Turning Today's Students into Tomorrow's Stars

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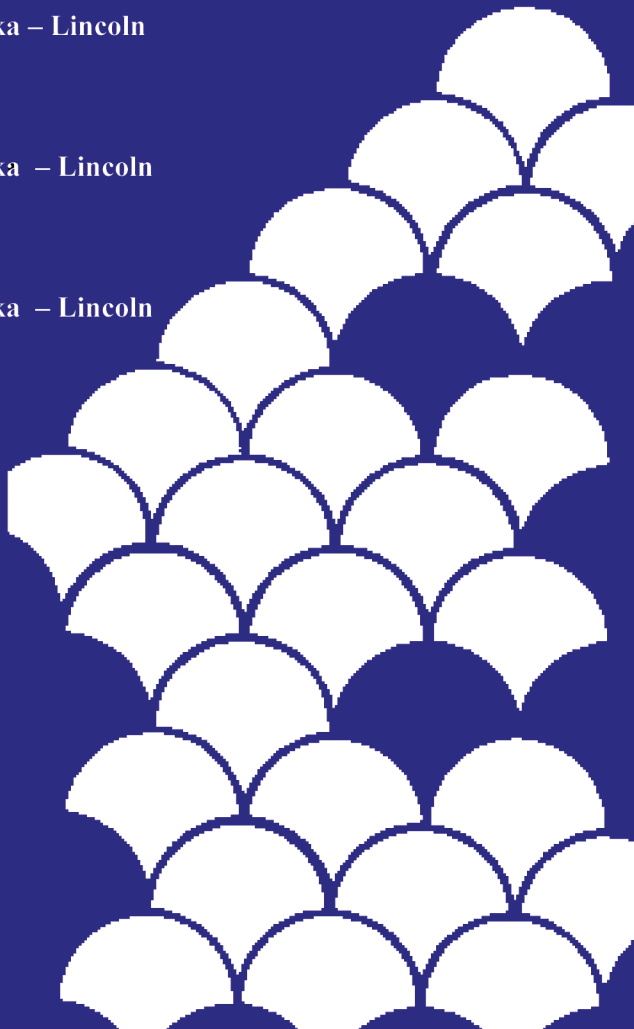**Assistant Editor**
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**2008 Report of the
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

Turning Today's Students into Tomorrow's Stars

Selected Papers from the 2008
Central States Conference

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Review and Acceptance Procedures
Central States Conference *Report*

The CSCTFL *Report* is a refereed volume of selected papers based on the theme and program of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Abstracts for sessions are first submitted to the Program Chair, who then selects the sessions that will be presented at the annual conference. Once the sessions have been selected, presenters are contacted by the editor of the CSCTFL *Report* and invited to submit a manuscript for possible publication in that volume. The invitation outlines the key themes for the *Report* to which each submission must connect. Copies of the publication guidelines are sent to conference presenters and others who express interest in submitting a manuscript. All submissions are read and evaluated by at least five members of the Editorial Board, individuals who are experts in the field of second language acquisition and foreign language methodology. Reviewers are asked to recommend that the article (1) be published in its current form, (2) be published after specific revisions have been made, or (3) not be published. When all the reviewers' ratings are received, the editors make all final publishing decisions. A critical criterion is how well the article addresses the volume's thematic focus. The names of the members of the 2007 Editorial Board are listed below.

The editors would like to point out that all Web site addresses (URLs) mentioned in the articles were fully functional at the time this volume went to press. This does not mean that those sites still exist or that the addresses given are still functional.

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Preface

Turning Today's Students into Tomorrow's Stars

The 2008 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, a joint conference with the Michigan World Language Association, focused on learning about the diverse backgrounds and needs of today's students and discovering new ways to help them succeed in reaching the goal of language proficiency.

In the Friday Keynote Address, Ellen Bernard Shrager explained how understanding eight profound changes in society can help teachers put student behavior in context and respond to their needs without enabling them. She continued her discussion at her Friday sessions, *Teacher Dialogues to Organize and Motivate Today's Unorganized and Unmotivated* and *Successful Dialoguing With Enabling Parents*, and her workshop, *Teacher Dialogues*, which included her suggestions on *Teacher Pet Peeves* and *Successful Dialoguing With Overindulged Students.*

In the Saturday Keynote Address, Susan Gross used the latest research on brain function and second language acquisition to show how teachers can produce students who are proficient in foreign language and therefore make it possible to someday realize our dreams of a multilingual America. She also presented workshops on *TPR Storytelling in Levels 2-AP* and a continuation of her keynote speech, *Promoting Fluency in the Foreign Language Classroom.*

A wide variety of workshops and sessions offered practical advice on how to deal with reluctant learners on a variety of levels. Immersion-type workshops and sessions were offered to help participants brush up on their language skills, and participants were brought up-to-date on topics such as foreign language advocacy, advanced placement, technology, assessment, culture, brain-based learning, and much more. In addition to "Best of" presentations from 15 states, the program included several encore presentations from last year's "All-Star" presenters.

The 2008 *Report* entitled *Engaging All Learners in the Language Classroom* reflects the student-centered conference theme by including articles that focus on using culture to change attitudes, task-based approaches, technology, and practical ideas for the classroom gleaned from research and theory.

The 2008 Central States Conference and the *Report* provided numerous opportunities for conference participants to reflect on the needs of their students and how to motivate and inspire them to success in the foreign language classroom.

Barbara S. Andrews
2008 Program Chair

Introduction

Engaging All Learners in the Language Classroom

Aleidine J. Moeller
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

This volume entitled, *Engaging All Learners in the Language Classroom*, offers the reader a wealth of research based approaches and strategies to language teaching and learning designed to assist the language educator in creating a learning environment that will motivate and engage all students in the language classroom. These articles focus on best practices representing theory-based instruction designed to optimize language communication skills and cultural knowledge for all learners.

Theisen, in her introductory chapter to this volume, reminds us of the importance of creating a learning environment that meets the emotional and cognitive needs of the learners, where classroom tasks serve as powerful emotional, cognitive and cultural connections between the learner and the content. She provides a model for differentiated learning curricula designed to individualize language instruction and learning that actively engage learners in the language learning process.

The Teaching of Culture: A Venue for Changing Attitudes, Enhancing Critical Thinking and Connecting to One's Roots

Knight conducted a study among high school students to investigate how the teaching of culture that focuses on attitude change rather than on cognitive learning can change attitudes and provide students with perspectives different from that of their native culture. Using video and multicultural lessons focused on undocumented immigrants, the author describes the approach used in the language classroom and identifies the change in attitude as measured by a pre- and post-treatment Values Questionnaire.

Mihaly argues that cultural topics should be presented not as unrelated, suspended snapshots of Mexican, Spanish, or Guatemalan culture, for example, but as relational readings and activities that are vital, important, and integrated into the students' developing personal worldview. The author offers a model ("frameless culture instruction") that promotes such an approach to language and culture learning and provides numerous examples of lessons from a first-semester, first-year Spanish class. Such content based lessons, she notes, challenge students to interact with authentic C2 source materials as information vital to their own identities and life experiences, thus presenting the concepts or texts in question as relevant sources of information that lead students not only to

world awareness, but also to heightened self-awareness.

Duvick promotes connecting the language classroom by using the local community as a springboard to access information about local French history and culture. By highlighting the presence of French explorers, traders, soldiers, and settlers from the 1600s to the 1800s, Duvick argues that when students learn more about the role played by the French in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River areas, they can participate in meaningful activities that engage them in learning about geography, history, the natural world, and cultural encounter, in addition to developing language skills. Duvick provides basic information about the French heritage in the Midwest, which can be used as a basis for further exploration by teachers who wish to supplement basic textbook information about the French in the Midwest. She offers activities and projects that teachers can use to help their students learn more about the history of their own communities and illustrates how to integrate interdisciplinary content into the French language classroom.

Hands-on, Task-Based Language Approaches

Sanatullov provides an alternative to a traditional language course by describing the design, curriculum, and instructional activities of a co-curricular club approach focused on developing interest in different facets of Russian language and culture while also developing student interest by immersing the learners into different authentic contents and contexts. The "Russian Cuisine" [Русская Кухня} experience provides students an opportunity to gain practice, knowledge and an appreciation of Russian language and culture through preparing diverse Russian dishes. Such an hands-on, task based course offers a learning environment successful in motivating learners to practice language, seek a deeper understanding of the Russian culture while acquiring a taste and appreciation for Russian cuisine.

Eiber engages her learners by making them the actors in a *fotonovela*. This literary genre, a "photo story," has been popular in the Spanish-speaking cultures for decades and first enjoyed popularity as a type of soap opera in print. More recently it has evolved into a vehicle for educating the population on issues of health and safety. Eiber discusses the rationale for using this activity, how it engages the learners and how it addresses the standards and contemporary learning expectations. Examples of current *fotonovelas* are posted on the web sites listed in the resources at the end of this article. Students can prepare a *fotonovela* by using digital pictures of themselves imported into PowerPoint, coupled with dialogue bubbles, or "callouts," thus creating a technology-based cartoon strip that stars the students themselves.

Technology that Enhances Language Learning and Assessment

Kraemer describes the implementation of engaging and interactive activities that combine all three areas (literature, culture, language) through the use of Hybrid or blended course materials that represent a carefully planned mix of traditional classroom instruction and online learning activities. This offers a

great way to actively engage students beyond the classroom setting by allowing them to demonstrate accomplishments in multiple literacies. This article describes hybrid modules that were developed for second- and fourth-year German college courses, highlighting benefits and challenges of hybrid education and showcasing different technologies that can be used effectively in and outside of foreign language classrooms.

Swanson and Early focus on the challenge of assessing spoken language that has resulted in more frequent formative assessments in the classroom, but fewer formal assessments. These challenges include the difficulty inherent in the development of useful and flexible rubrics for scoring instructors' time required for individual learner assessment. In this article the authors discuss the usefulness of out-of-class student digital recordings as a means to both empower and motivate students in their oral language proficiency achievement and to facilitate the creation of oral language assessment artifacts. They offer several inexpensive or free technology tools that educators can easily use in the classroom to measure oral proficiency and provide a spectrum of available technology resources that educators can use that will fit their needs and budget. They offer guidelines and sample evaluation tools to design meaningful and authentic oral proficiency tasks.

Learning from Research and Theory

Barrett explores the topic of mastery goals versus performance goals and the forces behind social comparison that occur in the classroom. She provides a review of the research on this timely topic as well as classroom strategies that can diminish competition and motivate all students to participate in a mastery learning experience designed to expand the linguistic, cultural and intellectual horizons of learners and ultimately to increase learners' sense of self-worth through satisfaction in their achievements.

Koubek draws on research to explain differentiated instruction and provides readers with an understanding of why it is important to use in mixed-level classes. Principles and strategies of differentiated instruction are outlined to help language educators better address varying student learning styles, interests, and readiness levels.

Hyde has been successful in engaging all her learners at the onset of class by opening class with reading bellringers, aimed at gaining and capturing student attention on lesson content. Hyde describes how she uses authentic, online texts from French newspapers to motivate students and instill confidence in them to successfully navigate authentic language texts that initially appear to be beyond their comprehension. Hyde provides a model and examples for how to effectively use this strategy to motivate learners and increase language achievement.

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The Important Work of Engaging Our 21st Century Learners

Toni Theisen
Loveland (CO) High School

The Spider Woman Meets the Trickster

Many indigenous societies relate wisdom through story. At the heart of many Native American legends is the Spider Woman. She is wise and powerful, but very discreet and mysterious. Rarely seen, she lurks in the shadows until she senses it is a time of transition. Only then does she emerge and begin to unravel the threads of the old web, representing the old world. She then begins spinning in order to weave the web of new stories and bring them to the forefront. The world has much to gain from observing the unraveling and the redesigning of new perspectives by this powerful mythological symbol. Spider Woman is a metaphor for change. The very metaphoric image exists in the world today as the art form of the Spider Woman permeates the 21st century vocabulary from websites to the Internet to social networking. Spider Woman has emerged and demands attention (Tarlow, 1999).

Another central figure in folktales around the world is the trickster, most often represented as the coyote or the hare. Tricksters, who are very clever, typically present surprises and unexpected events as a way to wake people out of their routines and uniformity. As Arrien (1993) states, the trickster enters to transform the society. The trickster is the master of transitions. It is this mastery that has the average world jumping and trying to control it. But the control is not the way out of the surprise. The trickster reminds all to become more objective, resilient and open to the wisdom of change. Who are the modern day tricksters in this changing society? They are, of course, the students. These 21st century digital native "tricksters" are here not only to challenge the educational system, but also to help make the transitions needed for positive change in the schools. They are here to move the country into acknowledging their diverse needs. They are here to

teach that every view of the world and every culture add to the synergetic growth of the country. They are here to let teachers know that they need a media-rich, multilayered environment in order to learn. They are here to say they want to be engaged in ways that help them make meaning. But the path is challenging and demanding and **these tricksters will expect change** (Arrien, 1993).

Stories are a way for individuals to project and present themselves and declare what is important and valuable. These tales of the Spider Woman and the trickster embody the vital elements of a changing society that strives to become more inclusive, interconnected and honoring of all. Their metaphoric messages are becoming more apparent and more urgent. The ways in which the educational system and the teachers respond will not only have major impact on the health and well being of all students, but also the future growth and success of this nation. Therefore, what is the important work of engaging all learners in the 21st century and how do teachers reach those wily, wonderful "trickster" students while using the wisdom of the Spider Woman?

Knowledge of Students

In order for learners to invest repeatedly and be deeply involved in learning, Tomlinson (2005) believes that there are at least five needs learners seek out. This doesn't mean that they come running in at the beginning saying they want to know all the countries that are Spanish-speaking or that they can hardly wait to write that first essay. No, not at all. They come seeking whether or not they will be honored and respected as an individual. They wonder if they can make a real contribution to the class that will be respected by others. Still they want to know if what they will learn truly will be relevant and purposeful for them. They will see if they feel empowered by the tasks and experiences of the classroom and finally they want to know if they can be motivated by challenge and feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when the challenge is met. These concepts of affirmation, contribution, power, purpose and challenge are those first thoughts that run through the minds of students, long before they even enter the school.

But how does the teacher respond to those beginning of the year jitters? The teacher can initially start by issuing an invitation to them. The message must be clear to the students that this classroom is a real place for you to learn, create, explore and be honored. But this cannot be just a one-time event. The students must be constantly reminded that the invitation has been extended over a long period of time. The teacher must also model that this invitation is sincere by ensuring the students that the classroom is a shared space for all and that everyone there has a voice. The next message of opportunity says to the students that the teacher will provide many rich, multilayered tasks, activities and strategies in order for the students to design and develop their dreams. This access will be equitable and enthusiastic and be aimed to foster positive attitudes about self. Investment is proving to the students that the teacher cares that positive growth happens to everyone. It points out to the students that the teacher values their opinions. It shows that the teacher invests lots of time and thought into doing a caring, complete job and that s/he has invested in the students' growth. The teacher

that really believes in the success and possibilities of all students demonstrates the response of persistence. The persistent teacher will always find another way to get a point across, teach a new concept, or arrive at a new way to deliver an authentic assessment. Finally, it is the teacher's responsibility to reflect on practices and strategies and to adjust learning accordingly when the need arrives. The value of constantly thinking that anything can be improved the next time makes for classes, tasks, and activities that keep up with the current needs of the students and the current research-based strategies that will continue to help students reach their goals (Tomlinson, 2005).

Now more than ever in order to have a successful learning environment, teachers must demonstrate a deep knowledge of their students. They should be able to recognize the individual differences that distinguish each student. Teachers need to understand how students learn and they must know and respect the cultural differences students bring to their classroom (www.nbpts.org, 2007). Teachers should also consider the experiences that students have had outside of school. For many of these students, digital tools have given them experience unlike any other generation. But still each of these student's experiences can be used as a springboard to design tasks that can serve as powerful emotional, cognitive and cultural connections between the learner and the content. As always, activities that center the learning in the student's own experiences better help engage the student in the tasks.

Students' learner profiles such as thinking styles and multiple intelligences preferences can also inform teachers, as well as provide successful strategies to reach many students. When teachers examine learner traits in order to understand what each student brings to the task, what each student needs to succeed with the task, and what each student needs to support her or his success, then teachers can use this knowledge of students to closely tailor instruction and build upon students' strengths and their diverse needs. A number of variables that comprise a student's learning profile include the desire to work alone or in groups, preferring hands-on activities over developing logical sequencing activities, learning better when viewing over listening, reading an online text over categorizing vocabulary words and demonstrating a strong musical-rhythmic intelligence (Gregory & Chapman, 2002).

Building this sense of community and connecting with students is critical in creating a safe environment where students want to succeed and be a part of the class. Students are motivated by choice. Effective teachers help students understand this freedom and guide them to make choices that will be both beneficial to them and respectful of all. Finally, joyful classrooms inspire students to be engaged and to achieve. When students and teachers are having fun, learning is deeper and the students maintain the internal desire to learn. Students take in knowledge through their senses, understand it based on personal background knowledge and experiences and evaluate it through their personal values (Sullo, 2007). All these students need relevant lessons, a caring environment where they can learn at varied rates, choices, challenges and respectful tasks. They need and want to network in flexible grouping arrangements, and they want to demonstrate

their new knowledge with a variety of ongoing assessments (Heacox, 2002). Most of all, they want to be engaged, and they really want to be engaged in the 21st century way. Teachers need to be more aware about, more responsive to and more knowledgeable of the digital world that impacts these students every minute of their lives (Prensky, 2005).

Enter the 21st Century Digital Native

Computers, cell phones, blogs, MySpace, Facebook, the Internet, video games, podcasts, instant messaging, MP3 players and texting are the tools of the native. As Prensky (2006) says, these tools are extensions of the students' brains. These clever digital native "trickster" students of today have grown up in a world filled with technology. They are experts at playing video games. They know how to use a cell phone to call, text and send pictures. They are connected to their downloaded music on their MP3 players with dangling ear buds that pass oh so secretly through the collars and sleeves of their hoodies. They publish their writings and thoughts on personal blogs. They share their dreams, their personalized poetry, stories and their wacky wisdom via MySpace, Facebook and YouTube. Their lives are filled with fast-paced special effects. They think and process information differently from their predecessors. They seem to be able to tune into different media all at once. They can easily multitask and are visual learners first. Their thinking is global. They want to analyze, evaluate and most of all, create. Their lives are engaging in what they perceive to be engaging (Prensky, 2005).

The world is at their fingertips, literally. They can personalize everything from their ring tones to their avatars. They can have "friends" join their space that come from all over the world. They can "mashup" their knowledge in order to share it with the world. They can research and examine anything that interests them via a keyword search on Google. They can even contribute and edit information on sites such as Wikipedia. They want to push out the boundaries of knowledge. All around, today's students are creating content in ways adults have never even heard of, much less tried. And they can do this 24/7/7, meaning twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week on seven continents. Yes, today's students are "native speakers" of their digital language (Prensky, 2001).

Then these digital natives come to school and enter into a 20th century world that is so foreign to their everyday existence out in the world. Their Web 2.0 lives must "power down" to Web 1.0. Then whom do they encounter? Enter the "digital immigrants." Who are they? Those teachers not born with technology as the center of their universe, those not speaking the vocabulary of the Internet, nor of texting nor of instant messaging, etc. are the digital immigrants. Knowing that the Web browser tool is only 12 years, it is obvious that there are lots of digital immigrant teachers out there. They are trying to adapt to their new environment, learn to use the new tools and learn the language of the digital native (Prensky, 2001). But things are changing at exponentially incredible speeds. So how can one spot a digital immigrant? Well, they are printing out their e-mails, they might be using a phone book to find a number or even use checks to pay bills (Richardson, 2006). But still the digital immigrants need to pay closer attention

to these mass societal shifts because they will continue to impact how a student perceives and works in the world. Many teachers still assume that what worked for them when they were learning will work for their students. This type of thinking from the digital immigrants only continues to widen the gap between them and their students. But, as Prensky (2001) states, it is highly unlikely that the digital native will go backwards. The students will continue to learn, to adopt new media easily and be very open to new technologies. The future will embody a digital and technological path, and the curricula must transform to reflect the realities of the needs of the future. Both schools and teachers must do more to keep pace with rapid technology, research, and societal changes in order to ensure that students will be ready to thrive in today's knowledge-based, global society. Yesterday's education is not sufficient for today's learner. Academic excellence must be acquired mostly within the context of today's technological environment in order to fully prepare students to thrive in the digital world.

There is good news, though, because the new tools of the 21st century can also lessen the gap between the digital native and the digital immigrant. Most of these tools are very easy to use and they are becoming easier to use in class. Many of these tools are also free and will probably stay that way as open-source software readily expands and more and more people respond to finding new ways to create and collaborate. Since these tools are making their ways more and more into schools, digital immigrant teachers can be encouraged both by the school tech team and better yet, by the students.

Sooner or later, everyone will need to be on board. Also, schools need to step up to embrace technology as a key component of a curricular delivery system. Open discussions on filtering programs and procedures need to happen soon. The digital natives are the experts, and they must be a part of this collaborative dialog (Richardson, 2006).

What skills will the digital natives need for the future?

Students of the 21st century will work in such venues as international and multicultural settings including globally integrated enterprises, non-governmental agencies aiding people all over the planet and in collaborative teams connected by technology to create new ideas and products. They also may be in a tiny town in the Midwest conducting international business, broadcasting a podcast radio show or teaching a course, all through the power of the home computer. But bottom line, to get to these jobs of tomorrow, students will need to be strong critical and creative thinkers, innovators, as well as flexible collaborative learners. They will need visual and information literacies, as well as multicultural understanding and global awareness. The skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis will help students work to adapt and manage complexity. Curiosity, creativity and risk taking will guide students with inventive and innovative thinking. Effective communication and strong interpersonal skills will be needed in order to collaborate in a variety of team structures that will constantly change. Managing for results, prioritizing and skillful planning will ground students into having the ability to produce relevant, high-quality products. Students will have to know how to effectively

and accurately use real-world digital tools (www.http://www.ncrel.org/engauge/, 2003). Horizontal thinking, or the ability to blend different perspectives and disciplines together to create a new thing will take on a life of its own. Right brain attributes of artistry, empathy and seeing the big picture will be equitable along side the logical skills of the left brain. But the most important ability a student needs to develop in the 21st century flat world is the desire and the ability to "learn how to learn". The world will constantly be exposed to digitalization. Therefore, the ability to absorb new information quickly and to find new ways to learn will only enhance one's chance to be viable in the workplace. Pursuing lifelong learning with passion will be the mantra of the 21st century (Friedman, 2005).

How does Differentiated Instruction help engage the digital learners?

One team of students in an elementary Spanish class is collaborating to write a song on a synthesizer for a recent Mayan legend they just read together. Another team is drawing posters and using online graphic organizers to retell the legend, while another team is making a set of puppets from directions found on a website. All are working to create a play that the teacher will film so parents can also learn about not only the legend, but also understand the cultural practices and products represented in this legend.

Meanwhile, in a middle school Japanese class, some students are practicing vocabulary by creating a podcast. Students are working in pairs at the computer, manipulating Japanese characters with an animated online program. Still others have chosen to complete a listening and viewing animé activity after having watched a video clip, and still another group is creating a game that will help others learn the vocabulary, too. All are preparing in their own ways to be ready for an assessment the next day while building meaning in collaborative teams (Davis, Lungaard, Pero & Theisen, 2007).

German I students are studying the weather. The teacher creates five learning centers where students can practice various aspects of the weather unit, including listening activities, vocabulary practice, a video clip of a TV weather report, and online German weather maps. Students then choose four of the five centers that best help them use the weather unit and complete the activities at their chosen centers. After evaluating students' progress, the teacher determines that one third of the class knows the vocabulary, structure and culture for this unit very well and could easily perform the appropriate real world functions such as helping a friend pack clothes for a trip to Austria. One third of the class understands *most* of the unit and has performed most of the interpersonal and interpretive tasks with just some difficulty. One third of the class is experiencing a considerable degree of difficulty and needs more direct instruction and concrete examples. In order to provide challenging and respectful practice to all, the teacher tiers three different homework assignments from the book and ancillaries, as well as from three interactive German websites. One group has a battleship game for practicing the vocabulary; one group is assigned to view a video clip from a weather report on an online channel in Vienna and the last group is finding Salzburg hotel and

youth hostel information. Students are assigned the tasks that best match their readiness level.

In an advanced level high school French class, students are focusing on the theme of problems of the planet. After learning the key concepts of the unit, student groups are researching topics of interest. Some are examining hunger, another group is interested in global warming and still another group is learning about malaria. They have blogged about views of global warming with their sister school in France and they have created podcasts from a cell phone about what their city is doing about global warming. Their podcasts are posted on the Wikispace so the sister school in France can respond. Their final products, which are their choices, must present an interpretation of the data, an analysis of the facts, and a set of proposed solutions based on a narrowed topic from the major themes. They may work alone or in small teams. Each person or team presents a PowerPoint movie that will be loaded on the Wikispace to share with the partner school in France. All students in these classes are highly engaged in their activities because of choice, interest and variety (Theisen, 2002).

All of these activities and strategies are examples of differentiation. Differentiated instruction recognizes that each learner is unique. Rigorous, relevant, complex and flexible, differentiated instruction is a response to that uniqueness. Rather than just being a set of strategies and activities, differentiated instruction is a powerful philosophy of learning that believes each child comes to class with their talents, gifts and abilities ready to be activated (Center for Advanced Student Learning, 2001). The goals of differentiated instruction include: establishing a balance between a student-centered and teacher-facilitated classroom, developing instruction around the standards and the essential questions of the unit and designing challenging and respectful tasks in order to maximize student growth and individual success while meeting curriculum goals (Tomlinson, 1999).

Research suggests that effective differentiation possesses many characteristics that engage all learners. First of all, it encourages the teacher to plan around multiple pathways to learning in order to reach all learners instead of creating the "one size fits all" model. Using a variety of materials, appropriately challenging tasks and research-based teaching strategies that address different modalities provide more understanding of the material. Different pacing addresses the rate at which students make sense of the learning. Flexible grouping allows students to collaborate with others. Ongoing formative assessments provide paths for teachers to continually adjust learning. When differentiated instructional strategies are used, there is more access to learning by more students, more effective use of time, and more evidence of motivated students. The art and science of teaching emerge (Theisen, 2002).

Differentiated instruction offers a variety of learning options to tap into different readiness levels, interests and learning profiles. First of all, each student's work should be at an appropriate level of challenge in order for achievement and attitude to improve. Secondly, more student engagement and more creativity occur when tasks are linked to a student's interest. Finally when a teacher addresses

learning profiles, the result tends to be improved achievement and attitude about learning (Tomlinson, 2005).

Tomlinson (1999) identifies three elements of the curriculum that can be differentiated: content, process, and product. The **content** refers to the "input" of the unit: ideas, concepts, information and facts. It is what the student must know, understand and be able to do as a result of the lesson. It can also be an extension of the content that can be used as enrichment or as choice to add more depth to the content. Focusing on the unit's essential questions and standards-based activities and varying them to meet learners' needs are examples of differentiating content. For example, if some students need more time to grasp the essential skills needed for the unit, the teacher might provide more direct instruction, more concrete examples and more concrete practice. Other students may quickly understand the concepts and need to be challenged by more complex activities (Berger, 1991).

Process is the how of teaching. Students need to find ways to make sense of their learning. To modify the process, the teacher can apply a variety of flexible grouping strategies such as ability grouping, interest grouping, or grouping by learning profile. As one of the foundations of differentiated instruction, grouping and regrouping must be a dynamic process, changing with the content, project, and on-going evaluations. Learners want to interact and work together as they try to make sense of the new content. Teachers may conduct whole-class introductory discussions of the content's big ideas followed by small group or paired work. Process can also be differentiated by modifying the complexity of tasks and by engaging students in critical and creative thinking. Other options include choice boards or menus. In these strategies, the students have the autonomy to select what to do or how to do it. This strategy gives them more responsibility and accountability for their learning because they must manage their time and select the options that will help them reach their full potential (Center for Advanced Student Learning, 2001).

A **product** is the output of the unit or the ways that students demonstrate or exhibit their understanding of the content. Both Bloom's Taxonomy (Heacox, 2002) and Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (Lazear, 2000) can be applied to the differentiation of products, providing greater challenge and variety in how students demonstrate what they have learned, now know, understand and are able to do.

Students vary in readiness, interest and learning profile. Students are also active and responsible explorers. Teachers respect that each task put before the learner will be interesting, engaging, and accessible to essential understanding and skills. Readiness is a certain entry point into a task. In evaluating how to organize a task around readiness it is important to understand that each student's work should be at an appropriate level of challenge. Students are frustrated when work is too hard. Students are bored when work is too easy. Each child should feel challenged most of the time. When the difficulty of the task matches the student's readiness, both achievement and attitude about learning are likely to improve. With interest as the focus, tasks that link to a student's interest are likely to promote greater student engagement, satisfaction, creativity, and autonomy. Learning style,

gender, culture, and intelligence preferences shape learning profiles. Addressing students' learning profiles tends to result in improved achievement and attitude about learning (Tomlinson, 1999).

Successful differentiation strategies

To begin with, initial and on-going assessment of student readiness and growth are essential. Meaningful pre-assessment leads to successful differentiation. Incorporating on-going assessment informs teachers so that they can better provide a menu of approaches, choices, and scaffolds for the varying needs, interests and abilities that exist in classrooms of students of diverse needs. After the students have been assessed in different ways, the following strategies can be designed to best meet the needs of the students and the goals of the unit.

Menus

A menu is a differentiated strategy that provides choice for the learner in order to practice skills, try new products, work with a variety of resources and use varying types of processes for learning. Everyone likes choice. Having the freedom to select what to do or how to do it gives students more responsibility and accountability for their learning. It also makes them feel in control of their own learning.

Tiered Lessons

A tiered lesson is a differentiation strategy that addresses certain standards, key concepts and generalizations, but allows several pathways for students to arrive at an understanding of these components based on the students' readiness level. Tiered assignments focus on the same essential skills and understandings but at different levels of complexity, abstractness and open-endedness. Tiered lessons allow learners to do respectful tasks at their own level of ability.

R.A.F.T. Writing Strategy

R.A.F.T is a system for making sure students understand their role as writer, their audience, the format of their work, and the expected content of their writing. It provides an easy, meaningful way to incorporate writing into content-area instruction. Practically all R.A.F.T assignments are written from a viewpoint other than that of a student. They are usually written to an audience other than the teacher. They take a form other than students would write as a standard essay. The R.A.F.T. format creates writing assignments and prompts that are real world writing assignments. These **four** key ingredients are included in every R.A.F.T writing assignment:

R: Role of Writer--Who are you?
A: Audience--To whom is this written?
F: Format--What form will it take?
T: Topic + strong verb--What is your topic?

Learning Centers

Learning centers are designated areas around the classroom that offer a collection of materials that learners can use to deepen their understanding

using the wiki, they can have a place to store the content, so later on the students can even edit and collaborate online from home. These collaborative workspaces mirror what will probably be the students' workspaces of the future (Richardson, 2006).

Rich Site Summary (RSS)

Imagine that you have started to make podcasts and you want students to listen to them in order to practice for the upcoming assessments. Rich Site Summary or RSS is a technology that allows people to subscribe to the "feeds" of the content created on the Internet. When using a free podcasting site, there will be a place where the site asks if you would like to subscribe. Students can subscribe and every teacher can be a star on their students' Ipods. Many audio sites have these options, so really students could broadcast podcasts, and others around the world could subscribe to them. Furthermore, some of the already existing podcasts on the Internet also have the same features (Richardson, 2006).

Online Photo Galleries

Publishing digital photos only means sharing pictures. With the emergence of this technology, people have been loading many pictures to these sites. What that means for a world language teacher or student is there are pictures to use as resources of just about any place in the world where the language is spoken. Need to see photos of the Costa Rican rainforest or the Maison Des Esclaves on the Île de Goree in Sénégal? By just searching these sites, you will probably find those pictures, which then can be turned into a slideshow. Load up the site, pull out the LCD projector and engage the students with the wonderful photos. This tool adds another dimension to what students and teachers can do with digital pictures (Richardson, 2006).

Audio and video

YouTube, Garage Band and many more free sites make it so easy to distribute video and audio files. Media that really engages the digital natives, these technologies open all sorts of possibilities in the classroom. Granted, some sites are blocked, but there are ways to capture video and podcasts in order to load them on the desktop. Check out some of these sites and, if ever the teacher required a video project for class, it quite often ends up on these sites, loaded up by the students themselves. TeacherTube is now a current site where teachers and their students can load up projects. Also there are even instructional videos for teachers to learn about new technologies (Richardson, 2006).

Digital Storytelling

Digital Storytelling is a fantastic way to engage students using the multimedia they love. There are many different definitions of "digital storytelling," but in general, all of them revolve around the idea of combining the art of telling stories with any of a variety of available multimedia tools, including graphics, audio, video animation, PowerPoint movies and Web publishing. Educators at all levels can use Digital Storytelling in many ways, from introducing new material to

of content. They can be designed based on readiness levels, learner profiles or interests. Center themes can include other texts or reading sources, computer activities, websites, research, art exploration, photography, podcasts, listening or viewing activities and real-world problem solving. Most of all, these centers give students the ability to move through assignments at a varied pace (Tomlinson, 1999).

The Digital Native's Tools and Strategies

Blogs and the Blogosphere

What is a blog and how can it impact student learning? An online publishing tool that enables people to easily share their thoughts, dislikes, discoveries, and insights is a blog. Blogging is also showing up in schools, where teachers have known for a long time that students develop better communication skills when they are involved in authentic situations where they negotiate meaning. A number of educators are helping their students develop their writing skills by having them publish their work as blogs and then invite comments from people on the outside. A blog is quite often a personal reflection, question or comment. The most fundamental feature of a blog is that it has a goal. Maybe a blog might focus on politics. Another one could be about learning French and still another can be about how to raise bilingual children. Articles, pictures, podcasts and videos can enhance the content. Some blogs are among friends, while some strive to draw as many people as possible. Blogs can also be interactive, allowing students and teachers to carry on or create conversations. The blog has become one of the most widely used Web 2.0 tools in school. It is easy to blog. Write the article or the post, go to the blog page and submit it. Then wait for the comments to arrive. What is also a blogosphere? Think of it as a global converstaion, a venue where anyone can post thoughts, express views and personal beliefs and wait for the world to talk back (Warlick, 2005).

Wikis

Wikis are collaborative workspaces where anyone can add content or edit content that has already been published. The wiki was first designed as an easy authoring tool to encourage people to publish. Like a simple word document, all anyone has to do is select the editing button, add or change the content and then select save. Pictures and documents can be uploaded and podcasts, slide shoes and video can be embedded or linked. Easy to create, wikis also have ways to direct who might view or edit them. People can be invited to the space and then edit, or the site can be private when only those who are members of the site can view or edit. These levels of privacy and security make the teacher feel more comfortable in using this tool with the students. Wikis can also be used to manage content or provide a space for students to review class notes, explore selected sites and view activities that the teacher has loaded to the site. The best use of a wiki though is the collaboration feature. Once students have joined the space (using a screen name and not a real name), they have the potential to edit and add content. For example, students can collaborate to write a story or problem-solve a task. By

helping students learn to conduct research, synthesize large amounts of content and gain expertise in the use of digital communication and authoring tools. It also can help students organize these ideas as they learn to create stories for an audience and present their ideas and knowledge in an individual and meaningful way. Digital stories appeal to many of the diverse learning styles and are an excellent choice for the presentation mode. While they capitalize on the creative talents of students, they can also reinforce research and writing skills and certainly do generate attention and motivation for the digital learners. This media form is an excellent tool that helps students learn appropriate ways to critique one's own work and others. Even though students' final projects are media-based, the most important part in the design of a solid story is the writing, editing and rewriting that goes into it to make it powerful. Digital stories also provide excellent media literacy learning opportunities and practice because students are involved in the creation and analysis of the media they are using. Students also develop communications skills by learning to ask questions, express opinions, construct narratives and write for an audience. This strategy also helps students increase computer skills using software that combines a variety of multimedia including: text, still images, audio, video and web publishing. By creating digital stories, students develop the power of their own voices and they help students be active participants rather than passive viewers (Ohler, 2006).

Student safety

An important factor in getting web 2.0 activities going in a school is the safety issue for the students. In using these tools, it is always important to follow district procedures first. Normally, for many K-12 students, parents are asked to sign an Internet usage agreement, but that still doesn't respond to all the issues. Teachers must teach students how to be safe on the Web by reminding them to never give any personal information, such as their address, their e-mail or their entire name, nor to share passwords. Using a screen or if the language student has a name in class like Zakia, have this person use that number with the period number after it, "Zakia3", then only the teacher and the student know of this identity. In directing a project, a teacher needs to set the guidelines for the use of the sites and the tools. Sometimes having the students sign a contract will ensure and clarify to the students all the details and guidelines for a successful project from start to finish. Encourage the students to watch over each other and report any unusual situations. On many of these sites, there are ways to protect the privacy of everyone, by choosing that the site can only be viewed and edited by the users. In the K-12 environment especially, the teacher should also inform the principal or the department chair of the details of the project (Richardson, 2006).

The Finale

All these new technologies are beginning to impact students' lives. These technologies promote collaboration, the ability to publish for an authentic audience, and promote new ways to critically think and be creative to solve real-world problems both predictable and unpredictable. This does not mean to throw

out everything that worked in the past. By all means, the importance of finding balance between the old and new provides all sorts of input that can be very valuable to the students' learning. A great song, a paragraph and drawing about the family, a selection from a great novel or the fly swatter game can certainly engage the students. It is all in the delivery and the joy in which it was presented.

But when technology combined with sound standards-based lesson design, including a variety of differentiated instructional strategies and strong teaching meet the digital native of the 21st century, the potential for deepening the student's learning and engagement expands even more. World language teachers and students have been waiting for the day when the access to the world would be right there and just flow into their lives. Today is here! Today a new age is evolving. An age and time when people collaborate to expand disciplines. In the past, students have individually mastered their own proficiencies as they explored the world from one perspective, their own. Now, with collaboration technologies, individuals are enlightened by the easy connections to the real content. Yes, the Spider Woman has emerged and she is unraveling the ways of the 20th century and starting to create the web of the new century. The digital native "tricksters" and the Spider Woman have formed a team, and their collaborative project is to help the digital immigrant educators understand the wonderment of their world. The digital native "tricksters" will demand change, and today's students are challenging educators everyday to engage them at their level. They are pleading to be challenged, to be allowed to make decisions, to collaborate and network with others including their teachers. The trickster is a creator, a transformer, and a truth teller. Listen wisely.

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Appendix A

21st Century Learning-Useful websites for both students and teachers

Resources for podcasting

GCast: http://www.gcast.com/
   These free sites let the user upload audio files or make a podcast using a cell
   phone and a toll free numbers.
   Podcasts can be stored on the site or a widget can be embedded on a website,
   wikispace or blog.
Gabcast: http://www.gabcast.com
   Record a podcast with a cellphone and a toll free number.
Learn French in Boston Podcasts: http://www.learnfrenchinboston.com
   Podcasts including explanations of French poetry and practice sessions.
Odeo: http://odeo.com/
   This site has variety of audio files including audio books and podcasts in many
   languages.
Odeo studio: http://studio.odeo.com/create
   This site provides a free service to make podcasts that can be embedded on a
   website, a wikispace and blogs.
Podomatic: http://www.podomatic.com/index.html
   This site provides a free seervice to make podcasts.
Utterz: http://www.utterz.com/welcome.php
   Post voice, video, picture and text mashups.

Blog sites, Videos sites

Blogger: http://www.blogger.com/
   This online blogging tool is an easy tool to use to start blogging.
Class Blogmeister: http://classblogmeister.com/
   This online blogging tool is designed with teachers and students in mind, where
   the teacher can evaluate, evaluate, comment on, and finally publish students'
   blog articles in a controlled environment.
Daily Motion: http://www.dailymotion.com
   Daily Motion is a free online video streaming service that allows anyone to
   view and share videos that have
   been uploaded by members of the site.
Google Video: http://video.google.com
   Google Video is a free online video streaming service that allows anyone to
   view and share videos that have been uploaded by members of the site.
Revver: http://one.revver.com/revver
   Revver is a free online video streaming service that allows anyone to view and
   share videos that have been uploaded by members of the site.
TeacherTube: http://www.teachertube.com/
   The goal of this site to provide an online community for sharing instructional
   teacher videos. Upload lesson plan videos or watch student videos. There are
   also instructional videos to help teacher learn more about using technology.

Viddler: http://www.viddler.com/
   Viddler is a free online video streaming service that allows anyone to view and share videos that have been uploaded by members of the site.
YouTube: http://youtube.com/
   YouTube is a free online video streaming service that allows anyone to view and share videos that have been uploaded by members of the site.
Zamzar: http://www.zamzar.com/
   This is an online free video conversion site. Here videos from sites like YouTube can be converted and downloaded to the desktop.
Voki: http://www.voki.com/
   Make your own talking avatar in many languages for a blog or wikispace,

Online Photo Galleries

Flickr: http://www.flickr.com
   This is a digital photo sharing website. It is also a great site to find pictures of many places in the world.

Digital Storytelling

Center for Digital Storytelling: http://www.storycenter.org/index1.html
   The Center for Digital Storytelling is an arts organization rooted in the art of personal storytelling. We assist people of all ages in using the tools of digital media to craft, record, share, and value the stories of individuals and communities.
Educational uses of digital Storytelling: http://www.coe.uh.edu/digital-story-telling
   This is a website devoted to the educational uses of digital storytelling with guidelines to create digital stories.
Project-based learning: http://www.edutopia.org/projectbasedlearning
   In project-based learning, students work in teams to explore real-world problems and create presentations to share what they have learned. Sample projects and directions are included.

Teacher Resources

Bookbox: http://www.bookbox.com/
   BookBox is a web-based jukebox of digital books in languages from around the world. BookBox aims to not only enhance children's basic literacy, but also facilitate their proficiency in foreign languages. The mission of BookBox is to create outstanding audio-visual "books" in a variety of languages. Free story is free.
Bubbleshare: http://www.bubbleshare.com/
   Make a slideshow of your pictures and add captions and comments with sound.
Copyright-friendly: http://copyrightfriendly.wikispaces.com/
   This site has Copyright-Friendly Images and Sound for Use in Media Projects and Web Pages, Blogs, Wikis, etc.
Differentiated Instruction: http://www.internet4classrooms.com/di.htm
   List of resources to use when differentiating instruction.
GoToQuiz: http://www.gotoquiz.com/create.html
   Create quizzes, surveys and polls.

Lit Gloss: http://wings.buffalo.edu/litgloss/list-of-texts.shtml
This site has a connection to original selections of literature in many different languages. Also included is the context of the piece and additional resources to better understand it.

OneTrueMedia: http://www.onetruemedia.com/
Mix photos, video and sound to create a new slideshow.

Read, Write, Think: http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/persuasion_map/
This site has an interactive map to help students to begin to write a persuasive essay.

Read, Write, Think: http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/comic/index.html
Students can make comic strips.

Slide Show: http://www.slide.com/
Make your own slide show by uploading your pictures.

Searchcrystal: http://www.searchcrystal.com/home.html
It is a search visualization tool that lets you search and compare multiple engines in one place.

Wikispaces

Wikispaces: www.wikispaces.com
This site shows how to make and use wikispaces. The is also a search in order to look for other wikis.

LHS French classes: http://lhsfrenchclasses.wikispaces.com
This wikispace shows how to use a wiki as a course management system and collaborative workspace for a French class.

Collaboration Nation: http://collaborationnation.wikispaces.com/
This is a collaborative wiki integrating many different digital tools.

2

A Model for Teaching
Cross-Cultural Perspectives

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Current Issues in Teaching Culture

Culture, an intrinsic part of foreign language (FL) teaching as defined by the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (1999), appears second after Communication and includes four standards: Standard 2.1, "Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between practices and perspectives of the culture studied;" Standard 2.2, "Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied;" Standard 3.2, "Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures"; and Standard 4.2, "Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own." How then does this crucial part of our mission often become the most trivialized, the most neglected, and the least tested aspect? According to Walker and Noda (2000, p.187), in the study of language, nothing has been discussed more and with less effect than the relationship between language and culture. Many others agree (e.g., Lange, 1999; Lafayette, 1997). Omaggio (2001, pp. 346-48) offers three reasons why teachers avoid teaching culture: (1) There is not enough time in class; (2) They fear they do not know enough about it; and (3) The cultural aspects that involve dealing with student attitudes can be threatening to one's own beliefs and values.

In dividing culture into three interdependent components, the Standards sought to expand beyond the stereotypes and generalizations often found when only "products" or at times "practices" were presented in classrooms. But even today, "perspectives" are often avoided because they involve the murky area of

values, beliefs, views that differ from ours (e.g., Omaggio's aforementioned third reason of avoidance). According to Heusinkveld (1997), "Despite the dramatic increase in the amount of culture included in the FL curriculum in recent years, the goal of producing culturally sensitive students remains elusive. It has become evident that sheer quantity of cultural instruction can not assure empathy or cross-cultural understanding so long as students remain bound by negative stereotypes, cultural misconceptions, and an ethnocentric view of the world (p.429)." Omaggio concurs, stating there is a "crying need for understanding and mutual acceptance among the world's people (p. 346)," and until we can see an issue or practice from another's point of view, there will be no mutual understanding. This truly needs to be an ultimate goal in FL learning.

In addition to studying the perspective of another society for the purpose of global awareness/ understanding, there are two very practical ramifications of teaching perspectives for enhancing second language acquisition itself. First, past research (e.g., Gardner, 1985; Mosche & Lambert, 1961) has shown that a positive attitude toward the target culture facilitates acquisition of the language; yet according to Robinson (1997, p.81) there is little evidence to support the effect of language acquisition on the development of positive attitudes toward the TL culture. In other words, it is the study of culture that increases a student's motivation to learn a language more so than the reverse. Second, the situation is complicated by the fact that social distance (as measured by differences in standard of living, education, technical development, or political power between countries) decreases the likelihood of successful second language acquisition (Schumann, 1976). Therefore, if students are to successfully learn a foreign language, negative stereotypes need to be dealt with and dispelled.

Seelye (1994, p. 214), echoing the need for clearly defined goals and objectives in teaching culture, recommends that it begin with teaching for attitude changes rather than focus on cognitive learning as is presently done in most classrooms. Kramsch (1983, p. 437) concurs when she says that cross-cultural communication and understanding cannot be achieved if we present the student only with cultural facts and with true/false tests and right/wrong answers. Although we no longer teach language via rote learning and imitation drills, we continue to teach culture in this manner emphasizing the products and practices and neglecting the perspectives and different attitudes.

The questions become: How can we effectively show our students another perspective? Can we change attitudes? If so, how do we do this? How do we measure it?

Review of Previous Research on Teaching for Attitude Change

Mantle-Bromley (1995) states that studies have been conducted on changing student attitudes, but without much success, and the reason may well be because attitude theory was not incorporated into the design. The Mantle-Bromley and Miller study of 1991 found that students' attitudes toward the target language (Spanish) and cultures (Hispanic) may even become less positive during the first semester of language study, but that their attitudes are more positive when

multicultural sensitivity lessons using attitude-change theory are incorporated into the plan than when no such lessons are taught. Similar results were found in a replication study (Mantle-Bromley, 1995) that sought to maintain and/or improve students' attitudes toward French and Spanish speakers. Again the mean of the group participating in culture-related lessons had a significantly greater mean on the modified version of the Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery than the control group. The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) showed that many beginning students have misconceptions about language learning that may hinder their progress. Indeed, she found that 22 percent of beginning Spanish students began the class with some degree of negative overall attitude toward Spanish and Spanish speakers. That percent even increased as the semester progressed, perhaps because language learning was more difficult than the students had anticipated. Her research, however, showed that the group exposed to more culture had a more positive attitude than the control group.

The attitude-change theory incorporated into the previously mentioned research hypothesizes that attitudes have three components: (1) affect (a like or dislike), (2) cognition (what the person "knows" or believes to be true) and, (3) behavior (action toward attitudinal object). Attitudes change primarily when there is dissonance or disagreement within the components. (See Rajecki, 1990; Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991.) For example, let us assume that student X does not like Spanish, and thinks that the U.S. is being threatened by illegal, inferior immigrants. When X meets (even via video) a kind, caring person whose values s/he respects, however, one of the three components will be in discord with the other two and an attitudinal change is possible.

How then, does one design a lesson for changing attitudes? Morgan (1993, pp. 73-74) conducted a comprehensive review of the research and theory on attitude changes with regard to FL classroom learning and concluded that four aspects need to be considered when attempting to change student attitudes, namely: (1) active student involvement with controversial materials, (2) novel classroom activities, (3) struggle with complex material to reach own conclusions, and (4) awareness of their own cultural attitudes. Using these four aspects as a basis, the following project was designed and classroom activities, developed.

Purpose of Project

The overall purpose of this project was to present students with a perspective different than that of their native culture based on attitude-change models. It sought to measure the effect of video and multicultural lessons on attitudes of intermediate language students toward undocumented immigrants, specifically, if there was a significant difference in the mean pre-treatment and the mean post-treatment scores of the Values Questionnaire.

Project Overview

Topic choice

The project was designed using the aforementioned aspects of a classroom proposed by Morgan. Based on the first concept (i.e., content delivery required

active learner involvement with complex, possibly even controversial material), the timely theme of illegal immigration was chosen. Not only is the theme controversial, but illegal immigrants pose a negative stereotype with social distancing—factors that not only impede cross-cultural understanding, but second language acquisition as well. This topic was especially controversial in the rural area in which this high school was located because of the large number of legal and questionably legal immigrants.

Seelye (1994) as well as Moorjani and Field (1988) recommend that teaching for attitude changes begin with first understanding the students' own cultural values, beliefs and attitudes. Byrnes (1991, p. 212) suggests that students might read about an aspect of their own culture in their native language, then read about same phenomenon in the TL from the perspective of target culture, then the theme of the target culture in L1, and finally the target culture viewpoint in the TL. This way students can begin to see how the cultural phenomenon differs in the two cultures and thus how attitudes about the phenomenon differ. The following materials were chosen using this model.

Materials

The two major sources for the contrasting viewpoints came from the September 20, 2004 cover article of *Time* magazine for the L1 viewpoint and the video *El Norte* (1984) for the L2 view. Other relevant readings in English were "Toll and Trouble" by Ninoska Marcano in *Latina* and another in *The Ann Arbor Observer* entitled "Life Underground" written by James Militzer describing the Latino situation in the vicinity of this high school. The *Time* magazine cover showed the American flag being ripped open by two hands and stated: "Special investigation: America's Border—even after 9/11, it's outrageously easy to sneak in." The article, written by Barlett and Steele, states that in a single day more than 4,000 illegal aliens will walk across the busiest unlawful gateway into the U.S., the 375-mile border between Arizona and Mexico (p. 51). The number of illegal aliens flooding into the U.S this year will total 3 million. The authors contend that it breeds anger and resentment among citizens who cannot understand why illegal aliens often receive government-funded health care, education benefits and subsidized housing (p. 52).

Truly, this is one perspective. Is there another? The L2 viewpoint came mainly from the video *El Norte*, a movie about an indigenous Guatemalan brother and sister seeking a better life. When their parents are killed, they decide to go to the U.S. (el norte). It is a perilous journey fraught with many dangers as they travel through Mexico and eventually enter the rat-infested sewage tunnel to the U.S. Upon their arrival they discover that life in the North is much more difficult than expected (Film Arobics). Although the film was produced in 1984, the controversial theme is ever more applicable now than even 20 years ago.

A video was chosen for several reasons. First, Oller's (1983) studies have proven the effectiveness of using story lines for heightening interest and comprehension in second language. (That was especially evident in this study as well as students looked forward to the next week's sequel in the narration.) Secondly, a video takes

the task of being "primary-information source" away from the teacher, one of the problems Omaggio found to hinder cultural teaching. Thirdly, it helps deflect the challenging values issue she also mentions, maintaining the message, so to speak, but changing the messenger so it is not always the teacher. It also puts the student in a less defensive situation. In discussing how attitudes change, for example, Kramsch (1983) recommends that teachers make students see the contrast between a stereotype they may have and new facts; "to make these constructs apparent and observable to students in the classroom without putting the students on the defensive or reinforcing stereotypes (438)." A video is an ideal medium for portraying these constructs.

The integration of videos is not only appropriate to reach our students, but often the media of choice to bridge the gap of cultural awareness. (See Herron, Cole, Corrie, and Dubreil, 1999; Shrum and Glisan 2004, p. 161.) In this study, however, video was used primarily to give another perspective—that of two Guatemalans trying to illegally enter the United States.

Although video presents students with real people using the language, questions have been raised about whether or not students have sufficient capacity for storage of new cultural information because of the demands required by the TL and syntactic processing. As Herron et. al. (1999) state, "if one accepts the capacity theory of text comprehension, it is perhaps too idealistic to suggest that FL students can glean cultural information from authentic video while they are simultaneously engaged in decoding linguistic utterances (p.519). The use of subtitles thus helped in the comprehension for these intermediate students who really saw the video over the brief period of seven classes. This is not to say, however, that subtitles should be suppressed for more advanced students.

Participants

During the fall semester of 2004, 160 intermediate-level Spanish students in a Midwest high school took part in the project, which examined their attitudes toward undocumented immigrants. Students varied in age from 15 to 18. All students and their parents or guardians gave written permission to take part in the study. The same teacher taught all six classes.

Procedures

Pre-teaching preparations

Because the film is rated "R" by the Motion Picture Association of America, a letter was sent to parents requesting permission for their child to watch the film. Basically, the rating came about because of language in one scene in which a militia group intercepts an uprising and another in which the main characters are told to swear like Mexicans so as not to be deported back to Guatemala. Both scenes are mild in comparison to much of prime-time television today. All parents signed the permission slips.

Overall plan

The complete set of eight, detailed lesson plans, with Standards-based objectives and selected classroom activities for each day can be found on webpage

http://www.chsbs.cmich.edu/Susan_Knight , and by clicking on "el Norte." The 30 pages of plans, created primarily by the teacher, Jamie Cartier, are divided according to the divisions in the film presentation as seen in Appendix A.

The two basic overall objectives were: (1) Students will be able to define what a stereotype is and discuss the accuracy of that image. (2) Students will discuss the meaning of perception/perspective and give examples of how different people can have different perceptions of the same situation and why that might be.

Based on suggestions given in FL methodology textbooks (e.g., Omaggio, 2001 and Shrum and Glisan, 2004), interactive pre-viewing, during-viewing, and post-viewing activities were designed for the students. Lessons were also planned to include Morgan's (1993, p. 73) three other classroom requisites for attitude change, namely:

- Classroom environment should be one of "change or novelty." Activities such as those on the above website were included. Students found such activities to be relevant, interesting, timely, challenging.
- Students need to struggle with complex material and reach their own conclusions rather than be just the passive receivers of information. This was done through debates and role plays.
- Students should become aware of their own attitudes toward language and culture learning, hopefully, to a greater acceptance of others. This was evident in the pre/post questionnaires and in the diary-like free writes.

All lesson plans incorporated Omaggio's (2001, p.358) suggestions on how to teach culture such as using a variety of techniques that involve speaking, listening, reading and writing, using probing questions to help students describe and analyze the cultural significance, using small-group techniques (e.g., discussions, brainstorming, and role-plays for cultural instruction), avoiding the "facts-only approach" by including experiential and process learning, and using the target language whenever possible to teach cultural content.

Timetable

The first and last day of the eight-week project, students answered a Values Questionnaire found in Appendix B. It was written to test any attitude change during the project. The cultural lessons were taught for eight weeks on Mondays. Mondays were chosen because attendance is normally higher, and students did come to class excited to see the movie segment. Variations can be used for showing the film. Although it was shown for six of the lessons, it could be shown for more and of shorter duration. For example, the film was only shown once each class period, but could be shown twice, perhaps with and without subtitles. (In viewing the lesson plans and questions on the website, the reader will notice that some assignments use both Spanish and English. This choice was made by the teacher, based on the language ability of the students in the class as well as the more difficult yet crucial content of the film. At least 95 percent of the class period, however, was conducted purely in Spanish.)

Instrumentation

According to Seelye (1994), the easiest way to get an objective overview of attitude shift in students is to pretest them at the beginning of the course and posttest them at the end. He mentions, however, that these tests should not be used for drawing conclusions about how any individual student has changed his or her attitudes, but rather for giving the teacher a general idea of the direction of any change in the attitudes of the class as a whole. He emphasizes that attitude tests of intercultural communication should be completed anonymously by the students.

The Values Questionnaire found in Appendix B was given as both a pre and post test to 160 students. The test items were constructed by several means. First, earlier in the semester, students were asked to write down 10 statements in English that they felt described legal/illegal immigrants coming from Mexico and Central America and/or their personal reactions. As seen in other studies (e.g., Allen 2004), the identification of personal stereotypes has been successfully used as a beginning point for examining cultural attitudes. Second, Spanish teachers who had studied the video and were well informed regarding the cultural issues submitted a few more questions. Both sets of statements were examined and 30 were chosen for the questionnaire that the teachers felt were most representative of students' initial views. As much of the student wording was retained as possible to reflect their pre-viewing attitudes, as can be seen in the use of two terms "undocumented" and "illegal." These statements were then incorporated into the questionnaire, and students could respond to each item based on a 5-answer Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Procedures generally followed those outlined in Dornyei's (2003) *Questionnaires in Second Language Research construction, Administration, and Processing*. Students were told that the tests were anonymous and thus would not affect their grade in the class. They were asked to respond honestly and told that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers, rather the questionnaire offered a chance to state their personal opinions. The questions were written in English so that all students would understand the attitudes expressed. Students took the test in the computer laboratory and the laboratory director administered the test.

The various "free writes" that were done in class as well as the debates were used as informal qualitative measures. Several times during the project students were asked to write their opinion about something. They were told to write about 100 words in Spanish about a particular topic and were given ten minutes. Although the teacher would often review some basic structure such as " a mí, me gusta o no me gusta," before the free write, students were told that they would not be graded on accuracy or on content of their writing. These were written in Spanish, unlike the questionnaire questions, but if students were uncertain of a key word, they could use the dictionary or ask the teacher. Students really exhibited no frustration in writing these and seemed to enjoy the opportunity to express their feelings.

Results

Quantitative data from Questionnaire results.

The pre-treatment descriptive data as seen in the table of Appendix C, shows that students most strongly agreed with questions #24 (I would cross a federal border illegally in order to survive or to help my family survive) (X=4.1) and #23 (I think a significant number of Hispanic people choose to immigrate illegally as a means of survival) (X=3.9). They most strongly disagreed with #18 (I would wash clothes, sweep floors, serve meals, or pick vegetables for $5/day) (X=1.92) and #8 (I think a Hispanic illegal immigrant in need of medical attention should be denied) (X=1.94).

The post-treatment data shows that students still most strongly agreed with questions # 24 (X=4.4) and disagreed with #18 (X=1.4). Other questions they strongly agreed with were # 4 (I think that Illegal immigrants face discrimination in the U.S.) (X=4.24) and #22 (I understand why a person would want to enter the U.S. illegally) (X=4.2). The second question in terms of disagreement was #12 (I think Hispanic illegal immigrants make the same amount of money as a U.S. citizen) (X=1.85).

To compare the pre and post-treatment means, a T-test for non-independent samples was used. Looking at the Statistical Summary of Pre and Post-Questionnaire Results in the table of Appendix C, nineteen of the 30 questions showed significantly different mean scores for pre and post testing (p<.05). The graph pattern and the chart data upon which it is based substantiate the overall shift in value to a more pro-illegal-immigrant view or, said another way, a shift to a more supportive view of undocumented workers.

The nineteen statistically significant changes in belief will be listed below in descending order of T-score and significance. After taking part in this project, students believed even more strongly that:

- Illegal immigrants often suffer poor working conditions even though they are now in the US (#7; p= .000).
- Many of these jobs are dangerous in one way or another (#15; p=.000).
- Americans do benefit from Hispanic undocumented laborers (#20; p=.000).
- Illegal immigrants do face discrimination in the U.S. (#4; p=.000).
- Illegal immigrants do not make the same amount of money as a U.S. citizen could make (#12; p=.000)
- Not all who live in the U.S. should speak English (#10; p=.001).
- They understand how one might illegally cross into another country and why someone might do so (#25; p=.004; #22, p=.004).
- Our society could create a solution to illegal immigration (#19; p=.004).
- Illegal Hispanics do not make too much money (#6; p=.004).
- They would cross the border illegally in order to survive or help their family survive (#24, .006).

- Hispanic illegal immigrants are hard workers (#27, p= .007).
- The majority of Hispanic people in the southwest have crossed the border illegally (#29, p=.01).
- It is difficult for an Hispanic illegal immigrant to find employment (#14, p=.015).
- They understand why some U.S. businesses hire Hispanic people illegally (#26, p=.04).

They feel significantly less strongly after the study that:

- They would personally do menial tasks for less than $5/day (#18; p=.000), or even those same tasks
  or $5/hour (# 17, p=.001).
- The government should stop all illegal immigration from Mexico and Central America (#5, p=.005).
- Illegal immigrants in need of medical attention should be denied treatment (#8, p=.05).

Qualitative data.

The overall evaluation of the projects as reflected in the open-ended questions indicated that students enjoyed the cultural project and learned from it. The comments ranged from, "I didn't know this was happening" and "I wish there was a sequel to this movie" to "I like the games and the things we did in class." and "I understand this situation better."

Attitudinal changes were noticed also through their reaction to being placed on the anti-immigration side of the debates. Twice comments were heard such as, "ah, I want to be on the other side …because that is how I feel." On the last day of the unit, students participated in a debate that, from the perspective of the teacher, revealed both more sensitive attitudinal changes as well as deeply engrained stigmatisms that students were not aware they even possessed. The topic was the various jobs Latino Americans hold in the U.S. (Lesson 7, Objective B). In naming the various jobs held by Latinos, the students only included less desirable, low-paying jobs, after which the teacher asked why no one mentioned jobs such as lawyers, doctors, actors, athletes or teachers. According to the teacher, "at that point approximately 25 light bulbs clicked. It was evident that the students were not even aware of the degree of which they had pre-set ideals that not even six consecutive weeks of cultural infiltration could dispel. The free write from that day, however, showed a greater awareness."

At the beginning of the project, many students stated that they did not know where they stood on the issue of illegal immigration, and even some did not at the end. Whether or not they thought the U.S. should do more about illegal immigration, they seemed to better understand the perspective of the person who would cross illegally. One student wrote, "Los pobres están los brazos por los ricos. En el fin, Enrique está pobre, y es brazo por los ricos o gringos. El fin es muy triste, pero la película es un maestro. Es un profesor de las vidas de latinos de Guatemala, Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador y más. Mas personas tienen una

interested in replicating this project. We must continue experimenting with ways to present the native viewpoint, and to examine our own perspective along side those of the TL culture.

The second question asked if we could change attitudes and if so how. Tang (2006, p. 89) states, not only should students know the *what* and *how* about a culture, but also the *why.* And it is the *why* that leads to attitude change. This study demonstrates that student perspectives and attitudes can change through the use of cultural units employing cognitive dissonance, part of the attitude change theory. By means of the video, related readings and engaging classroom activities, many students came to realize that the opinions or beliefs that they held were not substantiated by facts. The negative stereotype that many of them held was diffused with another perspective. Again, the goal of this project was not to indoctrinate one way or another, rather to show another perspective and let students decide. Objectivity is not easy to achieve, for we all have biases. "Becoming aware of our own biases and helping students recognize theirs are important first steps in teaching for cultural understanding in our classrooms" (Omaggio, 2001, 354).

The final question centered on how we can measure attitudes. These measures were very basic and only assessed changes over eight weeks. Results might be slightly different if the study were of longer duration or if the students were retested a semester later. The questionnaire results, however, were triangulated with student essays and in-class discussions and debates, which also strongly reflected attitude change.

Schulz (2007) sets the goal before us stating,

> There is no agreement on how culture can or should be defined operationally in the context of foreign language learning in terms of concrete instructional objectives, and there is even less consensus on whether or how it should be formally assessed. Indeed, despite all the claims about the importance of cultural content and culture leaning in the language classroom, the profession has no tradition of assessing cultural understanding in the context of language instruction at the precollegiate or collegiate level (p.10).

Although there may be no "tradition of assessing culture," we need to begin now. This article has proposed one model, and there surely are many more.

Limitations, Considerations, and Suggestions

There were several limitations to this study. First, the same teacher taught all of the cultural courses and results might be different with different teachers. In reference to the questionnaire itself, most questions focused specifically on immigration and were created from students' pre-treatment impressions or attitudes. In the future, another category of questions might be added of a more general nature about Hispanics or to check for social distance (e.g., I would marry someone from Mexico; I believe Hispanics should be able to enter this country legally).

vida de Rosa y Enrique y está muy triste" (uncorrected writing). The free writes corroborated the attitudinal changes found in the post-treatment questionnaire results, thus providing a type of triangulation for the findings.

Discussion.

Overall results indicate that two thirds of the questions in the Values Questionnaire were answered significantly different in the pre-post test comparison, showing that the cultural unit did change attitudes. That is a very substantial change based on past studies of attitude changes. The changes all appear to be in the direction of a greater understanding of the immigrant perspective. One result that was surprising, however, was question #19 (The majority of Hispanic people in the southwest of the U.S. have crossed the border illegally). It appears that students over generalized the information, thinking that the majority of immigrants from South of the border enter illegally, even though they were given information in one class period that most of the southwestern part of the U.S. was part of Mexico until 1848. They had also discussed the various professions of various legal Hispanics in the U.S. In reviewing the free writes, however, some students discussed their personal experiences with undocumented workers in the small rural area where the school was located, mentioning restaurant employees, farms hands, and even Latinos working on local road/construction projects. They felt most of these workers were undocumented, which may or may not have been the case. It is helpful to look at the questionnaire results to see where student did have misconceptions. Once the misinformation is discovered, future learning tasks can be planned to show students information they may have been missing or misunderstanding, as in the example of the Hispanics in the southwestern part of the U.S.

Conclusions

Now, let us return to the questions that we posed as we began this article and summarize the answers. The first was: How can we effectively show our students another perspective? The project showed that video or film is definitely one way of moving students from a comparative point of view to one of identification through characters.   Film not only can address the cognitive domain, but the affective as well while simultaneously re-forming students' perceptions of the culture. For the teacher, video can help relieve the burden of being the only cultural authority, one of the reasons, according to Omaggio, that teachers often avoid teaching culture in the classroom. Obviously, there are many excellent videos that effectively illustrate the "other" perspective be they films presenting religious differences and contributions (e.g., *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*) or presenting aspects of war and political differences (e.g., *La lengua de las mariposas*) to name just two. In addition to movies, there are, of course, may other avenues to native perspectives such as books, personal testimonies, or even personal interaction with natives through oral or written discourse. In reference to this specific project, needless to say, the immigration issue has become even more hotly debated, and many more recent articles are now available for anyone

It might also be interesting to chart changes in language acquisition for those with greater changes in pre- and post-questionnaire results, thus providing more data for the social distance theory. It would also be of value to test the students after a longer period of time to see if the attitudinal changes were indeed maintained. Above all, it is very important to remind any teacher who undertakes such a project dealing with race, ethnicity, religion to handle it with great care and sensitivity.

The overall purpose of this classroom project, however, was to try and help students view an issue from another perspective, and we felt successful in doing so. We encourage our colleagues throughout the K-14 to continue to include controversial cultural perspectives in their teaching, to take advantage of technology to portray other views, and to find new ways of measuring changes in attitudes. Our students not only enjoyed these classes, but we feel left with a more inclusive view of the "other"—truly a goal worth pursuing in this fragile world we live in.

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Appendix A

Divisions of the Video/Class

Week in unit	Plot location	Plot description
2	Guatemala	Military attacks. Rosa and Enrique see each other for the first time after the attack on the village
3	Guatemala/México	Rosa and Enrique leave for "el Norte"; pass through Mexico, and end up attacked by the bad coyote, "Jaime"
4	México/California	Rosa and Enrique get caught by the MIGRA, sent back to Mexico, find the good coyote that takes them across the border, introduces them to Monty, who gives them their new house.

5	California	Both find jobs — Rosa in the *planchadora* and Enrique in the restaurant; The *migra* comes to Rosa's work. Rosa and Nacha get jobs cleaning houses. They go to school to learn English. Enrique gets promotion and a Chicago job offer.
6	California	Enrique goes to celebrate; Rosa goes to work; Carlos calls LA MIGRA and Enrique and Carlos have to run; Rosa gets very sick and goes to the Hospital. Enrique decides to take Chicago job offer.
7	California	Rosa is diagnosed with Typhus. Nacha goes for Enrique who says he is leaving; Enrique goes to hospital, but Rosa dies. Enrique has to go back to work; Symbolism.

Appendix B

Value/Belief Questionnaire

Directions: Please answer the following questions. Keep in mind that you will not be graded or judged on your responses, so answer them as honestly as possible. You will choose the answer that best describes your opinion using the scale below.

1= *Strongly disagree*   2= *Somewhat disagree*   3=*No opinion*
4= *Somewhat agree*   5=*Strongly agree*

		Value Rating
1.	I believe there is a problem with Hispanic illegal immigrants in the USA.	
2.	I think Hispanic illegal immigrants should face harsh punishment for entering our country illegally.	
3.	I think Hispanic illegal immigrants benefit from working in our country.	
4.	I think that Hispanic illegal immigrants face discrimination in the U.S.	
5.	I think our government should stop all illegal immigration from Mexico and Central America.	

|		
6.	I think Hispanic illegal immigrants make too much money.	
7.	I think Hispanic illegal immigrants suffer poor working conditions in the US.	
8.	I think an illegal immigrant in need of medical attention should be denied treatment.	
9.	I think that Hispanic illegal immigrants are untrustworthy.	
10.	I believe that everyone who lives in this country should speak English.	
11.	I think that if a person living in this country cannot speak English they are uneducated.	
12.	I think Hispanic illegal immigrants make the same amount of money as a US citizen.	
13.	The majority of Hispanic illegal immigrants in the US are women and children.	
14.	I think it is hard for Hispanic illegal immigrants to find employment.	
15.	I think that Hispanic illegal immigrants work in jobs that are dangerous.	
16.	I feel sympathy for Hispanic illegal immigrants.	
17.	I would wash clothes, sweep floors, serve meals, or pick vegetables for $5/hour.	
18.	I would wash clothes, sweep floors, serve meals, or pick vegetables for $5/day.	
19.	I think that our society could create a solution to illegal immigration.	
20.	I think that the American society benefits from Hispanic undocumented laborers.	
21.	I think that legal Latin Americans support the idea of illegal immigration.	
22.	I understand why a person would want to enter the U.S. illegally.	
23.	I think a significant number of Hispanic people choose to immigrate illegally as a means of survival.	
24.	I would cross a federal border illegally in order to survive or to help my family survive.	
25.	I know at least one way that Hispanic illegal immigrants get across the border.	
26.	I understand why some U.S. businesses hire Hispanic people illegally.	
27.	I believe that Hispanic illegal immigrants are hard workers.	
28.	I believe that undocumented Hispanic workers are reliable employees.	
29.	I believe that the majority of Hispanic people in the southwest of the U.S. have crossed the border illegally.	
30.	I think that many Hispanic people come to the U.S. illegally to get a "free ride."	

Appendix C

Statistical Summary of Pre and Post-Questionnaire Results

Question	Mean	Mean_1	StDev	StDev_1	N	N_1	T-Value	P-Value
Q1	3.3902	3.541	1.0538	1.238	164	135	-1.120	0.263
Q2	2.7622	2.652	1.2623	1.351	164	135	0.723	0.470
Q3	3.7195	3.8296	1.1107	1.0114	164	135	-0.896	0.370
Q4	3.7683	4.2444	1.111	1.0035	164	135	-3.889	0.000
Q5	3.5244	3.156	1.0822	1.184	164	135	2.783	0.005
Q6	2.3354	1.9704	1.0981	1.0716	164	135	2.898	0.004
Q7	3.372	3.9704	1.2192	1.0716	164	135	-4.514	0.000
Q8	1.939	2.237	1.2566	1.334	164	135	-1.973	0.048
Q9	2.3293	2.4	1.214	1.1408	164	135	-0.518	0.604
Q10	2.348	2.933	1.438	1.462	164	135	-3.469	0.001
Q11	2.0244	2.081	1.2772	1.228	164	135	-0.389	0.697
Q12	2.2927	1.8519	1.0623	0.9813	164	135	3.724	0.000
Q13	2.8598	2.7259	0.8991	0.9258	164	135	1.261	0.207
Q14	3.2134	3.5185	1.0953	1.064	164	135	-2.435	0.015
Q15	3.3171	3.8222	1.0258	0.9131	164	135	-4.501	0.000
Q16	3.2927	3.496	1.1669	1.227	164	135	-1.458	0.145
Q17	3	2.467	1.379	1.387	164	135	3.315	0.001
Q18	1.921	1.3926	1.296	0.8733	164	135	4.192	0.000
Q19	3.64	4.037	1.379	0.9651	164	135	-2.919	0.004
Q20	3.1159	3.6148	1.1533	1.0437	164	135	-3.922	0.000
Q21	3.0671	3.037	0.9408	0.9805	164	135	0.269	0.788
Q22	3.9146	4.2222	0.9555	0.895	164	135	-2.868	0.004
Q23	3.8902	4.0519	0.9721	0.9409	164	135	-1.457	0.145
Q24	4.1037	4.4296	1.0718	0.9661	164	135	-2.762	0.006
Q25	3.7561	4.1185	1.0972	1.0931	164	135	-2.848	0.004
Q26	3.7073	3.9481	1.0271	1.0317	164	135	-2.012	0.044
Q27	3.7195	4.0074	0.95	0.8936	164	135	-2.694	0.007
Q28	3.1829	3.3185	0.8382	0.967	164	135	-1.281	0.200
Q29	2.9634	3.2222	0.9326	0.8696	164	135	-2.478	0.013
Q30	2.7561	2.8148	1.1194	1.1075	164	135	-0.454	0.650

Statistical Summary of Pre and Post-Questionnaire Results, cont'd.
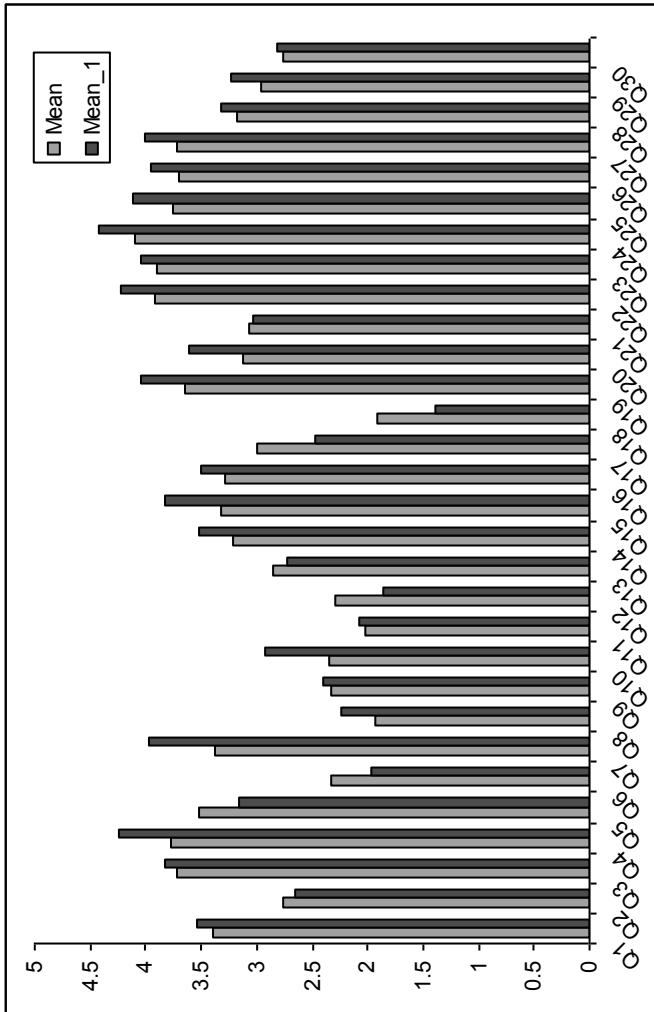
3

The Stealth Approach to Critical Thinking in Beginning Spanish Classes

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In early Spanish language classrooms, a quiet revolution is underway, a concerted effort to replace cultural other-ing and passive acceptance of language norms with cultural awareness and critical thinking about language as a socio-political construct. Recent developments in Content-Based Instruction (CBI), described by Myriam Met as "approaches to integrating language and content instruction" (2006), have led to critical reflection through authentic L2 and C2 text reading assignments (Bueno, 2002; Dupuy, 2000; Klee, 2006; Mantero, 2002) and L2 and C2 ethnographic interviews (Allen, 2002; Bateman, 2002), all of which propose a view of teaching cultural concepts as course content, with language a skill necessary for completing assignments that are constructed around the content item itself. These approaches release culture from the margins of textbook sidebars and acknowledge the usefulness of target-language activities on the path to cultural acquisition. What I refer to as frameless culture instruction is already making its way into the foreign language curriculum through Content-Based Instruction. Beatrice Dupuy (2000) stakes a smooth transition from early language courses to upper-level literature courses on the introduction of Content-Based Instruction at the early stage of language acquisition. Miguel Mantero (2002) describes the importance of discourse in the literature classroom, which features the meaning of the text as the classroom content item, and not the language used to interpret meaning from the text. This approach challenges students to interact with authentic C2 source materials as information vital to their own identities and life experiences, thus presenting the concepts or texts in question as relevant sources of information that lead students not only to world awareness, but also to heightened self-awareness. To this end, cultural topics are presented not as

unrelated, suspended snapshots of Mexican, Spanish, or Guatemalan culture, for example, but as relational readings and activities that are vital, important, and integrated into the students' developing personal world view.

If there is already success in second-year and third-year Spanish classes, then the evidence would suggest that some target language competence will be required in order to achieve this exciting authentic inter-cultural understanding and to discover sameness among life experiences across cultures. Each of the written and oral exercises cited above, i.e., reading and interviews, requires either oral or written competence in Spanish, seeming to say we need the basic language skills in place before we can get to the fun stuff, the critical analysis of Hispanic and United States cultures on the basis of commonality rather than exoticism and othering. Beatrice Dupuy (2000) situates her defense of CBI in second-year Spanish courses, as a transitional step from elementary to advanced language learning. Critical thinking can and indeed, should be introduced on the first day of a first-year Spanish class, in the target language, and with un-framed cultural commentary; that is, culture should be taught as an integral part of each class exercise and woven into daily language lessons, as opposed to being presented as a separate unit of study. By introducing integrated cultural content, which I will refer to in this paper as " frameless culture instruction," and critical thinking in the target language, students will naturally begin to incorporate into their acquisition of Spanish a heightened awareness of language as a socio-political construct, and they will slowly accumulate the skills they need to not only produce the target language, but also to express their thoughts about L2 as it relates to L1. I am naming this approach to introductory Spanish instruction, i.e. frameless culture instruction and critical thinking in the target language, the "Stealth Approach," because subtlety guides the lessons and students assess things critically while at times unaware they are doing so. Every example provided has been tested in first-semester, first-year Spanish classes at the university level, but is easily translatable to other languages and high school curriculums as well.

One of the first topics instructors introduce in the beginning Spanish classroom is a series of basic greetings. Using a clock and pictures of the sun and moon, we are easily able to present the differences among the salutations: *buenos días* [good morning], *buenas tardes* [good afternoon], and *buenas noches* [good night]. The instructor merely points to the sun for daytime and afternoon hours on the clock, then uses the moon when saying, *buenas noches* [good night]. Students can quickly reproduce the appropriate greeting after a few minutes of rehearsal of the various terms. This moment is quite successful in terms of creating oral proficiency within the Natural Approach; although the output from students is brief, it is accurate and does not require translation from L1 to L2. The simple introduction of classroom greetings could end after the students effectively demonstrate their comprehension of varied greetings as related to time. However, if we desire to build critical thinking skills in our students, we need to allow them to make unexpected errors and to boldly use their few new words in an unfamiliar context. The following detailed classroom examples will illustrate the Stealth Approach in practice. At the center of each activity lie the core principles

of the approach that are outlined above: integrated cultural content that I have assigned the descriptive name of "frameless culture instruction," and a wealth of opportunities for critical reflection, with subtlety and an enjoyable classroom environment as key elements in the method of instruction.

To enrich an oral-proficiency classroom to a content-based, task-based opportunity for critical thinking and authentic cultural learning, the professor modifies the simple classroom greetings exercise to create an opportunity for students to reflect while acquiring the most basic phraseology in Spanish. For the greetings introduction, the instructor will place maps of Spain and the United States on the wall, each on differing sides of the clock/sun/moon display. After having students repeat the three key phrases, the instructor sets the display clock to 8:00 am and asks, *¿buenas tardes*? [good afternoon?]. The students will most likely correct the instructor and repeat the correct phrase, *buenos días* [good morning]. This exercise alerts students that they will be actively engaged in the lesson, and that they will need to decide whether or not to accept what the instructor says. Students in the first ten minutes of first-semester Spanish have been put on the spot and given some authority in the formulation of a sound lesson. Once students are prepared to challenge what they're told in class, they will assume a critical posture when faced with new information. The next phase of the lesson involves the same three greetings, but will introduce an inter-cultural comparison. The instructor merely changes the clock to 4 pm and asks, *¿buenas tardes*? *¿sí*? *¿no*? [good afternoon. yes? no?]. The students will evaluate what they're being told and will decide this expression is suitable. Once the clock changes to 8 pm, the students will be asked to choose: *¿buenas noches ó buenas tardes*? [good afternoon or good night?]. The instructor points to the United States and says, *buenas tardes* [good afternoon]. She then points to the map of Spain and says, *buenas noches* [good night]. Students do not need to voice the cultural lesson they've been given, nor will any further comment be necessary. There will most likely be a spark in the students' mind, a small lingering uneasiness about why the professor uses the word for afternoon to refer to a nighttime hour in Spain. Choosing not to explain the Spanish daily schedule and instead moving on to another topic, the instructor leaves the information with the students, who will need to consider the cultural difference presented to them, as well as the cultural sameness of the concept of what constitutes a morning in both countries. By not framing the discussion of telling time within its relative cultural contexts, the instructor places the burden of problem-solving on the students and invites them to critically assess the language they're already using in brief salutatory exchanges.

Early in the first semester of Spanish study, students learn the personal pronouns that will provide the basic structure for all of the verb conjugations that await them in subsequent classes. It is important for students to acquire the pronouns not as a random list, but as a vital, important cultural product that defines the society that produced it. For this reason, there are three extra elements to the usual personal pronoun chart that will provide an opportunity for students to wonder about the pronouns and their uses. For the presentation of personal pronouns, the instructor will place a chart on the board with six basic categories delineated (first person

singular, second person singular, third person singular, and the corresponding plural forms). The instructor will point to people around the room to indicate the people she is addressing or speaking about in the third-person. Establishing cultural awareness of the difference between *tú* and *usted* is one integrative cultural and language lesson that has functioned well over time, and illustrates the usefulness of linking language to culture to aid comprehension. Since the *tú/usted* is a common distinction emphasized in introductory Spanish classes, I will move on to some other features of personal pronouns that may be easily highlighted within an L2 -taught classroom. The simplest visual modification that may be made is to erase the *él/ellos* [he/they] pronouns on the top of the standard list, and replace them with *ella/ellas* [she/they (group of women)] in the first position on the list of third-person pronouns. This change can happen with no comment on the part of the instructor, and maybe with some confusion among students in the class. They saw the male/gender neutral term at the top of the list, then they witnessed a shuffling of the positions to place the female-gender pronouns first. This quick replacement of the groups of pronouns invites students to wonder about male-female order of the pronoun chart in their introductory language text. It could be argued that the order is not male-female, but rather neutral/male-female. Either way, students will be drawing their own conclusions about the new material because it has been efficiently and quietly challenged when presented to them.

A second activity that relies more on visual indicators involves explanation of the pronoun *ellos* [they (male group, or male-female group)]. This example uses a female instructor, but could be modified to fit a male instructor class. The instructor begins with some easier examples and invites students to come to the front of the room. She addresses a student face-to-face as *tú* [you], then talks about her to her classmates as *ella* [she]. The instructor then invites a small group of students to the front of the room and points at them, saying *ustedes* [all of you]. She then joins the male-female group and changes the pronoun to *nosotros* [we]. The professor then asks male students to sit down and remains with the all-female group and says *nosotras* [we (all females)]. The use of visual referents for the pronouns activates the material for students and helps them remember which pronoun to use for which person or people. For the final demonstration, the instructor calls on a group of male students, then talks about them and says *ellos* [they (all males or male-female group)]. She then brings a group of all female students up to the front of the class and says *ellas* [they (all females)]. Finally, the instructor brings every female in the class up to the front of the room, and says again: *ellas*. She invites one male student to come to the front of the room and then repeats loudly *ELLAS*. Some students will already protest and say *ellos*. The instructor insists and counts each female, writing a number on the board indicating the size of their group. She then counts the one male student and increases the group's number by one on the board. She repeats *ellas*. Students by now know this is not correct and they begin to insist on the term *ellos*. The instructor should act shocked and confused and indicate again that there is a large group of females with only one male in its midst. After a moment, the instructor will acquiesce to the demands of the classroom and give the "proper" term of ellos to the students

gathered in the front of the classroom. Students enjoy correcting their instructor during this exercise, and the playfulness of the activity belies the gravity of the critical thinking that is taking place. Students are already learning in their first week of Spanish study that there are patriarchal norms to the language. Not only do they recognize the cultural construct of the language, but they also gain insight into their own insistence that their instructor follow these rules, against what logic would dictate. Students quickly accept the idea that there are interesting societal norms displayed in the new language, but they may not be prepared to address their own obedience to those norms. Of course, they choose to do what is deemed correct by the textbook and the instructor, possibly motivated by the goal of a good grade looming before them, but they are very slowly starting to awaken to the possibility that what is grammatically correct may be socially wrong and even illogical.

The third enhancement to the personal pronoun presentation involves an acknowledgement that language is intricately linked to its place of production. Maps again may be helpful as visual cues to the dialectical variations on pronouns the instructor will introduce. Leaving the basic chart on the board, the instructor will speak in the *vosotros* [all of you (informal address, used in Spain)] while pointing to the map of Spain. "*Vosotros estudiáis español. Vosotros sois muy inteligentes. Vosotros sois estudiantes.* [You all study Spanish. You all are very intelligent. You all are students.]" The instructor will then attach to the board maps of South America, Central American, the United States, Mexico, and the Caribbean. The proliferation of maps and Spanish-speaking countries on those maps will inform students that what they are about to hear is a broad and standard form of address. The instructor will then re-state her previous sentences, this time using the *ustedes* [all of you (formal in Spain, formal or informal in Spanish America)] instead of *vosotros*. She will speak very softy in the *vosotros* form, pointing to the map of Spain, then make repeated , louder statements in the ustedes from, while pointing one-by-one to the numerous Spanish-speaking countries in America. She will then erase *vosotros/vosotras* from the personal pronoun chart, to emphasize that it is non-standard and will not be used in class. To reinforce her point, she will remove the Spain map from the board and push it aside. Many students in elementary Spanish classes have already studied Spanish previously. To keep them critically sharp along with the true beginners in the classroom, the instructor will introduce the *vos* [you (very familiar, in Central America and parts of South America)] pronoun by using it instead when addressing individual students directly, while pointing to countries like Nicaragua and Venezuela on the map. Again, voice changes can indicate the more sporadic use of the *vos*, while the *tú* form is boldly and clearly stated for students. To ensure frameless culture instruction on the regional use of pronouns, these dialectical differences should be presented during the first exposure to personal pronouns, and without a separate cultural comment or explanation. Integrating regional variations within the first presentation of the topic naturalizes the dynamic nature of language across space and time. Stopping to disclose a regional language difference would frame the discussion as extraneous input. Bundling the grammar points and the cultural

topic of regional language diversity together in one presentation will maintain an intimate link between language and the society that produces it. Within the Stealth Approach, there is always a possibility that students will move from observing and critically assessing to actually asking questions and seeking clarification. Responding with information about the vos, for example, to spontaneous questions that students produce fits within the method because students are framing the discussion, and they are asking based on a need-to-know basis; contrived cultural commentaries in the classroom are abandoned for student-centered, need-based learning.

The topic of clothing allows for great creativity in both integrated cultural content and in terms of critical thinking exercises. When introducing clothing, pictures are often helpful in establishing an all-Spanish environment, and providing students a streamlined route directly from the image to its expression in language. The instructor shows a stack of magazine photos, each with easy-to-identify outfit components that are named while repeating the phrase, *Él lleva*…[He is wearing…] or *Ella lleva*….[She is wearing…]. By the end of a brief presentation of repeated articles of clothing, students spontaneously begin adding comments, or volunteering the vocabulary terms they've accumulated. This target-language exercise assists students on the path to oral proficiency, and will provide them the fundamental data blocks that will be used later in their written wok, but it can accomplish much more with only minor modifications. There are three modifications to a visual clothing vocabulary presentation that will yield positive results, both in terms of increasing cultural awareness in an unframed exposure to authentic material, and in terms of requiring students to challenge societal norms.

The first alteration to the activity requires integrating images of people wearing clothing that is associated with their regional culture or traditional customs. Rather than teach everyday Unites States clothing items to students, and then move on to a lesson on the huipil or the guayabera, or other notable indigenous and Hispanic vestments, these items are instead placed in the stack of images without distinction or reference to their origin. Students will be wondering about the new types of clothing they are encountering in the lesson, and they will be internally constructing some type of rationale to explain why what appears to be yet another dress shirt in the array of images is being referred to as a guayabera. Stopping to explain to students that the guayabera is a Cuban shirt and the huipil a Mayan blouse will not allow them the time to independently reflect on and critically assess the new items and their respective terminology. This activity integrates culturally-linked clothing into a presentation of helpful vocabulary terms, thus normalizing the foreign clothing articles by presenting them as beginning Spanish units of knowledge. Students may return to the huipil later as they read about indigenous people in the Yucatán Pensinsula or Guatemalan highlands, or as they observe men in video footage on Cuba wearing guayaberas. They will recall the clothing items from their earlier lesson and, perhaps with a quick visual review, link the clothing term they acquired to the cultural referent that is provided later. By saving the cultural discussion for another time, students will begin to assimilate

cultural newness as if it were linguistic newness, which will lead them to accept, or at the very least, co-opt the new words and to reserve a contiguous space in their L2 system for the C2 information they acquire.

The second modification on the presentation of clothing vocabulary involves the questioning of gender construction in our society. Students are each given two same-color flashcards: one says, "mujer," and the other says, "hombre." Each card also has on it the international symbols for male/female ♀♂ (not the bathroom sign icons with someone in a skirt and someone else in pants). To prepare the students for the exercise, the instructor holds up the picture of an article of clothing and says its name, then indicates whether it is a male or a female clothing item by lifting the "correct" cards of her own. After a few examples, the instructor tells students in Spanish to lift the female card for a female clothing item and the male card for a male clothing item, and begins showing pictures of clothing items by themselves, without people wearing them. After each clothing item is named and the students say male or female, the instructor will hold up a magazine image or photograph of someone wearing the article of clothing that does not fit the gender categories selected by students with the raising of their male-female index cards. Some examples of pop culture images that counter gender expectations for clothing choices, and have garnered an instant response from students include: a picture of Avril Lavigne wearing a tie, Jerry Seinfeld wearing a pirate shirt blouse, a photograph of Dennis Rodman in a wedding dress, and an image of a Backstreet Boy in what he calls a man skirt. According to Linda Quinn Allen (2000), students "must realize that the meaning they derive from any cultural phenomenon is dynamic and subjective based on their own culturally conditioned and individually formed schemas" (p. 52). Students involved in the gendered-clothing activity will actively question their schemas, that is, their particularized means of processing and interpreting new information. This seemingly innocuous activity of subverting societal conventions for dressing brings students into contact with the limits of their own schemas, and makes them aware that they arrive at a presentation of new material with pre-established notions of normalcy. The recognition that they act on pre-conceived notions with regards to their own culture may reveal to students that all new concepts will be filtered through their own personal lens of culture, personality, and life experiences, to name some of the major influences on their world view. The importance of the stealth aspect of the Stealth Approach cannot be overstated. Students will happily address their own preconceptions and challenge them, along with broader cultural stereotypes, as long as they are enjoying the activity and invested in the outcome. The instructor will successfully teach students to think critically if she is able to convince them of their importance in shaping the class, and the value of each student's voice in the process of learning. Keeping the topic light will encourage students to take more risks with their critical assessments. If their identity itself is respected, while the assumptions that spring from that identity are called into question, students will be more likely to react positively to this type of classroom exchange.

The pop culture references mentioned in the exercise above allow students to relax and laugh while they are doing the serious work of questioning gender norms

that regulate our clothing choices. Lowering their affective filter has been shown to be an effective technique to language acquisition and cultural proficiency (Storme and Derakhshani, 2002). I also work from a belief that lowering the affective filter will enhance cultural acquisition in students; in addition, I propose that a lowered affective filter will serve students well as they undertake the serious and often uncomfortable work of critical thinking. Having students stretch beyond their expectations and subvert social conventions requires an open classroom and well-established trust between the instructor and students and among students and their peers. Humor and subtlety in approaching these issues requires patience and creativity on the part of the instructor. Sarah Benesch (1999) addresses the risk of instructors teaching critical thinking to a particular end, rather than as a skill to be applied as a student chooses. She cites resistance to critical thinking in the foreign language classroom, and offers this description in response: "Critical teachers… [encourage] students to consider and question processes of daily life so that their thinking and behavior will be informed" (p. 575). She focuses her article on the useful distinction between monologic and dialogic critical thinking. For Benesch, teaching dialogic critical thinking: "allows students to articulate their unstated assumptions and consider a variety of views. However, the goal is not just to exchange ideas but also to promote tolerance and social justice…" (p. 576). Incorporating culturally distinctive clothing and images of clothed celebrities that complicate typical gender choices give a hint that all is not what it appears to be, and instructs students to remain alert to over-simplification of any vocabulary list or basic language concept. Students gain a dialogic critical thinking skill set because they are not being steered by their instructor to a certain conclusion, but rather to the appropriate goal of wondering about social conventions and remaining tolerant of both intra-cultural and inter-cultural otherness.

The final modification to a typical visual presentation of clothing vocabulary involves a game that allows student to work in teams and use their newly-acquired skills to solve a problem they face in competition. The game may be used as a quick second-day material review, or in preparation for a quiz or exam. In order to prepare, the instructor searches for typical images of clothing along with others that will reinforce the culture and gender questions already raised in a previous class session, tapes them to different spots on the wall of the classroom, then writes a description for each picture. The instructor will use the same construct the students have heard in her oral presentation of the material: *Ella lleva…* [She is wearing…] and *Él lleva…* [he is wearing…]. When the in-class activity begins, each team is given a written description of clothing and must locate the appropriate matching picture. The game is a race, and students are told to speak only in Spanish during the activity. Once all the teams have returned with their pictures, they each read the descriptions to the class. The students will be reading statements that match the image in their hands, but that seem to challenge societal clothing norms. For example, there may be a picture of a non-indigenous person wearing a huipil, or of a woman in a guayabera. For this activity, it is also helpful to add a humorous element, or some other jarring image that will keep students in dialogue with the new information they're acquiring. A picture of Dennis Rodman

in a dress or a photograph of university students abroad could both loosen the confines of the exercise itself. Throughout the activity, and especially during the description readings, students will interact with the language and culture, and they will receive a subtle reminder to relax their expectations about gender, culture, and the class format itself. Helping students view the classroom as a dynamic and interactive space that offers a wealth of language and culture input promotes active participation and heightened responsibility on the part of each person in the class. Dennis O. Durocher Jr (2007), emphasizes the importance of intercultural competence, focusing on what he refers to as culture with a small c, or subjective culture: "…an awareness and understanding of subjective culture is vital to language learning because language cannot be separated from thought and thought is based on assumptions, values, and beliefs" (p. 345). For Durocher, the attitudes and beliefs that shape cultural practices must be understood in order for FL students to meaningfully interact with the products of that culture, including its language. Durocher proposes cultural knowledge as a means to enhance language study. I propose a dual-purpose approach and assert that both cultural understanding and language skill function collaboratively as students develop the ability to think critically. Taking this participation further and obligating students to challenge the information they encounter, albeit in playful and subtle ways, transforms students from active language learners to engaged world citizens.

Terry Ballman (1997) details her use of the effective instructional approach known as content-based instruction (CBI), using the example of target-language exercises on the topic of family. The basic components of Content-Enriched Instruction, what she describes as "a variation of CBI," include: presentation of new topics within the target language, the use of authentic materials, and students relating information they learn to their own lives. She outlines the presentation, to beginning Spanish students, of necessary skills for talking about families in general and their own families specifically. The activities she describes have many of the features that a frameless culture instruction presentation includes, that involve a natural inclusion of the discussion of family values within the practice activities themselves. While students practice their new vocabulary words for naming Spanish members, the instructor in Ballman's article questions whom we might consider to be members of a nuclear versus an extended family group (pp. 182-3). The presentation of the topic fits within my conception of frameless culture instruction because cultural difference is highlighted without being isolated from the linguistic task at hand. In this way, students learn to reflect on and express cultural difference with limited language skills at their disposal. This partnering of language and culture acquisition assists instructors in meeting language and cultural comparison goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (National Standards, 1999), a desired outcome for the many teachers who gear their lessons towards ACTFL proficiency guidelines and standards for language and culture instruction.

What I propose to expand on Ballman's model exercise is not only a presentation and reflection on the social norms, in this case, the basic family construction in the United States and other Spanish-speaking countries, but also

any given culture" (p. 51). A difficult task for instructors who present family differences as cultural content is the need to recognize the large population in the U.S. that is Hispanic. It would be contrived to present a U.S. family as a model in opposition to Hispanic families. With the Hispanic population in the U.S. at 12%, according to the 2004 U.S. Census (Population Resource Center), any family model group already incorporates Hispanic family values to a large extent. Using specific Spanish-speaking countries in our examples, and talking about the traditional U.S. family resolves this issue, while still allowing for cultural comparisons. It would be absurd for language instructors to become social scientists and research data on, for instance, the socio-economic factors that determine family size and composition. However, it does not require extra-curricular training for Spanish instructors to incorporate cultural references within their lessons, and then assess their own classroom methodology to determine if they are asking students to absorb isolated cultural snippets, or if they are instead seeking to present relevant comparisons while critically challenging the norms to collapse contrived cultural differences.

As a follow-up presentation on family member vocabulary, student often learn about Hispanic names. This cultural information may be embedded within a review of basic Spanish family member terminology. For the activity on Hispanic names, the instructor will indicate her own name, and then change it to reflect her name within Hispanic culture. Student volunteers to come to the board and write their names, then the instructor will assist them in re-writing according to the Hispanic model. This may be accomplished in the target language by using previously-learned words for family members to indicate the paternal grandfather's name, then the maternal grandfather's name are used in the exercise. Each student will be given a slip of paper and asked to write his or her Hispanic name on it. The instructor will call two volunteers to the front of the room and indicate they are married. She will ask the class for a new name for the woman who has recently been married in the class. Students may try to invent a name for her, but the instructor will point to her Hispanic name on her slip of paper and indicate no change is needed. She will then ask about the man's new name, since he has also recently married. Students will possibly view the question as comical or absurd, and their reaction will reveal a cultural hesitancy to changing a man's name once he marries. Even though students are learning the key concept that Hispanic women keep their names when they marry, the question of cultural pre-suppositions will be effectively and quickly raised without need for further comment. After clarifying the naming options available to those who have married in front of the class, the instructor will give them a picture of a baby and will ask them to name their child. The students will need to determine which of their four available names to use for the child. After the child is named, the instructor will point to the two unused names in the parents' repertoire and state, "*¿No usan el nombre de su madre*? [You don't use your mother's name?]" She will indicate that the baby's name comes from the father's father's name and the mother's father's name, and she will again state that the mother's names are not passed on: "No usan los nombres de las madres. Sí usan los nombres de los padres. [They don't

a critical questioning of the differences that are revealed. Zsuzsanna I. Abrams (2002) clarifies the desired goal for FL teachers: "our goal… should not be to teach learners about *an* other culture, rather than to help them develop a set of strategic skills for identifying members of other cultures… as role models for partaking in that culture…" (p. 142). Abrams posits a more open approach to culture instruction that provides students with a critical skill set in the shaping of their own identities within a new cultural environment. Although the first-semester Spanish class does not constitute an authentic immersion experience for students, they still may seek their reflection in the C2 phenomena presented to them. Facilitating personal student interaction with another culture, on any level, creates the affective learning experience that many theorists propose as the key to culture acquisition (Durocher, 2007) Fabio Clavijo (1984) indicates the importance of creating what he terms a "natural" environment to guide students to cultural assimilation and thus lead to attitude changes towards another culture. He espouses active rather than passive student interaction with authentic materials presented (p. 88), an approach that underscores the need for student agency in the classroom for cultural assimilation to take place. To accommodate diverse student identities in order to draw students into the classroom dialogue on a personal level, and to assist them in finding cross-cultural relevance in the topic studied, I recommend having various nuclear families represented in circles on the board in the classroom, with the traditional U.S. and the traditional Hispanic models in the center as the anchor data sets. Each additional circle would contain a family set that challenges the mother-father-children model in the United States, or the Hispanic model of mother-father-children-grandparents. Some of the family sets should include adoptive parents, gay parents, single mothers or fathers, and married couples without children. Presenting a diverse array of families problematizes our own pre-conceptions, thus easing student comprehension of the Hispanic model that incorporates more relatives in the nuclear family. Once we critically posit the idea of family as a complex and perhaps controversial topic, the introduction of a Hispanic model collapses into an array of options, and seems more natural in comparison. The cultural difference is still duly noted, but now students treat this other model as one more option among many. Guillermo Latorre (1985) echoes these sentiments:

> … concentration on differences and avoidance of similarities will inevitably result in an exaggeration of the former at the expense of the latter… if a real understanding of Hispanic ways is sought, time is best spent in both teaching the language and presenting Hispanic lifestyles as they actually are, regardless of differences or similarities (p. 673).

When making the comparison between U.S. and Hispanic family models, instructors may introduce the term, "tradicional," to help students grasp cultural difference in family type as a social norm, while realizing that sameness in various family constructions is indeed not normalized, yet plausible across cultures.

Linda Quinn Allen (2002) warns against approaches to culture in the FL classroom that, "neglect the consideration of many subcultures that exist within

use the mother's names. They do use the father's names.]" This statement will be made matter-of-factly, as if merely revealing a part-language, part-culture rule for Hispanic naming. The nonchalance of the statement provides the information and its corresponding gender issues as linked concepts, for further review by each individual in the class.

To expand the gender dimensions of naming, and to draw relevant cultural comparisons, the class may then proceed to a U.S. marriage. The same technique will be employed and the student volunteers will be asked to give the woman and the man an appropriate name after their marriage. The class should give a wide array of possibilities for naming the newly-married individuals, thus suggesting for themselves the choices the U.S. system offers, which stand in contrast to the individual's dual-name preservation of Hispanic married couples. Once again naming a child in the U.S. system should close off the possibilities explored by students in response to the elicited possible married names. This deceptively simple classroom exchange allows students to reference their own cultural heritage while examining the possibilities both systems provide for spouses and children. The students will note differences between the cultures, and the differences within their own culture; the silence surrounding the naming of a child in U.S. culture stands in stark contrast to the possibilities for a new bride, for example. The students, and not the instructor, will be the agents of this cultural lesson, and they will expose inconsistencies within both systems. Again, the recognition of their own unreliable social norms will lead them to accept differences between cultures more readily. Students will not choose one system over another; they will simply observe both and reflect on the systems for naming.

Dennis Durocher (2007) cites M.J. Bennett's (1993) study: "Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity," and outlines Bennett's three steps on the path towards cultural sensitivity: "Acceptance, Adaptation, and Integration" (p. 142). Because the students in the class give the data for the exercise, the instructor does not interfere as a proponent of a certain outcome in their discussion. Accepting the role of classroom facilitator cedes the space for decision-making and/or cultural judgments to the students. Durocher clarifies the goal of the Adaptation stage of cultural sensitivity acquisition:

> Acting just like a member of the target culture is not the goal of adaptation. In fact, this type of 'going native' is more characteristic of the ethnocentric stage of reversal. In Bennett's model, adaptation is about choosing appropriate behavior given a particular cultural context. This choice is grounded in an awareness of the individual's own cultural assumptions and values as well as those of the host culture. True adaptation consists of a negotiation of these different, sometimes contradictory, systems in such a way that behaviors emerge that are acceptable to all parties involved" (p. 149).

The exercise in naming, according to the standards set forth by both cultures, will only approximate this model for adaptation with one final step. Students will be asked to choose a name for themselves, to state their preference for one system

or another. Giving them a choice communicates to them that their way of naming is a negotiable system, and that other cultures provide valid options to consider. Even if they choose their own names, students will have necessarily imagined themselves in the alternate cultural context and made an informed decision. This type of exercise does not need to be linked to real-world experiences for some internal shifting and Adaptation to the foreign culture to take place. Students who can correctly articulate their Hispanic name have adapted to the Hispanic naming system. Once they consider the possibilities for change this new system allows, they approach the final stage of Integration, using the new information they've acquired to mold their identity, albeit in theory and not in reality. Durocher states that "the teaching of cultural sensitivity is spread out over several semesters…" (p. 140). It seems logical that cultural sensitivity cannot be achieved quickly, for it requires time for reflection and acquisition of vast C2 information. However, there's no reason to believe students are barred from reaching cultural Integration until they amass enough information and understanding to one day claim, "I've got it!" There may be countless "I've got it!" moments along the way to developing a lasting and profound cultural sensitivity. Each time an instructor allows students to interact with C2 material on their own terms, reflecting and questioning their own cultural beliefs and practices in the process, an opportunity for the stage of Integration exists.

Once students acquire the language they need to talk about their family members, they typically progress to basic descriptions of the people they know, managing unfamiliar sentence structures, and learning an abundance of adjectives they use to describe physical and personality traits. Once an instructor establishes rules for adjective placement and agreement with nouns, the students may apply their skills to a variety of dialogic situations. The following examples for classroom activities derive from the basic principles of the Stealth Approach, that foreign language instruction should be done in the target language, with culture and language competence linked in the pursuit of critical thinking skills. Each activity also denotes the importance placed on positive classroom interactions, and playful subversion of societal norms. The first activity uses magazine images to elicit descriptors from the students in the class. One magazine used is *People*, and the other is *People en español*. Students have to guess which magazine publishes each photo they describe. Throughout the activity, students are not only stating appropriate adjectives to describe physical features, they are also reflecting on the images promoted by the same magazine, marketed to two distinct populations. Students consistently identify the photos' magazines of origin with accuracy. Although this is a rapid classroom exercise, the students in the class engage the material while thinking about images of beauty exemplified for different groups of people. Claire Kramsch (1993) highlights the importance of difference that is experienced, as opposed to merely presented or mentioned in passing in the classroom:

> Experiencing difference does not automatically come with learning a foreign code. The potential of the foreign language for defamiliarisation, for the discovery of alternate realities is there, but it must be actualised,

texts must be authenticated, cultural contexts must be created. It is by observing, documenting and interpreting … learners' experience of difference that we can understand what it means to teach culture in the language class (p. 357).

The underlying question that may occur to many students, of course, is "Why is there a need for separate models in the two magazines?" Any introspection that occurs derives form the students' direct interaction with cultural differences during the activity, and assists students in thinking critically about marketing and culture-group ideals of beauty.

In a second adjective practice activity, the instructor writes two words on the board in separate areas: la profesora ideal [the ideal professor]/el estudiante ideal [the ideal student] and then asks students to come and write an adjective under each heading. At the end of the exercise, the board contains a messy cluster of adjectives, with a great deal of repetition among them. The instructor erases all repeated adjectives, and then asks the class for their opinions about the remaining list. Some students protest others' choices, and a vote is needed to determine whether the adjective remains or is erased. The process is repeated on the other side of the board until both lists are whittled down to attributes the class agrees are important. The instructor then matches characteristics of a good professor with those of a good student, highlighting the overlapping traits and indicating how much the two have in common. After the traits shared by students and professors are noted, the class watches a video with segments on students in Spanish-speaking countries. Students are asked at the end of the video if the same list applies among Hispanic populations outside the U.S. Typically, this activity reveals similar values held by students within C1 and C2 academic settings.

For a final look at adjectives, students are asked to write a sentence about themselves using six adjectives and the following formula: "*Yo soy* _____, _____ *y* _____, *pero también soy* _____, _____ *y* _____. [I am…, but I also am…]" Students write positive attributes in the first three spaces, and negative personality traits in the final three spaces. Students are also directed not to use any qualifiers for either of their lists, such as: *muy* [very], *un poco* [a little], *a veces* [at times], etc. Inevitably, students will present one attribute as positive, while another lists it as negative. The instructor notes these distinctions and emphasizes them for the class to consider. Why does one student list *tímido* [shy] as a positive trait, yet another student includes it on the negative list? Students are not required to resolve these differences; they simply observe them and are asked to question the divergence of value assigned to each term. Drawing attention to varied perspectives about what constitutes a positive personality trait renders identity relative and personal. Students may carry this culturally relativistic perspective forward with them as they continue their study and application of adjectives, and as they seek to describe people from Spanish-speaking countries.

The final review of adjectives involves asking students to describe groups of people whose pictures are taken from current news articles. The instructor names the group and leaves the descriptors to the students, saying, for example: "*Los*

inmigrantes ilegales son _____. [Illegal immigrants are _____
__.]"; "*El Presidente Evo Morales, de Bolivia, es* _____. [President
Evo Morales, from Bolivia, is _____.]"; "*Los cubano-americanos en Miami
son* _____. [Cuban-Americans in Miami are _____.]," or "*El Rey y
la Reina de España son* _____. [The king and queen of Spain are _____
__.]" Students not only name adjectives, but they also listen to their classmates
characterizing the people mentioned; comparing these responses will serve as a
revealing commentary on how the world leaders and social groups in current news
are viewed, and whether or not their descriptions are static throughout the classroom.
If students fail to recognize the world leaders and populations represented in
the activity, they will at least have had an exposure to newsworthy people from
diverse Spanish-speaking countries. The instructor assumes the role of facilitator
in this activity, seeking adjectives from each group or person being described, yet
not interfering to question a word choice or to steer the flow of conversation about
an image. The instructor will merely repeat adjectives in their proper form, if a
slight indirect correction is needed. By leaving the characterization of the people
in the photos to the students, the instructor relinquishes her position of authority
over the content being discussed, acting instead as an editor who steps in to ensure
a clean oral sample. Sharing classroom authority not only gives students control
over the flow of comments they make about current events, but also frees their
dialogic exchanges from the instructor's filtering process. By doing this, she gives
students agency in fulfilling their own educational goals and diminishes their
reliance on her viewpoint as the decisive, punctuating comment on everything
the class addresses. Cary A. Buzzelli and Bill Johnston (2002) detail the moral
dimensions of teaching and examine the power dynamic in a classroom as similar
to the both personal and communal nature of language:

> Just as with language and with morality itself, the notion of power is
> best understood as something that resides neither entirely within the
> individual or in the group, but rather in the complex interplay between
> them; like language, it is both personal and social… as with language,
> individual agency exists alongside constraining social forces, making
> relations of power a complex series of negotiations in which everyone
> participates. Thus, along with language, power is an important way in
> which relations in a group (such as a class) are mediated (p. 50).

The classroom that remains open to unfiltered student observations models
the diffusion of power described in the quote by Buzzelli and Johnston. Students
negotiate meaning at the same time they are allowed by their professor to
determine meaning for themselves, which renders them equals in the creation
of the lesson's content. Ultimately, however, the "constraining social forces"
of limited class time, a lesson plan the instructor has in mind, and the looming
students' grades, will abruptly end any power-sharing in the classroom, placing
the responsibility for the course once again with the instructor. Because power
in the classroom is a shifting and unstable entity, students who are requested to
accept the burden of directing their own classroom exchanges may feel confused,

unwilling, or under-qualified to handle the task. Instructors need to maintain a delicate balance between engaging students in the enactment of the course goals, yet staging appropriate moments for student led activities and open discussions. Once students accept an active classroom role and a subjective position in their studies, they will more readily challenge assumptions about the nature of culture and language. An instructor seeking to encourage critical thinking in students must necessarily accept increased student questioning of the classroom power dynamic and the teacher-student roles at play in the educational exchange. It would not be possible to train students to assume a critical stance when confronted with new information, they have those same students constrained when they wonder about the design and implementation of the Spanish class. Unleashing critical thinking in the classroom, in this sense, exposes the instructor and the construct of the class to reflective analysis and questioning. The byproduct of active challenging social norms will logically be the questioning and critique of the class itself. As mentioned earlier, there must be a level of mutual trust and respect in the class before successful integration of critical thinking tasks can begin.

The final set of critical thinking activities this paper proposes addresses the introduction of body parts vocabulary. Students enjoy naming body parts, perhaps because of their affinity for symbols with clear referents in reality. Body parts vocabulary lists are easily mastered because they are grounded in the visible and the tangible, elements which allow students immediacy in their language skills application. Instructors who teach in the target language find body parts an easy concept to address because the simple gesture of pointing activates a content dialogue. There are a variety of activities that will ensure critical thinking in the review of body parts. The first activity involves the entire class in drawing an ideal body, labeling the parts and adding adjectives where possible. The bodies created by students are presented in small groups, and three volunteers share their work with the entire class in mini presentations. With the combination of the three students' artwork and explanations, and the groups' reports on what constitutes "*un cuerpo ideal* [a perfect body]," students will realize that perfect is not the same for everyone in the class. After the student presentations, the professor draws her ideal body on the board, complete with "*un corazón leal* [a loyal heart]"; "*una mente curiosa* [a curious mind]"; "*ojos abiertos* [open eyes]"; and "*manos trabajadoras* [hardworking hands]." Students have responded to this activity by offering further details for their perfect person drawing, showing recognition of their overt focus on the superficial aspects of the body, and their ignorance of the potential for good that the body contains. The activity ends the instructor seeking comments from the students about a variety of famous Hispanic people in photographs. The class members will continue to name ideal body parts of the people in the photograph, with the professor consistently referring them back to the more profound meaning of ideal. Students idealized the physical body of Salma Hayek, for example, and then enhanced their output by stating she had an imaginative and creative mind, a generous heart, and a real smile. Following up the Salma Hayek picture with an image of her creation, Ugly Betty, subtly reinforces the critical questioning of what makes a body ideal. The use of Hispanic people in photographs naturally

integrates culture into the language instruction, while both components contribute to the development of critical thinking skills in the students.

Conclusion

This paper outlines some effective techniques for implementation of the Stealth Approach, an approach to foreign language teaching that combines frameless culture instruction with language tasks, in the development of a critical thinking skill set. Using the activities outlined in the article will assist the instructor in creating a comfortable, engaging classroom environment while establishing trust with her students. The bar for student performance is set high in this approach. Each classroom activity described here will require students to move, speak, and most importantly, question the information that is being presented to them. They will take on a subjective role in their Spanish language education, and will learn to challenge the societal norms that shape language as a socio-political construct. Once students co-opt critical thinking skills, they will be able to assess Hispanic culture as it is revealed to them, while also reflecting on their own cultural values and pre-conceptions. Students will leave the first year Stealth Approach Spanish program with a keen ability to negotiate their identity among shifting cultural codes, and with an interest in seeking the important questions that basic language and culture study present to them.

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4

Teaching about the French Heritage of the Midwest

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The national Standards for Foreign Language Learning have come to be an important guiding philosophy in second-language education since their development in the mid-1990s (Allen, 2002, p. 518). Designed in a pedagogical context that aims to prepare students "who can use the language in meaningful ways, in real-life situations" (*Standards*, p. 15), the Standards seek to link the development of linguistic skills with a broad array of skills and knowledge dealing with content—including, for example, culture, history, geography, and the arts (*Standards*, p. 112). The areas of language acquisition and learning about culture, traditionally parts of any second-language class, are included in the national Standards that are called Communication and Culture. But use of the national Standards further enlarges the scope of the second-language class to include purposeful opportunities for students to take their developing skills in language and culture beyond the walls of the classroom. Thus, the standards called Connections, Comparison, and Communities are designed to highlight the need for second-language students to "explore interdisciplinary content," "develop insights into the very nature of language and culture," and "test their new competencies in venues beyond the school" (Phillips, 1999, p, 3)

In the Communities standard in particular, students are led to "participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world" (*Standards*, p. 63) both by using the target language "within and beyond the school setting" (p. 64) and by using it "for personal enjoyment and enrichment" (p. 66). Phillips (1999) highlighted the fundamental importance of this Standard, stating that it "may well be the culminating reason for language study for most students" (p. 13). Second-language teachers who are designing learning experiences within the framework of the national Standards try to help their students progress toward the goals of all five areas. Accordingly, in order to address the Communities standard,

they seek opportunities for authentic communication between their students and speakers of the relevant second language in the local community. In this regard, technology has made it increasingly possible for teachers of French in the U.S. Midwest to find ways for their students to communicate with French-speaking communities around the world—in Quebec, France, and beyond—through e-mail correspondence, podcasts, and blogs. However, locating such a Francophone community closer to home presents challenges, given the small number and small size of Francophone communities in the Midwest. How, then, can students make the connections between their own home community and the French language?

One way to deal with this challenge is to "communicate" across time, linking students with a Francophone community that existed several centuries ago. Specifically, French teachers in the Midwest can acquaint students with the history of their home territory, highlighting the presence of French explorers, traders, soldiers, and settlers from the 1600s to the 1800s. Many teachers and students can name Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette as important explorers of the Midwest and the Mississippi River, and know something about the *voyageurs* who paddled across the lakes of Minnesota and Canada. But when students learn more about the role played by the French in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River areas, they can participate in meaningful activities that engage them in learning about geography, history, the natural world, and cultural encounter, in addition to developing language skills. This article will a) provide basic information about the French heritage in the Midwest which can be used as a basis for further exploration by teachers who wish to supplement basic textbook information (where it exists) about the French in the Midwest b) suggest activities and projects that teachers can use to help their students learn more about the history of their own communities with a special focus on French and c) illustrate how to integrate interdisciplinary content into the French language classroom.

Teaching About French Heritage

Teachers who wish to introduce their students to the French heritage of the Midwest will find that historical background information lends itself to activities that reinforce and deepen language skills, broaden vocabulary, lead to historical understanding, and help students reflect on culture and learn about their communities. Students become enabled to use French "within and beyond the school setting" (*Standards*, p. 64), to learn about the activities of people of French and Québécois origin in their region, and to recognize the presence of French place names locally or regionally. They can further be introduced to cross-cultural issues from a new angle, imagining the cultural encounter between Native Americans and the French explorers and traders. They connect their French-language study with local history, and further develop their language skills with appropriate activities conducted in French and requiring them to produce both oral and written language. Hence, a teaching unit first conceived as a response to Standard Five—Communities—in fact intrinsically helps students work toward the other goals expressed in the Standards: Communication, Cultures, Connections, and Comparisons. The topic of French heritage in the Midwest is thus an illustration

of the "weave" of curricular elements that a rich language-learning experience provides (*Standards*, pp. 32-33).

The following summary of French explorers and settlers in the Midwest can be used by the teacher to provide background knowledge for French learners. This can be done via "jigsaw" cooperative learning form (each member of the home group becomes an expert on one of the topics below, shares this information with peers and subsequently creates a presentation summarizing this information). Supplementary information can be provided by the teacher or students can locate additional information via the web.

Early Travelers

The goal of the earliest French expeditions to the New World was finding a sea passage to China and its riches. Verrazano's trip to the coast of North America (1524) and Cartier's first two voyages (1534 and 1535) were made with this goal in mind. Cartier came to North America again in 1541 with the intent of establishing a colony, but this project failed. For the next fifty years, French settlement would be limited to the establishment of fishing outposts along the Atlantic Coast.

Colonization did not begin in earnest until after 1600. Samuel de Champlain's first trip to *la Nouvelle-France* in 1603 helped to form relations with the Native Montagnais and Algonquian peoples, and thus set the stage for his return trip in 1608, when he established, on the site of a Native settlement on the St Lawrence River, the "habitation de Québec," today Quebec City. Although Champlain promoted an extensive program of colonization for the new town and the surrounding New France, the town remained a relatively simple trading post under the French, and the heart of France's trade with the colonies would prove to be fur, not gold or goods from the Orient.

Expeditions continued to set out into the territory west of Quebec City, however, and the Great Lakes area became known to the French as a rich source of fur and skins, and a potential source of metals—primarily lead. In 1615 Champlain arrived for the first time at Lake Huron, led by Native American guides, and heard rumors of a great river running to the sea. In 1634 Jean Nicolet began a trip that would take him through the Straits of Mackinac to Lake Michigan and into Green Bay. Between 1654 and 1660, brothers-in-law Médard Chouart, sieur des Groseillers, and Pierre d'Esprit Radisson traveled through present-day Minnesota and Wisconsin, returning to Montreal with furs and tales of remarkable adventures among the Natives. When their proposal to increase French trade by establishing a post on Hudson's Bay in the north was rejected, however, they took their idea to the English, leading to the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The story of Groseillers and Radisson's change of allegiance reminds us of the complex nature of the presence of the French on the North American continent. This is not a simple tale of French kings encouraging settlement and drawing economic advantage through officially sanctioned expeditions proceeding with coherent and consistent policy. Rather, it involves multiple policy changes; varying attitudes on the part of French decision-makers toward how trade should be organized, how and whether settlement should be encouraged, and what the

role of religious communities should be; the creation and dissolution of private companies to carry out trade and settlement; and the ambitions and energies of a variety of individuals seeking riches, notoriety, and adventure with or without the support of the French government. Further, and centrally important, is the fact that neither expeditions nor settlements nor the fur trade itself could have taken place without the participation of the Native Americans already in place on the North American continent when the French arrived. The story of the interactions between Natives and French goes far beyond the scope of this article, but it underlies in important ways any narrative of the French presence in North America. Richard White's book *The Middle Ground* (1991) discusses in detail the complex negotiation of culture and power that took place as the Native Americans encountered French adventurers and traders, and as the French struggled to survive and draw economic advantage from territory claimed by France but inhabited by a multiplicity of Native groups with their own multi-layered relationships and objectives.

Groseillers and Radisson's adventures also set the stage for what would become a major theme in French exploits in the Midwest: the competition between France and first the Dutch and then the English for the lucrative fur trade with the Native Americans. As the English colonized the eastern coast of North America, including their takeover of New Amsterdam (finalized in 1674), the fur trade was economically important to them, as well. Thus, Jean Talon, who began work in 1665 as the Intendant, or financial administrator, of New France planned to increase the French presence in the Great Lakes region in order to limit British influence and trade. At the same time, French religious communities began to establish missions among the Native Americans in this region: the Mission du Saint-Esprit at Chequamegon on Lake Superior in 1665, a mission at Sault Ste-Marie in 1668, and the Saint-Ignace mission at Michilimackinac in 1670. Indeed, Jesuit and Recollect religious would often accompany French explorers, traders, and soldiers, or be sent out on their own to establish missions, throughout the period of French exploration and settlement. However, this was not always done with the blessing of the French government, with whom the religious communities' relationship was uneven.

In 1673 Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet were sent by Governor General Louis de Buade, comte de Frontenac, to find the great river to the west of which the Native Americans spoke. It was reported that this river led to the Pacific Ocean. The route of Marquette and Jolliet is well known. The small group set out from Michilimackinac across Lake Michigan to Green Bay and took the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers through present-day Wisconsin to the Mississippi River. They floated downstream on the Mississippi for a month, turning back north again at the mouth of the Arkansas River, convinced that this south-bearing river was not the gateway to the Orient. On their return trip, they turned northeast onto the Illinois River and returned to Michilimackinac. Marquette came back to the Illinois country the following year, founding a mission at Kaskaskia on the Illinois River, but died while heading back up to Michilimackinac along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan in May, 1675.

Thus, the French had traveled through the northern and central Mississippi valley and claimed the area for their king. Their presence was established further south a few years later as René Robert Cavelier de la Salle set off in 1682 to find the mouth of the Mississippi. Traveling from Lake Michigan down the Saint Joseph River and portaging to the Kankakee at the site of present-day South Bend, Indiana, he stopped at Fort Crèvecoeur — founded in 1680 on the Illinois River — and proceeded to the Mississippi, taking two months to reach the Gulf. On an island at the mouth of the river, he claimed the land for Louis XIV on April 9, 1682. Thus, France positioned herself to conduct trade operations in a vast part of the North American continent — a complicated and precarious undertaking, dependent on establishing and maintaining relationships with a wide variety of Native American groups in an immense territory.

Each of the Midwest states has its own particular strand in the history of this region's French heritage, each with a different degree of French activity and influence. Rather than recount each in detail, this article will describe some of the patterns and structures of economics, politics, and everyday life that were established as the French came to this part of what they called the *pays d'en haut*, the Upper Country. For, although the land was administratively divided in two— the northern and Great Lakes areas as part of Canada, and the Illinois country south along the Mississippi as *la Louisiane*—there was considerable continuity in the activities and settlement carried out by the French throughout this central part of the North American continent.

Trade

If France were to continue to dominate the fur trade in this vast territory — from the Ohio valley to west of the Mississippi, from Lake Superior to the Gulf — they would need to establish a stable and visible presence here. The English were pressing hard westward, offering favorable trade conditions — better-quality products at cheaper prices — to the Native Americans. France needed to create situations in which the Natives found it better and easier to trade with the French. To that end, the French built forts where soldiers could try to reduce the number of conflicts among the various Native American groups. With a relatively peaceful situation in the area of the forts, trade could proceed. The French also founded some settlements which, though very small, could also serve as trading posts and representatives of France in the forests and plains of the *pays d'en haut*. Usually founded at the site of a Native village or gathering place, these settlements would reproduce, in these remote corners of the Midwest, ways of life, building styles, and land allotment patterns well-known in Quebec and soon to be implanted in the southern part of France's North American territory, Louisiana.

The original hope of the early French explorers — finding easy passage to the Orient — was, of course, never realized, nor did mining become a major source of income for the French entrepreneurs who explored this territory with (or sometimes without) the permission of their government. In the end, it was the fur trade that was the predominant economic engine in France's North American territory.

Although the development of New Orleans after 1700 meant that there were henceforth two sea outlets for goods shipped from French North America to Europe, the vast majority of furs from both Canada and Louisiana were shipped north to Montreal and thence to Europe. A complete cycle of the fur trade took over a year. Each spring, holders of fur trade licenses organized the bulk transport of trade goods from Montreal into the *pays d'en haut*, to one or more of the larger trading post sites — Michilimackinac, Detroit, or Grand Portage on Lake Superior, for example. Their water route from Montreal took these large canoes down the Ottawa River to Lake Nipissing and on to Georgian Bay, continuing to Lake Huron and Lake Superior or Lake Michigan. When they had reached the trading posts in early to mid-summer, the trade goods were divided up by managers, or *bourgeois*, for distribution among smaller trading parties. Each smaller party was manned by a number of *voyageurs* — paddlers — who departed, often in smaller canoes, in mid- to late summer to the remote spots where they would spend the winter. The men on these expeditions — *aventures*, in French — took with them a large supply of metal goods, cloth, blankets, gunpowder, and other items useful to the Native Americans. Throughout the winter months, they traded these for beaver, bear, otter, mink, and other furs and skins brought in by the Natives. Prices were fixed by the government, and only licensed traders and legally hired *voyageurs* were supposed to participate. At the breakup of ice in the spring, the small groups of "winterers" — *hivernants* — returned to the trading posts where, amid the celebration of the *rendez-vous*, the furs were re-packed for transport back to Montreal, normally with a late-summer arrival, and further shipment to Europe.

Even after New France became British territory in 1763, the fur trade continued to be of economic importance, and the vast majority of men working in the trade continued to be French-Canadian (although the men heading of the fur-trading companies were mostly not of French origin). Thus the fur trade retained its connection with speakers of French, and the rich lore of the *voyageurs* has come down to us as a manifestation of the French-speaking culture of North America. Terminology of the trade is often in French — *voyageur, bourgeois, portage, hivernant* — as are the traditional songs that accompanied the paddlers as they plied their canoes and *batteaux* on the rivers and lakes of the Midwest.

What was, in fact, exchanged in the fur trade? In the north, beaver fur was the gold standard, with a complex system for determining its quality and worth. In much of the rest of the Midwest, however, a wider variety of furs was accepted for trade: Bear, lynx, otter, mink, raccoon, fisher, fox, muskrat and deerskin were all exchanged. In return, manufactured goods of all kinds were useful to the Natives and regularly traded. In traders' account books we find wool and cotton cloth (scarlet was particularly popular), blankets of various sizes, ribbon, buttons, combs, small mirrors, bells, rings, earrings, small brooches, bracelets and armbands, beads of all kinds, kettles and pans, knives, powder and shot, and alcohol — often rum or brandy (*eau-de-vie*). The prices to be paid for the furs were fixed by the government. However, this could be problematic for the French traders, as the English frequently undercut them, giving more and higher-quality

trade goods in exchange for a given amount of furs than could the French, and thereby attracting the Natives to trade with them and not the French.

While the French government did have a system whereby only licensed traders could take part in the business, there were of course numerous individuals who broke the rules and traded without official permission. These *coureurs des bois* were of great concern to the government: Letters from the officials of *la Nouvelle France* to their superiors in the French Navy (the only branch of the French military to serve in North America) reveal concern that the *coureurs des bois* were causing trouble among the various groups of Native Americans, upsetting regular trading relationships, wreaking havoc with the pricing system, and generally flouting authority with their licentious behavior (Callière and Champigny, 1701). If the French trading system were weakened by these unregulated traders, that of course made it easier for the English traders to make inroads.

Forts

These letters also reveal the efforts of the French government to maintain control over their territory and its trade by establishing additional forts farther west and south. While some forts were built when the French first began their exploration of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi valley, even more were constructed during the first half of the eighteenth century. Some of these forts attracted a fairly stable civilian population, and went on to become towns that are still in existence today. Others, however, simply served their basic function — attempting to establish a measure of stability and provide a place where traders could meet their Native American trading partners — but disappeared when New France became British territory or even earlier.

A sampling of forts — both short- and long-lived — shows the size of the territory in which the French attempted to assert their influence. Post Arkansas, founded by La Salle's partner Tonti in 1686, at the mouth of the Arkansas River, was intended to protect trade on the Mississippi from the northern part of *la Louisiane* to its southern tip. Much farther north, Nicolas Perrot founded Fort St. Antoine on Lake Pepin (present-day Minnesota), also in 1686. To the northeast, the mission on Lake Superior was the site of the fort of Chequamegon Bay, re-opened in 1718. Farther south, in the Illinois country, Fort de Chartres was constructed on the Illinois River just upstream from Kaskaskia in 1720. Not far away, on the opposite bank of the Mississippi, the short-lived Fort Orléans was established in 1723 and abandoned in 1729. (The nearby town of Ste Geneviève, founded shortly afterward, has had a longer and more prosperous existence.) To the north and east, Poste St-Philippe des Miamis, near present-day Fort Wayne, Indiana, was established by Jean-Baptiste Bissot, sieur de Vincennes, at about the same time. At Michilimackinac, on the strait between Lakes Michigan and Huron, the French re-occupied the fort in 1715. Although many other forts could be mentioned, it is clear that the French needed to be present over a vast territory. And they needed to maintain that presence without much manpower: In 1760, only about 90,000 French-speaking people lived in New France, and about 90% of them lived in Quebec City or Montreal (Havard and Vidal, 2003, p. 67), leaving

9,000 French scattered over an immense territory. Historians stress the illusory character of French "control" in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River areas. Even for Frenchmen who appeared to function as effective mediators between the French and the Natives, such as Jean-Baptiste Bissot, sieur de Vincennes, the complexity of intercultural relations meant that they "exercised influence but little power" (Cayton, 1996, p. 4). The Native Americans might deal with the French when it was to their advantage, but "they were not about to allow anyone to dictate where they lived or with whom they traded or talked" (Cayton, p. 1). Thus the presence of forts did not necessarily mean the exercise of power, for many reasons.

It is important to note that, in particular as regards the *pays d'en haut*, the French were generally more interested in trade than in extensive settlements. In this way, they differed from the British. And it is in part for this reason that Midwest cities and towns with true French cultural roots are relatively scarce: Detroit, Vincennes, Ste Genevieve, St. Louis, and Green Bay are among this select group. At most forts, there were few efforts made to attract settlers who would farm the land: When the forts were set up, it was the military and trade functions that predominated. They did not have large numbers of inhabitants, military or otherwise, although fairly large groups of Native Americans often lived nearby, in villages that frequently had been established before the French arrived. Fort Ouiatenon on the Wabash River near present-day Lafayette, Indiana, for instance, was populated at its origin in 1717 by just four soldiers, three civilians, and one blacksmith; even thirty years later, it had only twenty French residents, near a Native American village of about six hundred (Cayton, 1996, pp. 5-6). At most forts, little provision was made for settlers. Soldiers' wives and families, with a very few exceptions in the case of commanding officers, did not accompany them to the wilderness forts. The forts themselves often remained relatively crude structures, with little in the way of creature comforts.

Another important way in which French colonization differed from British was in the establishment of kin relationships with the Native Americans with whom they were trading: Intermarriage and sexual relationships between French traders and Native women were not uncommon. These relationships were sometimes approved and sometimes condemned by the French government and religious authorities, but their establishment could be tremendously useful on both sides. Both partners gained access to a network of relationships that brought what they needed, economically: trade goods to the Native woman and her family; furs to the French trader. Historian Richard White (1991) discusses the complex nature of these relationships, and further points out, "Both in and out of marriage, these women bore children with the French, some of whom in time would come to form a separate people, the *métis*, who themselves mediated between French and Algonquians and became of critical importance to the area" (White, p. 74).

Towns in the *pays d'en haut*

The few towns or villages that grew up with the forts and missions were populated by soldiers and *habitants* (civilian settlers) as well as fur traders.

(*Habitants* often participated in trading along with their agricultural work.) The stockade present at the heart of most of the French villages betrays their important function as military posts. However, beyond this, certain characteristics recurred in towns from Canada to New Orleans. Nearly all the towns were originally built on a river. The agricultural land outside the towns was divided into long tracts of land fronting on the river, a pattern called the long-lot system. Long-lot farms ranged from a quarter-mile to two or three miles deep, with a width of from 40 to 250 feet. There were also common lands used for grazing, running hogs, or wood-gathering. Not infrequently, a Native village was situated nearby.

The French towns were not large: In 1764, 40 to 50 families resided in St. Louis (Foley, 1971, p. 18); closer to Montreal, Detroit had 900 inhabitants in 1750 (Poremba, 2001, p. 22); Vincennes boasted a population of around 50 families in 1760 (Baker, 1998, p. 9). The lists of residents of these towns often include slaves. Some were of African origin, and others were Native Americans. Slaves were not present in large numbers, but their existence is worth noting.

Houses of the *habitants* were often built in the typical fashion imported from France known as *poteau-en-terre* (post in ground) or *poteau-sur-solle* (post on sill). The spaces between the upright posts were filled in with a clay- or mud-and-straw mixture known as *bousillage*. Houses were often surrounded on several sides by a *galerie* or porch. This style of architecture can be seen today where these houses have been preserved, from Vincennes to Ste. Genevieve and at other sites.

French folk and religious traditions were to some extent retained in these towns: *Mardi gras* was celebrated, as were New Year's Eve and other festivals, to the tune of traditional French songs such as "A la Claire Fontaine" or "La Belle Françoise" (Baker, French Folklife in Old Vincennes, 1998, p. 29). (Such songs are also well-known in the *voyageur* musical repertoire.) Formal religious presence was sporadic: Some towns had a resident priest, but others had to make do with traveling clerics.

Closing of the French Period

The war between France and Great Britain often called the French and Indian War brought an end to France's tenure in North America. Upon the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, France ceded its Canadian territory to Great Britain; Louisiana, west of the Mississippi, became a Spanish possession. Forts were taken over by British troops or closed down, and British settlers moved into French villages, as the period of French governance came to an end. However, due in part to the continuing importance of the fur trade and the predominance of French Canadians in that trade, this was not the end of a French-language presence in the Great Lakes area and Mississippi basin. Even as the territory changed from British hands to those of the United States of America, traders of French-Canadian descent continued their work, rising in some places to positions of prominence like Solomon Juneau, founder of Milwaukee, Alexis Bailly, who served in the Territorial House of Minnesota in the mid-1800s, or Julien Dubuque, who mined and traded furs and gave his name to the Iowa town on the Mississippi. And, in

the many Midwest rivers and lakes bearing French names and in the towns whose roots were planted by the French, evidence that this region was once part of *la Nouvelle France* has remained.

Sample Activities for Classroom Application

The following activities serve as examples of a variety of activities designed to engage the learners actively in deepening their knowledge of the history, music, literature, culture and language of this historical era. They could accompany or wind up a unit on "Le patrimoine français dans mon état ou dans ma région."

1. Students locate place names of French origin locally or regionally. What places are named after animals or plants? after geographical features? after people? Why do they have these names?
2. Students research people of French or French-Canadian origin who are important in local history: Solomon Juneau in Wisconsin, or Daniel Greysolon Dulhut in Minnesota, for instance.
3. Students look at seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French maps of North America. (Many are available for viewing on line.) Note the different names for some places such as Lake Michigan (*lac des Illinois*) or Green Bay (*baye des Puants*). Note other discrepancies with modern maps: Why are there rivers but no roads? Why do the shapes of lakes and land look different than they do today?
4. Students trace a map and draw the route taken by an early explorer.
5. Two points of view: When La Salle traveled down the Mississippi, what did he see on the shore? And what did the Native Americans see, looking at him? What was familiar, for each side? What was strange?
6. Vocabulary: Learn the names of the animals traded for fur. Learn the words for some of the trade goods: cloth, kettle, earrings, ribbon, blanket, and so on.
7. Students guess what animals were living in their region at the time of the French fur trade. They speculate as to what animals still live there.
8. Establish exchange values: one blanket = two otter pelts, and so forth. Students make currency symbolizing furs and trade goods (a bill worth one bearskin or one otter pelt, for instance, or a bill worth one blanket or one kettle). Students play the roles of Native Americans and French traders and negotiate.
9. Students take the role of a French soldier who served at a fort in your region. They put together a picture book recounting their memories. (Variant: memories of a trader/*voyageur* who was not a soldier, or a Native American who traded with the French.)
10. Talk about methods of transportation. Students research the sizes of canoes used by *voyageurs*. They speculate about what *voyageurs* would use today in their region.
11. Talk about lives of the *voyageurs* and fur traders: What did they eat? What did they wear?

12. Listen to *voyageur* songs, or songs sung in French settlements ("Voilà le bon vent," for example). Students make drawings or collages to illustrate what happens in each verse of the song.

13. Students act out or pantomime the activities described in a *voyageur* song.

14. Put together a New Year's Eve celebration in old Detroit or La Baye (Green Bay) or Ste Genevieve: Choose songs, play games, dance, make crêpes (see Baker, *French Folk Life in Old Vincennes*, for ideas). Invite parents to see what their children have learned.

15. Students build models of houses typical of French settlements, with *galeries* on all sides, or put together *poteau-sur-solle* construction with modeling clay.

16. Use the Canadian Archives on the internet (www.collectionscanada.ca/index-e.html; search under "fonds des colonies") to look at letters from the leaders of New France to their superiors in France. Use the search option to look for familiar local names or names of people known in your area like Pontchartrain, Vincennes, and so forth.

17. Go to a nearby *voyageur rendez-vous* re-enactment. Some are held during the school year. See, for example, the Feast of the Hunter's Moon at Fort Ouiatenon near Lafayette, Indiana, or the French & Indian War Assemblage at Prairie du Rocher, Illinois.

18. Students investigate your local historical society to see what French connections there might be in your community. Use copies of documents in French (if they exist) as source material for a "diary" of a local French-speaking resident, or to inform an activity dealing with the fur trade.

19. Students write in French a brief history of your community's French connection, or create a visual presentation. This can be posted on a website when appropriate.

20. Identify major historical figures, locate photos and create a power point presentation of these historical figures and how the role they played in French history.

21. Locate the words and lyrics to a song sung during this time period and introduce a series of activities   (e.g closed texts, paraphrase content, illustrate content of verses, provide a title for the song) for students to better understand the content, language and culture of this historical era.

Project-Based Workshop

A half-day workshop for high-school students in French levels 3 and 4 combined a number of these activities. Students first worked with a series of old French maps, reading the maps' legends to trace the paths of several seventeenth-century French explorers, and comparing place names on the old maps with current place names. Next they read a series of short texts in French that acquainted them with the history of the *voyageurs* and the fur trade, as well as the history of one Québécois fur trader who had been active in the local area in the early 1800s. Students worked in groups to answer comprehension questions. They

next read excerpts of a fur-trade journal in French kept by this trader, learning about the exchange of goods for furs, acquiring new vocabulary, and doing arithmetic problems (in French) related to the trade issues. Then, students listened to two traditional French songs associated with the *voyageurs*, first verifying comprehension and then creating visual representations of the songs' lyrics; they showed their representations as they sang along with the songs. Finally, students learned a traditional Québecois dance which they performed to the music of a *voyageur* song. As an extra-curricular workshop, this particular set of activities did not involve assessment exercises, but teachers could build these in. Within the workshop, however, students engaged in activities addressing a number of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning: 1.1 Obtain information, 1.2 Understand written language, 1.3 Present information, 2.1 and 2.2 Practices and Products of culture, 3.1 Knowledge of other disciplines, 5.2 Use language beyond the school setting, 5.3 Become life-long learners (*Standards*, p. 9).

Sample Teaching Unit

A unit on "le patrimoine français de mon état" might be organized in a week of concentrated activities or formatted as a once-a-week series spread over several weeks. It might be structured as follows:

A. Explorations and Beginnings
- Initial discovery of French heritage through place names (Activity 1) and/or local people of French or Québécois origin (Activities 2, 18)
- Work with maps (Activities 3 and 4)
- Work with historical letters (Activity 15)

B. Trade and Related Activities
- Students list fur-bearing animals and learn fur-trade goods (Activity 6)
- Students research lives of the *voyageurs* and fur traders, looking at transportation issues, food, etc. (Activities 6, 10, 11)
- Students make currency and role-play fur trade between Native Americans and traders (Activity 8)
- Students write from point of view of trader/*voyageur* or soldier, or Native American (Activity 9)

C. Life and Culture
- Cross-cultural encounters: Native and French points of view (Activity 5)
- Highlighting the French language: French songs of the *voyageurs* and *habitants* (Activities 12 and 13)

D. Culminating Activity
- Organize a New Year's Eve celebration in a French settlement (Activity 14)
- Perform *voyageur* song (Activities 12 and 13) in National French Week or World Language Week celebration program
- Visit *voyageur rendez-vous* (Activity 17) where available
- Write history or put together visual presentation of your community's French heritage (Activity 19)

These activities will promote a deeper understanding of the French influence on the local community, help students to see the connection among and between a variety of content areas and the language classroom (history, music, geography) and enhance their language and culture skills through meaningful and relevant texts and materials that will motivate the learners.

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5

Integrating Russian Cuisine with Russian Language and Culture Classes

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Along with incorporating music, songs, cinema, and theatrical presentations, preparing dishes from the target culture and countries can be another effective way of enhancing the language curriculum as well as motivating students to learn and practice the target language and culture. Cuisine and its traditions and practices have an important place in Russian culture. This article addresses the theoretical underpinnings, strategies, and research-based classroom practices of a Russian Cuisine-centered course developed for and taught in a summer Russian immersion language school at a college intensive language program in the northeastern part of the United States. Throughout this article, the conceptual framework, design, curriculum, and instructional methods and activities of the sample cuisine course will be discussed.

In the summer Russian immersion language school, during the first part of the day students were to attend the required language courses. During the second half of the day, students could participate in one of several co-curricular courses called "clubs" [клуб] that they could choose based on their individual interests and educational objectives. Except the very first few weeks of the program for those students learning the target language for the first time, the target language was the only means of delivering and participating in the instruction for all students across proficiency and educational levels. Signing, sports, theatrical performances, reading, radio or cuisine were some of the main content domains of the co-curricular courses.

Infused with richness and diversity, the co-curricular clubs were to introduce learners to different facets of Russian language and culture while also developing students' interests through immersing them into different authentic contents and contexts. The sample co-curricular course of focus, "Russian Cuisine" [Русская Кухня}, had the objective of giving the students an opportunity to enhance their

practice, learning, knowledge and appreciation of Russian language and culture through preparing diverse Russian dishes. Participation in this specific course and the co-curricular program in general was neither required nor graded for students, but it was strongly encouraged in the program.

This article first describes the conceptual framework that was developed for the course. Second, course strategies for teaching and learning are discussed. In light of the conference theme, "Turning our students into tomorrow's stars", a specific focus will be on the ways teachers can enhance learner motivation and develop and reach their multiple intelligences to learn and practice the foreign language and culture. Different examples of authentic and pedagogically sound materials and sources presented in the article can be useful for those Russian teachers who would like to create and teach their own cuisine courses and activities. The author also believes that the proposed and discussed instructional strategies can be used by teachers of any language with learners at 7-16 grade levels across language proficiency levels and language program formats in order to integrate cuisine as a part of their classrooms, extra- or co-curricular activities.

Conceptual Framework Supporting the Russian Cuisine Course

The conceptual framework supporting this course focuses on the importance of the relationship between 1) the principles of effective language learning and teaching and 2) strategies and materials that can be used in a cuisine course. The objective of the presented cuisine course was to promote and enhance language learners' education in an authentic, task- and interest-driven instructional environment. Learning the real-life tasks of preparing Russian dishes is a way to learn Russian language and culture where task completion assesses students' progress in meeting learning objectives. The ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards for foreign language learners and proficiency guidelines can help the teacher develop the instructional objectives of such a course in which every thematic unit is based on the preparation and study of certain dishes (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project - NSFLEP, 1999). The ACTFL's 5 Cs (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) address the major aspects of foreign language study: communication, cultures, comparison, connection with other disciplines, understanding the nature of language and culture, and participation in multilingual communities.

Language and Culture

Using the target language should be an important focus of the instruction in a cuisine-centered course. The relationship between the perspectives (meanings, values, and ideas), the practices (patterns of cultural interaction) and the products (dishes) of the target culture (NSFLEP Standards 2.1, 2.2) are other important aspects of the study of the target culture. Different language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening should be used in an integrated fashion in such a course. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines can help the instructor design the instructional objectives in order to determine what learners should

know and be able to do with the language at different language proficiency levels. With the integration of topics, perspectives, and authentic materials from more than one content area, such as gastronomy (cooking meals), music (learning and signing songs), and folklore (learning and using proverbs and sayings), the course promotes an interdisciplinary approach to foreign language learning in order to develop learners' appreciation of the diversity and knowledge of Russian linguistic and cultural heritage, students' cross-cultural awareness, and acceptance of and sensitivity to cultural diversity (Standard 3.2).

Foundation in Theory and Research

The cuisine course should create a learner-centered environment in which every learner is an active and creative participant in her/his own learning process and in the building of a community of learners. The instructor promotes learners' self-efficacy, motivation, and meta-cognitive awareness as essential factors for students' success (Bruning, Gregory, & Ronning, 1995). The instruction should encourage students to develop their individual linguistic abilities, interests, and learning styles and should address language learners' individual language needs to help them succeed in their program of language study (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999). The teacher facilitates instruction, guides student learning, and designs opportunities for cooperative and individual learning. The ways in which integrating cuisine can engage students and teachers, and connect to various areas of language study and course design, are summarized in Figure 1 (see Appendix A). Competencies, tasks and functions, and text type that the activities of a cuisine course address are included in Table 1 (see Appendix B). Ninety percent of what people learn is learned by doing, and capturing students' attention should be an important variable to consider while planning and implementing instruction (Jensen, 1998). Learners' engagement in meaningful tasks (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; McCafferty, Roebuck, & Wayland, 2001), an intensive processing of language input (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993), and the use of modified input and output (Ellis & He, 1999) in the negotiation of meaning between participants (Vygotsky, 1997) enhance memory retention and lead to higher learning. According to the constructivist approach to learning, a student needs to become an active and self-regulated (someone who is in charge of her/his own learning) participant in the learning process in order to increase her/his self-efficacy (belief in one's abilities) and acquisition of knowledge (learning of new information) (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1995).

Motivation of Learners

As in any language course and activity, keeping language learners motivated should be an important objective for the teacher of a cuisine course. If students join a cuisine course voluntarily because of their individual interests and educational priorities, it is important for teachers and course developers to use effective ways to keep the level of students' motivation high throughout the course. If the preparation of a certain dish is a required class activity, instructors should implement appropriate instructional means to motivate as many learners

as possible. For example, Dornyei (1998) discusses the Ten Commandments for motivating language learners:

1. Set a personal example with your own behavior
2. Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom
3. Present the tasks properly
4. Develop a good relationship with the learners
5. Increase the learners' linguistic self-confidence
6. Make the language classes interesting
7. Promote learner autonomy
8. Personalize the learning process
9. Increase the learners' goal-orientedness
10. Familiarize learners with the target language culture.

As they develop or teach cuisine courses, teachers should address as many of these motivational principles as possible. Dornyei states:

> Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement. […] Motivation is no longer seen as a reflection of certain inner forces such as instincts, volition, will, and psychical energy; neither is it view in strictly behavioral terms as a function of stimuli and reinforcement. Rather, current cognitive approaches place the focus on the individual's thoughts and beliefs (and recently also emotions) that are transformed into action. (p. 117).

Thus, in order to keep learners' motivation high, teachers and course developers have to be able to demonstrate to students that the language and culture experience that they will be exposed to through a cuisine course is a meaningful and thoughtful one. Such immersion should positively affect and actively engage their core thoughts, beliefs and emotions about what it means to learn the foreign language and culture.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

In light of the presented conceptual framework, different and appropriate instructional strategies, materials and sources should be used and implemented in a cuisine course. A task-based environment, authentic materials, information processing, proficiency and implementation of recipes determine the teaching and learning strategies of the cuisine course.

Task-Based Environment

The structure of the cuisine course can be based on a certain number of theme-related class sessions during an educational segment (e.g., a semester in a college or a university, a school quarter, academic sessions of 4, 6, 8, or 9 weeks). For example, in the sample course, the total of eight theme-related classes throughout a summer session was implemented. Class sessions can be a part of a separate cuisine course as it was in the discussed sample course or can be incorporated

within a larger language course. In the sample cuisine course, each class session was linked to the task of preparing specific dishes, for example, каша [dish of cooked grain or grouts], пельмени [meat dumplings], компот [stewed fruit], квас [kvass], котлеты [cutlet], салат "Оливье" [salad "Olivier"], медовый торт [honey cake], борщ [cabbage soup, borsch], пироги [pie], калачи [kind of fancy bread], блины [pancakes]. Завтрак [Breakfast], обед [lunch], ужин [dinner] and празднечные блюда [dishes for holidays] were broad contexts in which the dishes-to-be-studied were presented and grouped. Each class session had the following structural components: 1) discussion of learning objectives (what students will be able to do), 2) theoretical preparation that included the discussion of new material (e.g.. "новые слова" [new vocabulary], "пословицы" [proverbs], "поговорки" [facetious sayings], "считалки" [counting], "рецепты" [recipes], "упражнения" [exercises], "скороговорки" [tongue-twisters], "загадки" [riddles] и "примеры" [examples]), and 3) preparation and tasting of the dishes being studied. In revolving these three structural components of instruction around the central focus of preparing Russian Cuisine, the instructor effectively establishes a motivating environment which requires learners to engage in authentic tasks while simultaneously acquiring language and culture.

Using Authentic Materials for Meaningful Practice

Russian folklore is an important source of linguistically and culturally authentic information and materials that can enrich students' learning. Proverbs ["пословицы"], colloquial sayings ["поговорки"], facetious sayings ["прибаутки"] and amusing phrases ["потешки"] can illustrate a theme/topic being studied, a particular dish, a situation/moment, or a principle/value/belief of the target culture. Instructors might draw students' attention to the meaning of the expressions and contexts in which they appear. Example contexts might be the importance of the basic foods in people's daily lives, the content of people's daily meals, the content of a dish, the importance of timing and eating well, the psychology of tasting, and expressive descriptions of foods. In focusing upon the broader context, students may acknowledge that folklore represents an authentic source of information about the values, perceptions, and traditions of the target culture.

In the sample cuisine course, students studied the following expressions when they cooked "гречневую кашу" [boiled buckwheat], ate "хлеб" [bread] and used "соль" [salt] (Brusova, 1997, pp. 66-70). The expressions presented in Russian are followed by their translation in English:

1. Гречневая каша - матушка наша,
а хлебец ржаной - отец наш родной.
Boiled buckwheat - our mother,
Rye-bread - our own father.

2. Без соли не вкусно, без хлеба не сытно.
Without salt it is not tasty, without bread it is not filling.

3. Без соли, без хлеба худая беседа.
Without salt and bread the conversation is bad.

In the sample course, diverse expressions were also used in relation to the following topics and dishes: "щи" [cabbage soup], "каша" [boiled grains], cooked meals, "калачи" [fancy loaves] and the relationship between eating/tasting dishes and preparing them (see Appendix C). After introducing these expressions, the instructor used them regularly during the theoretical phase as well as during actual food preparation in order to enhance students' comprehension (knowledge of the meaning of vocabulary studied), reinforce retention (recognition of language patterns), and develop automaticity (development of language patterns).

"Считалки" [counting] and "скороговорки" [tongue-twisters] can be effectively used to distribute and assign tasks among students, such as boiling water, cutting vegetables, or mixing salad. In the sample cuisine course, an example of a counting exercise was to have the whole class form a circle where all the students, one after another, had to say a word from the expression in use until the end of it in order to find out, for instance, who would start a certain activity or do a specific task. This strategy creates a joyful and positive classroom atmosphere that is likely to lower students' anxiety levels as well as maximize their learning, as recommended in Krashen's Monitor hypothesis (Krashen, 1982). This subsequently strengthens the community of learners. The following is an example that was used in the classroom (Brusova, 1997, pp. 66-70). Additional materials used in class can be found in Appendix D.

Катилася торба
С высокого горба.
В этой торбе
Хлеб, соль, пшеница;
С кем хочешь поделиться?
A bag was sliding down from a high hill
In this bag there was bread, salt, wheat;
Whom do you want to share with?

"Скороговорки" [tongue-twisters] that include topics with respect to cuisine may be used in a cuisine course in order to improve students' pronunciation of sounds in the context of the vocabulary and themes being studied. Consonants representing difficulties for English-speaking learners of Russian are "р, ц, л, в, б, т, д, л". The following sample was used in the sample cuisine course (Brusova, 1997, pp. 66-70). Additional examples can be located in Appendix E.

1. Ар-ар-ар - кипит наш самовар.
Ar-ar-ar - our samovar boils.

2. Цо-цо-цо - снесла курица яйцо
Tso-tso-tsoo - our hen has laid an egg.

3. Иван-болван молоко взболтал,
Да не выболтал.
Ivan-idiot did not shake up the milk well.

Focusing on Information Processing

Information-processing activities are used to enhance students' cognitive processes, such as recognition, discrimination, and retention, while challenging learners in order to increase students' motivation and learning. Students can do various tasks, such as find missing words or errors, reconstruct expressions studied with words provided, answer questions, or fill in the blank by using studied vocabulary (Brusova, 1997, pp. 66-70). Here is an example that was used in class where students were asked to reconstruct a proverb or a saying by using given words. Additional samples for a variety of tasks can be found in Appendix G.

Составьте из этих слов пословицу или поговорку:
1. Пруд, труд, вынимать, рыбка
2. Рыба, мясо
3. Соловей, кормить, басни

Use these words to make a proverb or a saying:
1. Pond, labor, pull out, a little fish
2. Fish, meat
3. Nightingale, to feed, fables

Obviously, beginning learners have more difficulties than advanced students in completing these exercises. If different proficiency levels are present in the same class, the teacher can ask more advanced learners to offer explanations of words and clarifications of tasks, as well as general assistance, to novice learners while the class works in pairs. From the beginning, students know and acknowledge that the exercises are to introduce them to authentic knowledge through motivational and cooperative learning and not necessarily to evaluate and rate their current knowledge of the target language.

Using and Learning Songs

Some dishes and their ingredients can also be studied through learning a song. A song can be a way for the instructor to develop students' multiple intelligences and interests, especially musical/rhythmic, as well as make the classroom environment more informal and enjoyable in order to lower students' anxiety levels and enhance their motivation to learn the target language and culture. Below is an example of a popular song "Odnazhdy khoziaika s bazara prishla", "Однажды хозяйка с базара пришла" [One day a house wife came from a market] composed by Тувим [Tuvim] in which a woman buys ingredients to make vegetable soup. In the sample course, students read the lyrics and sang the song. Students were asked to identify, read, and pronounce the names of the dish-to-be-prepared as well as its ingredients. Students and the teacher repeated or referred to the song when they used the ingredients that the song lists.

1. Однажды хозяйка с базара пришла,
Хозяйка с базара домой принесла,
Картошку, капусту, морковку, горох,
Петрушку и свеклу - О-О-ОХ!
One day a house wife came from a market
The house wife brought home
Potatoes, cabbage, carrots, peas,
Parsley and beets - WOW!

Another song learned in the sample course was sung on the days of students' birthdays. Students sang the song "Kak na imeniny", "Как на именины" [For birthday], with joy and smiles once they learned it, especially if someone had a birthday.

Как на _____ (имя) именины испекли мы каравай
Вот такой вышины, вот такой нижины,
Вот такой ширины, вот такой ужины.
For _____'s birthday we baked a round loaf
This high and this low
This large and this narrow.

Aiming at Students' Language Proficiency While Implementing Recipes

The actual tasks of preparing dishes provide a meaningful context for students' use of new vocabulary. Depending on the students' proficiency levels, different aspects of language production and knowledge can be emphasized by the instruction through questions and prompts. For example, "я варю кашу" [I am preparing boiled grain] (Что ты делаешь?) and "мы готовим пироги" [we are preparing pies] (Какое блюдо вы готовите?) are sample sentences that the instructor encouraged Novice learners to use when describing their involvement during task completion. Numerals, plural/singular distinction, and verb conjugation are examples of common difficulties that beginning learners can face when attempting to communicate or give descriptions. The collaborative preparation of dishes, in pairs or groups, provides a real opportunity for language communication and learning. Cooperative tasks enable students to receive feedback and negotiate meaning as well as learn from each other. For this purpose, the instructor can use heterogeneous grouping among students to facilitate the development of novice learners from their actual to their potential language level, in light of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Through questions, modeling, negotiation, clarifications, and facilitation, the more advanced students can promote and establish a climate of interaction and cooperative learning with novice learners of Russian.

Scaffolding the Learning Experience

Authentic recipes and related instructions provide a way to reinforce and to activate students' schemata and background knowledge as well as engage them in meaningful communicative practice in the target language. In the sample cuisine course, the instructor engaged the learners in discussing the purpose of a recipe,

what it looks like, and how it can be used in different cultures and countries. This was done utilizing a variety of authentic Russian resources which are readily available (Pankov, 2000; Znamenskii, 2000) in combination with the utilization of student centered strategies and techniques. Ensuring that instruction and authentic experiences are effective for all learners requires careful planning on the part of the instructor. To guide and structure learners' education, a scaffolded step-by-step approach should be utilized.

In the sample cuisine course, a scaffolded step-by-step approach was emphasized. At the beginning of this gradual process, the instructor briefly introduced a dish-to-be-studied by explaining its origin and use and showing its images. The ingredients were displayed on a table so that students could see, touch, or smell them. It is important to engage as many students' senses as possible to enhance the information processing (Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Recipes and instructions were written on big posters displayed on a table in front of the students. Because of their size and format, posters were to increase students' attention to the input and allow participants to naturally build group discussions about posters' content and to locate needed information. Key vocabulary from the materials was written on a board to be pointed out during discussions. With the instructor's facilitation, students could read the recipes and instructions and try to make sense of them individually, in groups, or in a whole class discussion. The instructor regularly checked the students' comprehension by having them locate the items on the table and identify or model an action needed for cooking: "Какие овощи вы видите на столе? Что я сейчас делаю? Я режу картошку?" [What vegetables do you see on the table? What am I doing now? Am I cutting potatoes?] To learn verbs that describe cooking instructions, the instructor modeled them while using visuals. The Input - Response - Feedback (IRF) model (Shrum & Glisan, 2005) appeared to be an effective means for the instructor to provide students with feedback while establishing interaction and mediation between classroom participants. Instructional dialogues and conversations during the phases of theoretical as well as actual food preparation promoted students' comprehension, vocabulary use, and accurate pronunciation.

Conclusion

A cuisine course should promote authentic language, culture, and tasks, it should focus on learners' interests and actively involve them, and it should enhance learners' motivation to learn the foreign language and culture in diverse settings. Learning about the cuisine and foods of the target culture can be of practical interest to learners from different backgrounds and paths, including those who prepare to travel to, live in, or study in the country of the target language and culture. Such topics can be an integral part of the curriculum of language programs at different levels and settings, such as the regular language classroom or co-curricular activities. Student products developed in such cuisine classes can be presented in forums on world cultures, traditions, and languages, such as cultural conferences or international food events, in order to promote the studied culture and language. When preparing and conducting similar courses and activities, teachers should

consider 1) effective ways to involve students from different language levels (who can participate in the course: only majors/minors in Russian or anyone interested in the topic?); 2) logistics (what foods and facilities to use? what regulations to take into consideration?); 3) enriching the preparation of dishes with learning the target language and culture (what elements of formal instruction to use? what course design and learning objectives to implement? what should be the major language of communication? how to implement students' assessment? what printed materials to use?); and 4) choosing an appropriate setting and format (university level? secondary level? co-curricular or curricular activities? graded or non-graded? is attendance required? would the course have a syllabus?). The author believes that the topic of Russian cuisine can give foreign language educators a variety of options and possibilities for instructional innovation, adaptations, and applications that would use their creativity and expertise and enhance students' motivation, knowledge, and skills.

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Appendix A

Figure 1. Cuisine in the language classroom.

Cuisine in the Language Classroom

Course and Lesson Design and Structure

Thematic units
Background knowledge
New vocabulary
Preparing and testing selected dishes

Authentic Materials

Proverbs
Tongue-twisters
Sayings
Facetious phrases
Counting
Songs

Language Learner

Proficiency

Levels
Questions
Cooperative learning groups

Cuisine

Language Teacher

Information Processing

Defining
Finding errors
Finishing phrases
Matching
Defining
Reconstructing sentences

Conceptual Framework

Standards
Theory
Research
Tasks
Culture
Multiple intelligences
Other disciplines

Appendix B

Table 1. *Competencies, Tasks and Functions, and Text Type through Cuisine in the Classroom*

Competencies	Tasks and functions	Text type
Communicative	Solving Extra-linguistic cues Guessing Recalling Discussing Defining Comparing Finding errors Answering Finishing phrases Matching Reconstructing sentences	Authentic Materials Proverbs Tongue-twisters Sayings Facetious phrases Counting Songs
Linguistic	Grammar Pronunciation	
Socio-cultural	Target culture Perspectives Products Practices Contexts Genres	

Appendix C

Table 2. *Authentic Expressions and Food Tasting and Preparation*

Expressions	Translation
When preparing "щи" [cabbage soup] and "кашу" [boiled grains]: Щи да каша вся еда наша when preparing "пироги" [pies]: Хорош пирожок, внутри творожок while tasting cooked meals:	Cabbage soup and boiled grains are all our food Pie is good when there is cottage cheese inside
1. Хороша ложка к обеду 2. Аппетит приходит во время еды 3. Наварила щука щей, гощала двух лещей 4. Без соли кривой обед while preparing "калачи" [fancy loaves]:	1. One needs a spoon for a lunch 2. Appetite comes while eating 3. A pike prepared cabbage soup She offered some to two breams 4. Without salt a lunch is bad
1. Горячи кирпичи! Соскочи-ка с печи, Испеки-ка в печи Из муки калачи! 2. Ешь калачи, пока горячи. 3. Ешь калачи да поменьше лепечи. when stressing the relationship between eating/tasting dishes and preparing them:	1. Hot bricks! Come down from the stove, Bake with flour fancy loaves in the stove! 2. Eat fancy loaves while they are warm. 3. Eat fancy loaves and speak less.
1. Ешь досыта, делай то поту. 2. Ешь - не тянись, а работай - не ленись. 3. Без теста пирога не испечёшь. 4. Без труда не вытащишь и рыбку из пруда.	1. Eat until satisfied, work until in a sweat. 2. Eat quickly, work and don't be lazy. 3. Without dough one will not bake a fancy loaf. 4. No pains, no gains.

Appendix D

Table 3. *Authentic Expressions and Task Distribution*

Expressions	Translation
1. Один, два, три, четыре, пять, Шесть, семь! Пойду каши я поем. Вы ж пока считайте, Кому водить, гадайте!	1. One, two, three, four, five, Six, seven! I will go to eat some boiled grains. While you count to find out Who will lead!
2. За стеклянными горами Стоит Ваня с пирогами. Здравствуй, Ванечка-дружок, Сколько стоит пирожок? Пирожок-то стоит три, А водить-то будешь ты!	2. Behind glass mountains There is Vania with pies. Hello, Vania-friend, How much is the pie? The pie is three, And you will lead!

Appendix E

Table 4. *Tongue-Twisters*

Expressions	Translation
1. Аты-баты, шли солдаты, Аты-баты, на базар, Аты-баты, что купили? Аты-баты, самовар.	1. Aty-baty, the soldiers were going, Aty-baty, to a market, Aty-baty, what did they buy? Atay-baty, a samovar.
2. Бублик, баранку, Батон и буханку Пекарь из теста Испек спозаранку.	2. Early in the morning, with dough a baker baked A bagel, a baranka (ring-shaped roll), a bread stick and a loaf of bread.
3. Без соли, без хлеба худая беседа.	3. Without salt and bread the conversation is bad.

Appendix F

Table 5. *A Song and Food Preparation and Tasting*

Lyrics	Translation
2. Вот овощи спор завели на столе Кто лучше, нужней и важней на столе. 3. Хозяйка тем временем ножик взяла и ножиком этим крошить начала. 4. Накрытые крышкою в душном горшке Кипели, кипели в крутом кипятке 5. И суп овощной оказался не плох.	2. Vegetables began a discussion on a table Who is better, more necessary and important on the table. 3. At the same time, the housewife took a knife To begin to cut them. 4. Under a lid in a stuffy pot They were boiling in water. 5. Vegetable soup was good.

Appendix G

Table 6. *Information Processing and Food Preparation and Tasting*

Exercises	Translation
Ответьте на вопрос пословицей или поговоркой: 1. Без чего не вынешь рыбку из пруда? 2. Когда приходит аппетит? Найдите ошибку: 1. Аппетит проходит во время еды. (Ответ: Аппетит приходит во время еды.) 2. Голод не мать. (Ответ: Голод не тётка.) 3. Знает мишка, чьё мясо съела. (Ответ: Знает мошка, чьё мясо съела.)	Answer the question by using a proverb or a saying: 1. What do you need to pull out a little fish from a pond? 2. When does the appetite come? Find errors: 1. Appetite decreases while eating. (Answer: Appetite comes while eating.) 2. Hunger is not your mother. (Answer: Hunger is not your aunt.) 3. A bear knows whose meat he ate. (Answer: A midge knows whose meat she ate.)

Отгадайте загадку: 1. Фрукты и ягоды, сваренные в сахарном сиропе. Что это? (Ответ: варенье) 2. Ломтик хлеба с маслом, сыром, колбасой. Что это? (Ответ: бутерброд) 3. Сто одёжок все без застёжек. Что это? (Ответ: капуста) Grouping: The instructor asks students to group food items represented on visuals according to the following categories: fruits, vegetables, dairy products, etc.	Solve the riddles: 1. Fruits and berries, boiled in syrup of sugar. What is it? (Answer: preserves) 2. A piece of bread with butter, cheese, and sausage. What is it? (Answer: sandwich) 3. One hundred garments and all without a button. What is it? (Answer: cabbage)
Закончи фразу: Корова ест сено, а лиса? Лиса _____	Finish the phrase: A cow eats hay, and the fox? A fox _____
Разговор красок: Красный. Что это? (Возможные ответы: помидор, арбуз, и т.д.)	Conversation of colors: Red. What is it? (Possible answers: tomato, watermelon, etc.)

6

Preparing a Fotonovela in the Foreign Language Classroom

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Engaging all learners in the language classroom can be challenging as language teachers compete with their students' extracurricular activities, sports, employment, and social lives, not to mention their other classes. What better way to capture their attention than to make them the actors in a *fotonovela*? This literary genre, a "photo story," has been popular in the Spanish-speaking cultures for decades, first enjoying popularity as a type of soap opera in print and more recently evolving into a vehicle for educating the population on issues of health and safety. Even though the *fotonovela* has traditionally been a Spanish-language product, there is no reason why it could not be used as a learning activity in classes of other foreign languages to make their lessons come alive. Students can prepare a *fotonovela* by using digital pictures of themselves imported into PowerPoint, coupled with dialogue bubbles, or "callouts," thus creating a technology-based cartoon strip that stars the students themselves.

This article will first discuss the rationale for using this activity, how it engages the learners and how it addresses the standards and contemporary learning expectations. Following the rationale, the author will give a plan for implementation that worked in her classroom. Examples of current *fotonovelas* are posted on the web sites listed in the resources at the end of this article. Those interested may see there the product of a group of Spanish-speaking high school students who address the topic of healthy nutrition and lifestyle. One may see there appeal of the genre as well as the lessons of good nutrition that they attempting to teach. The Spanish language textbook Ven conmigo in levels one and two uses the *fotonovela* at the beginning of each chapter as an abridged version of the video that accompanies the chapter. An art educator guides her students in a project called Live Comics which is a very accurate term for a *fotonovela*.

Engaging all learners

Greenleaf (2003) writes, "Whoever does the work does the learning . . . We must design learning experiences that cause learners to engage, personalize, and frame contexts from their own lives—to do the work of learning" (p. 15). As the students prepare a *fotonovela*, they are engaged in using their own image and literally framing themselves in a story that has meaning to them.

The appeal of a *fotonovela* to children and young people is multifaceted. Most notably there is the personal attraction of seeing oneself and one's classmates as characters in a story. The desire for self-expression starts at an early age; teachers can capitalize on this desire by providing opportunities for their students to create stories and put themselves into the creation as the cast. The students are able to make themselves the characters in a legend, the heroes or villains in an historical saga, or just be themselves in experiencing a cultural difference in the target culture. The students can be actors on a non-threatening platform where stage fright before a live audience is not an issue. Jeanette Hecker (2005) states, "To perform in front of peers, whether in one's mother language or another language, can be a stressful experience for a student. … The computer, specifically the sound recorder, can provide the means for a student to speak the language without the potential embarrassment of making mistakes or being corrected in front of peers" (p. 119). The acting, the speaking, and the photography can all be rehearsed, repeated, and redone until the students are satisfied with the final product. Furthermore, this is a group project that allows for affiliation where the students interact with each other, learn from each other, and practice the target language with their peers. And finally, preparing a *fotonovela* is fun as it allows for creativity and humor!

Connie Fredericks-Malone and Nancy Gadbois (2005) propose that "emotional scaffolding occurs when a teacher designs a lesson plan, activity, or approach to a subject that incorporates the students' personal lives, including ethnicity, socio-economic group, history, and culture" (p. 197-198). With this interpretation, the *fotonovela* provides emotional scaffolding in that the teacher can structure the theme or situation that involves the students in cross-cultural comparisons, practices, and perspectives. Students from the earliest levels can act out cultural differences or similarities and discuss those practices in the conversational text of the *fotonovela*. As they plan the scenes and dialogue for their fotonvela, they have to think about how the practice of the target culture is similar or different from a practice in their own culture. Both the group that prepares the *fotonovela* and their classmates who view the presentation learn from the visual representation of the cultural practices.

The activities required to produce a *fotonovela* address several of Gardiner's Multiple Intelligences (1993). The students with Interpersonal Intelligence can exercise their creativity within a social group; those with Intrapersonal Intelligence will be engaged by the opportunity to express their own feelings, or perhaps those of the character he or she portrays. Those blessed with Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence can use their body language and gestures to act out the scenes. The "picture smart" students, that is, those with Visual/Spatial Intelligence

are primed to shine with the tasks that require them to produce the images and visuals that convey meaning. The Logical/Mathematical Intelligence is tapped when the students apply their logic to the order and sequence of the visuals while the Verbal/Linguistic students work well in writing the "conversations" between the characters that appear in the dialogue bubbles or callouts. The students with Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence may be encouraged by providing appropriate cultural music to accompany the presentation of the *fotonovela* via a computer with speakers. Those teachers who teach with music may find interesting Paula Heusinkveld's article listed in Suggested Further Readings at the end of this article where she writes about understanding culture through music. Even those with the Naturalist Intelligence may be included via the careful selection of perhaps an environmental theme. Jeannette Hecker (2005) concludes that "PowerPoint software has proven to be an effective tool in the language classroom, even more so when put into the students' hands. PowerPoint addresses multiple learning styles, from the analytical to the creative to the interpersonal" (p. 121).

Addressing the Standards

The *fotonovela* appeals to the educator in its relationship to accepted theories and standards of teaching foreign languages as well as to the teaching of many other disciplines. In this author's high school the principal's frequent question is, "How does this activity relate to the academic content standards?" In this case the *fotonovela* project meets the Benchmarks associated with the several of the Ohio Content Standards. Since Ohio's Content Standards (Ohio Department of Education [ODE], 2004) are aligned with the National Standards, other language educators may justify the implementation of the *fotonovela* activity as meeting the latter. It addresses Interpersonal Communication in that "students initiate and sustain . . . written communication by providing and obtaining information, expression of feelings and emotions in culturally appropriate ways in the target language" (p. 99). Meeting the Culture standard can be set up as one of the principal objectives since language and culture are connected. The results of the students' research for the *fotonovela* theme prepare them to "demonstrate an understanding of insights gained into another culture through the examination of its practices, … products, … and perspectives" (p. 107). Nancy Humbach (2001) writes of the products (materials or objects) produced by people and encourages teachers to guide their students through observation of them. What language teacher has not returned from travels abroad without at least a shopping bag full of realia? Why not give each group an artifact from the target culture and require them to explain or demonstrate its use in their *fotonovela*? The students will make Connections, as they "reinforce and expand their knowledge across disciplines through the target language" (ODE, 2004, p. 113) and those connections to other disciplines are many. Beyond the obvious support of the writing process involved in brainstorming, outlining, writing, editing, and publishing, there are the connections to the study of literature by choosing a legend or story to present, to geography by setting the scene of the *fotonovela* in a country where the target language is spoken, to art by the use of digital photography, to technology by

using a digital camera and a computer with PowerPoint software. Finally students meet the Comparisons standard as they "enhance their understanding of the nature of language by comparing the target language … their understanding of the concept of culture by comparing their own culture with another culture" (ODE, 2004, p. 119). Humbach and Bacon (2001) write of using legends to provide the "context for making information meaningful to learners (connections)" as well as providing "the context for instruction of vocabulary, syntax and functions of language (comparisons)" (p. 162).   The project can also include the Communities standard if the students go out to places where the target language is spoken, such as restaurants or stores around their communities, and ask for assistance from some native speakers.

Critical Thinking

In reviewing Bloom's Taxonomy in relation to preparing a *fotonovela*, it can be seen that the student moves upward from knowledge of the language or cultural practice, through comprehension into application. After the group discusses the assigned theme and linguistic constructions, they will begin to synthesize the ideas. They will have to discuss how to demonstrate the cultural practice or tradition and how to use language to go along with the visual representations. After the completion of the project the students should be able to make an evaluation of the practices presented and the use of the language in telling the story. After each group presents their *fotonovela* to the rest of the class there can be discussion on the assigned theme, the use of language, or the outcome of the situation that will help the rest of the class learn from that group's work.

One example is a group of students in the author's classroom who chose to prepare a *fotonovela* on the Tomatina, a street fight of one hour of throwing tomatoes in Buñol, Spain. The students moved from knowledge, where they researched and learned about the event, to comprehension where they identified the activities involved. In the application level they dramatized the festival complete with a few overripe tomatoes from the supermarket. They photographed the series of activities, put the digital pictures into a PowerPoint presentation, and added the dialogue bubbles. They presented their *fotonovela* to the class and in that way shared their learning with their classmates. To continue to the analysis level they could compare or contrast the tomato fight to an American folk festival or an absurd tradition. At the synthesis level the student could write their opinion of it or express their interest in participating in such an event. To reach the highest level of critical thinking, the students could evaluate the purpose of such a colorful tradition or even argue or defend its value in the 21st century. See Appendix 1 for one of their PowerPoint slides taken after the "fight."

Authentic Assessment

Using technology as a means to organize thoughts, plan a sequence of activities, and present the information to others is a real world activity. When the author asked her class if anyone could not do a Power Point presentation, not one student raised a hand. If high school students can easily manage the presentation

software, then they can concentrate on the task of using the target language in a meaningful way to tell a story, portray a social situation, or demonstrate a cultural practice.   They can use the target language in the context of a real world task, demonstrate what they know, and enjoy the activity. The *fotonovela*s can be stored in digital form on a disk or flash drive and may become part of a student's language portfolio, or simply printed out and copied for sharing with classmates.

Planning

As the teacher begins to plan the lesson she will start with an objective, or what understanding or perspective she wants the students to demonstrate. What is the purpose of the activity? Judith Shrum and Eileen Glissan (2000) discuss theme- and task-based approach and offer scenarios for planning. They also discuss integrating culture, (practices, products, and perspectives) and comparisons into middle school instruction that would work at other levels as well. What cultural knowledge does the teacher want her students to discuss and present to classmates? How should the students express this information, in other words, what are the targeted constructions and vocabulary? A reenactment of a myth or legend would lend itself to one vocabulary theme while a portrayal of a visit to a target country would include the vocabulary related to travel. Solving a mystery lends itself to specific or descriptive past tenses. Cultural themes, social issues, celebrations, or food preparation, the topics are endless!

Next the teacher will address the practical issues. What equipment is available at the school or will the students use their own cameras? Will they take the pictures around the school or will they set dates to photograph themselves outside of the school day? Will the students have to share one computer or several computers in the classroom, will they go to a media center, or will they have to work on a computer outside of school? How will the students bring their digital images to class, on a flash drive or burned on a CD?

To plan for the evaluation rubric the teacher will want to address the specific requirements for a high quality presentation. She should spell out expectations of both quality and quantity. What is the minimum required length of the *fotonovela* and is there an upper limit to the number of slides? What are the targeted constructions and vocabulary and how often should the students use them? Is their treatment of the cultural aspect of sufficient depth to educate their classmates? This teacher finds it helpful to address spelling expectations along with accuracy in grammar usage. Originality, creativity, appearance, and effort are important as well; they remind the student that aesthetics make their work appealing and attractive to their audience. Do the students need a category for the appropriateness of the work for the classroom? A category for cooperation that addresses the group's shared responsibility helps to encourage shared participation and time on task. Finally, consider the deadlines; if the teacher establishes deadlines for submission of the rough draft, the photographs, as well as the final project, there is no doubt that work is expected on time. An example of a rubric that this teacher used successfully is attached as Appendix 2. For help in making a rubric, there are web sites listed in the resource section that provide templates for doing so.

Timeline and Activity

There is not a set timeline for this activity since class periods vary in length. The teacher has to consider the length of the class period, the availability of the technology hardware, and the activity schedules of the students. This author introduced the project by using a laptop computer and LCD projector in class to show examples of existing *fotonovela*s on the Internet, specifically those of the California students and the University of Connecticut Family Nutrition Program; both are listed under References. Then she showed examples of work from previous classes; those examples never fail to engage the students especially when they see acquaintances or the older siblings of their classmates starring in the *fotonovela*! For the first time implementation of the project when the teacher has no projects from previous years, she can prepare a short *fotonovela* using several digital images taken of the students in the class or some of herself and insert a dialogue that will attract the attention of the students. The author allowed one forty-minute class period for the introduction and viewing of *fotonovelas*, as well as the discussion of the requirements and the rubric. She gave each student an abbreviated copy of the rubric in the form of a checklist to eliminate any questions on what should be included.

Once the students see how to prepare a *fotonovela* and what it looks like with their acquaintances in it, they will have a better idea of how to proceed and they can begin their work. Grouping is at the discretion of the instructor who must keep in mind the schedules of the students since they will have to be together at an appointed time to take the pictures. The students should start by brainstorming a story line that will follow the assigned theme. Homework assignments may include each student writing a set number of lines for consideration in the story or each student sketching a certain number of pictures that will show the action of the story. After the students meet again in class with their lines, they can refine the story, plan the photos, and set a common meeting time to take the pictures. After two days of working on the script, she collected their work to that point which was that included each group's lines and sketches for pictures, and she marked areas for correction. The class returned to a regular instruction routine to study other grammatical constructions so that the students would have two weeks and two weekends in which they had to meet to take their pictures. On two other days during the following week some class time was devoted to finalizing the script for the conversation bubbles.

On the assigned date the students returned with their digital images on a disk or flash drive. The author then used Microsoft Word on a Mac laptop computer and showed them how to transfer pictures into the Power Point slide and then insert dialogue bubbles. The students were given the following instructions and demonstration: after starting the presentation software, open the formatting palette alongside the Power Point screen. Transfer the digital images from the CD, the flash drive, or the computer's picture file onto the desktop. Under Slide format choose Blank and under Insert place one picture per Power Point Slide. Open the Formatting Palette along side the Power Point window; under Add Objects click on AutoShapes and choose an appropriate callout shape. Click on a conversation

bubble or a thought bubble and drag it to the desired location on the picture. Use the mouse to grab a corner dot and stretch it until the bubble is the desired size. Click inside the bubble and type in the text. On a PC go to toolbar, then under Insert, click Picture, and then AutoShapes. Click on the desired shape then move the cursor that has turned to a + sign to the appropriate place on the picture. Click there and the bubble will appear.

After the "how to" instruction the students then set to work preparing the *fotonovela*, saving each day's work on the computer assigned to them, on the school's server, and to the flash drive belonging to one of the students. The teacher required the students to take turns at the group's computer and had supplemental assignments and readings for those who were not on the computer. Students were directed to proofread each other's work, to read it aloud, and in general, double check their text. Those groups who had the expertise and the time to do so, inserted transitions and sound into their slides.

The length of the project from start to finish depends on the size of the groups, the number of computers, and the skill level of the students. Elementary students will have fewer slides and fewer lines to insert; older students will have more pictures and in their enthusiasm may have to be limited in how many they use or to limit their use of transitions and sound. The author's students enjoyed the project and had to be encouraged to finish up by the assigned date.

Presentation and Extension

Once the students have finished their *fotonovela* the final step is to present it and lead a discussion of the lesson they have taught. If they have inserted recordings of their own voices in the slides, then they will "speak" simply by playing the slide show. If they do not have sound inserted they should read their dialogue as they show the slide show to the class. Moving beyond the classroom, this presentation makes an excellent teaching tool for lower level classes. It can also serve as a promotion for language study at class selection time or for parents' night. With the appropriate technological support, and if full names are not used, the *fotonovelas* could be posted on the school's or the language department's web site.

Practical advice

The following suggestions may help the *fotonovela* project run smoothly. Set limits; the students may enjoy taking their pictures so much that the *fotonovela* may turn out to be too long and will take longer than the time allotted for the hands-on transfer of pictures and conversation bubbles.

Time on task can be difficult to manage when there are limited computers available and when the students have delegated different tasks to each other. In this teacher's classroom those who are not actively working on the computer or whatever task is underway are expected to proofread the text and to make corrections. If there are absolutely no tasks available for them at that time, then writing activities or reading selections that parallel the targeted constructions and vocabulary help keep all students on a language-centered task. If the students keep

a daily log of completed activities it may help them see exactly what they have accomplished and what they have yet to complete. If not all students are familiar with PowerPoint, then preparing a *fotonovela* becomes a lesson in computer skills. The students who are familiar with the presentation software can teach those who are not and give them an opportunity to learn to do something they can use in other areas.

Conclusion

Students who prepare a *fotonovela* carry on a cultural literary tradition at the same time they demonstrate their language skills and make steps towards meeting National and State Content Standards. They literally put themselves into their creations and can act without the stress of having a live audience. By using the already familiar PowerPoint software, the activity is easy for them, the learning curve is not very steep, and the frustration that can occur when using new technology is eliminated. Using the target language in a creative manner where they are teaching something sets the students up for success. J. Sanford Dugan (2007) writes, "When learners address their peers in class in the target language, they are sharing ideas with an audience that has considerable value for them. The task of presenting autobiographical information or information gathered from the target culture has inherent authenticity grounded in the group's shared interest in acquiring the language and the culture. … sharing ideas in a presentational mode can give the presenter motivation to succeed without causing debilitating anxiety" (p. 31).

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1

The *Tomatina* is an annual street fight with tomatoes in Buñol, Spain, where truckloads of tomatoes are brought in and dumped in the street for the fight. The students are portraying a scene after the fight and they are saying, "The Tomatina was such fun; shall we come next year?" "Why not?" "Well, they're not angry, it's just to have fun." and "What fun, hitting my friends with tomatoes."

Appendix 2

Rubric for the *Fotonovela*

	Outstanding!	Good work!	Meets the requirements.	Needs improvement!
Spelling and Grammar	Our presentation has very few misspellings or grammatical errors. We used correct all the targeted constructions at least twice.	Our presentation has a few misspellings and/or grammatical errors but they did not detract from the story. Most targeted constructions were attempted.	Our presentation has several grammatical and/or misspellings. The errors detracted from the story. Some targeted constructions were attempted.	Our presentation has many grammatical and// or spelling errors. Errors detracted greatly from the story. Only a few targeted constructions were attempted.
Creativity and Originality	Our presentation shows originality, creativity or inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in a unique and interesting way. We made an obvious effort to be creative, engaging or humorous.	Our presentation shows some originality, creativity or inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in an interesting way.	Our presentation shows an attempt at originality or creativity on 1-2 slides.	Our presentation was a rehash of other people's ideas and/or graphics or shows very little or no attempt at original thought.
Digital Camera Use	The pictures are high quality. The subjects are in focus, centered, and allow room for the callouts. The length of the presentation is 12 or more slides.	The pictures are good quality. The subjects are usually in focus. The length of the presentation was 10-11 slides. Most pictures have room for callouts.	Some pictures are of marginal quality. Several subjects are not in focus. The length of the presentation was 8 slides. Callouts block much of the pictures.	The pictures are of poor quality. The presentation was less than 8 slides. Callouts block much of the pictures.
Culture	Our presentation includes several in-depth explanations of Spanish-speaking cultures and their traditions or practices.	Our presentation includes two in-depth references and explanations to Spanish-speaking culture.	Our presentation includes a passing reference to something from a Spanish-speaking culture.	Our presentation lacks a reference to something in a Spanish-speaking culture.

Effort	Our presentation goes above and beyond the requirements by using several of the high-level grammatical constructions, sound, and transitions. The title page is in Spanish with the title in Spanish, all members' names and the period number.	Our presentation includes one or two elements beyond the requirements. The title page is in Spanish with all members' names listed.	Our presentation meets the requirements. The title page uses English or is missing group members' names.	Our presentation does not meet the minimum requirements. The title page is missing.
Group Cooperation	Our group delegated tasks and shared responsibility effectively all the time. All individuals were on task on Spanish all the time.	Our group delegated tasks and shared responsibility effectively most of the time. Most individuals were on task on Spanish most of the time.	Our group delegated tasks and shared responsibility effectively some of the time. Some individuals were off task some of the time.	Our group was not effective in delegating tasks and/or sharing responsibility. Some individuals did not make good use of class time allotted, did homework for other classes, or socialized. One or two members did most of the work.
Deadlines	Our group turned in a completed a rough draft and a finished *fotonovela* ahead of the deadline.	Our group met the deadlines and the project was finished on time.	The group met the deadlines and the *fotonovela* was finished on time.	Our group did not meet one or more deadlines or the *fotonovela* was not finished on time.

Suggested Further Readings and Recommended Resources:

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Emme, M.J., Kirova, A., & Cambre, C. *Fotonovela* and Collaborative Storytelling: Researching the Spaces between Image, Text, and Body. Retrieved October 7, 2007 from http://pcerii.metropolis.net/Virtual%20Library/ Final Reports/Kirova/*Fotonovela*%20and%20Collaborative%20Storytelling.pdf

Heusinkveld, P. R. (2001). Understanding Culture Through Music: Products and Perspectives. In V. Galloway, (Ed.) Teaching Cultures of the Hispanic World: Products and Practices in Perspectives. Mason, OH: Thomson Learning Custom Publishing.

Online resources for creating rubrics:

http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php
http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/
http://rubrics4teachers.com/

Resources for viewing *fotonovelas*:

http://cemonterey.ucdavis.edu/EFNEP122/-b--I-Fotonovelas--b---I-.htm
http://hhd.org/hhdnews/hhdstories/fs_09_2006.asp
http://slideshare.net/tag/fotonovela
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7

Engaging Students through Hybrid Course Materials

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Foreign language educators are often faced with limited opportunities for students to use the target language in class, limited access to authentic materials, and limited language input from a variety of sources. Integrating literature, culture, and language in an already packed curriculum poses another challenge. The implementation of engaging and interactive activities that combine all three areas (literature, culture, language) can have a great impact on how students learn and on their motivation. Hybrid or blended course materials represent a carefully planned mix of traditional classroom instruction and online learning activities (Allen & Seaman, 2003; Rivera & Rice, 2002; Young, 2002) and offer a great way to actively engage students beyond the classroom setting by allowing them to demonstrate accomplishments in multiple literacies. This delivery model is rapidly gaining popularity in foreign language classrooms and may be useful at all levels of instruction (Chenoweth, Ushida & Murday, 2006). This article describes hybrid modules that were developed for second- and fourth-year German college courses, highlighting benefits and challenges of hybrid education and showcasing different technologies that can be used effectively in and outside of foreign language classrooms. Empirical results of qualitative perception studies indicate students' strong preference toward technology-enhanced materials and increased confidence, motivation, and fluency as part of increased opportunities for students to produce language output.

Challenges in foreign language classrooms

In recent years, foreign language enrollments at US institutions of higher education have steadily increased. Comparing numbers from the 2002 MLA survey with those from 2006, Furman, Goldberg and Lusin (2007) noted a 12.6% increase for the fifteen most commonly taught languages (i.e., Spanish, French,

German, American Sign Language, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Latin, Russian, Arabic, ancient Greek, biblical Hebrew, Portuguese, modern Hebrew, and Korean), ranging from 2.2% (French) to 126.5% (Arabic) with biblical Hebrew as the only language that decreased in enrollment by 0.3%. While these numbers display a positive development, many language departments face the problem of classrooms that are filled to capacity. A review of three Big Ten institutions that all follow semester systems (Indiana University Bloomington, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota Twin Cities) revealed that in the fall of 2007, 24% of first-year language classes in French, German, and Spanish and 53% of second-year classes were filled to or beyond capacity (capacity ranging from 22-30 students per section). It is not hard to conceive that with student numbers exceeding 30 for lower-division language classes, traditional classroom settings do not offer many opportunities for students to use the target language and to receive feedback. Also, a strategy that would rely solely on hiring additional instructional staff is not cost-efficient.

The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (1999) list communication as one of five areas of language competency. The statement of philosophy reads:

> Language and communication are the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. (ACTFL, 1999, p. 2)

Communication is not only a major aspect in our daily lives, foreign language students specifically state that one of their top priorities in language classes is to gain oral fluency which will enable them to communicate and use the language in every-day situations (e.g., Glisan, 1987; Harlow & Muyskens, 1994; Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995b; Ossipov, 2000; Saussy, 2005), but that too little emphasis is placed on this skill in classrooms that seat many students with often differing proficiency levels.

A second challenge for language educators is the implementation of authentic materials in their teaching practices. Most often, such materials are limited in textbooks, and materials from other sources may be inappropriate in terms of level of difficulty (Geltrich-Ludgate & Tovar, 1987; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Rogers & Medley, 1988). Along with the lack of authentic materials goes a general lack of variety of input from different sources. Students are rarely exposed to another speaker besides the instructor, and in the case of non-native instructors, students might never be exposed to native speakers at all (Lazaraton, 2001; Medyes, 2001). They also have few if any opportunities to observe and engage in communication with several native speakers in multiple modes (speaking and writing).

Over the last 25 years, yet another challenge has been discussed by scholars and practitioners: the integration of literature, language, and culture across levels (e.g., Barnett, 1991; Bernhardt, 1995; Byrnes, 1990, 1998; Henning, 1993;

Hoffmann & James, 1986; Kramsch, 1985, 1993, 1998; Schultz, 2002; Shanahan, 1997; Swaffar & Arens, 2005; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991). In general, lower-level courses (i.e., first and second year) focus on developing functional communication abilities in interpersonal contexts, while upper-level courses (i.e., third and fourth year) are content-based and focus on developing analytic skills through investigation of cultural themes and literary genres. Many institutions struggle with articulation between these levels and smooth transitions from one level to the next. Despite the plethora of theoretical and (fewer) practical suggestions, the literature-language divide still poses an urgent problem for language educators across departments.

Overcoming challenges

The profession has witnessed a renewed prioritizing of language instruction in recent years, particularly of strategic languages, as evidenced by the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) launched in 2006. The three overarching goals of the NSLI are to

(1) Expand the number of Americans mastering critical need languages and start at a younger age;
(2) Increase the number of advanced-level speakers of foreign languages, with an emphasis on critical need languages; and
(3) Increase the number of foreign language teachers and the resources for them. (U.S. Department of State, 2006)

To meet these goals, the NSLI requested funding in the amount of $114 million for FY07 (U.S. Department of State, 2006). The initiative follows recommendations by the American Council on Education that state

Mastery of a second language and cultural sensitivity are crucial for diplomacy, for international business, and in fields as diverse as engineering and medicine. … [F]luency in a host nation's language is helpful not only in negotiations, but also as a gateway to the culture. … The United States must preserve and improve [the capability for teaching and research in all languages] at the national level, not permitting its erosion in the face of budget pressures. (American Council on Education, 1998, p. 7)

Along with rising enrollment numbers, there is an increased demand for language departments to provide quality instruction to a diverse body of learners in a wide variety of languages under varying learning conditions. As the global network continues to grow, so will the need for global citizens with proficient intercultural communication skills. It can be assumed that global communication will take place to a large extent in computer-mediated environments, which also calls for sufficient technology skills in the global future workforce (NMC, 2007). Therefore, technology poses a necessary component of curricular enhancement across educational institutions and not least in language departments (Gannon, 2004; Hokanson, 2000). Digital tools can not only enhance language learning in general, but also increase its efficacy and capacity.

Hybrid education: Promises and problems

Hybrid education can help overcome the above challenges by offering a promising model for more flexible language instruction. Hybrid, blended, or technology-enhanced courses refer to classes where there is a carefully planned blend of traditional classroom instruction and online learning, combining the best of both styles of instruction (Allen & Seaman, 2003; Rivera & Rice, 2002; Young, 2002). Such courses still offer the crucial face-to-face interaction with instructors and other students (particularly important for foreign language courses) but reduce seat time at the institution and therefore expenses for reserving classrooms by moving parts of the learning process online. The Sloan-Consortium distinguishes hybrid or blended courses where 30-79% of course content is delivered online from web-facilitated learning that includes 1-29% online learning (Allen & Seaman, 2005). These delivery methods are rapidly gaining popularity in institutions of higher education. Research on computer-assisted language learning, computer-mediated communication, and hybrid education has identified positive aspects of such course models that can benefit students, instructors, and institutions:

(1) Technology-enhanced courses offer great flexibility. They allow students to self study (flexibility in time and location) but also bring students and instructors together face-to-face. In both settings (online and face-to-face), students are able to make meaningful connections with their instructor and with other students, encouraging self-directed learning, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, time management, and computer skills (Chun, 1994; Darnhower, 2002; Garnham & Kaleta, 2002; Kern, 1995a).

(2) They cater to different learner styles and give students equal opportunity to participate through the student-centered nature of such courses and the fact that learners can actively control their own learning environment (Beauvois, 1992; Hokanson, 2000; Kelm, 1992).

(3) Students engage in active learning through assignments such as online group projects, discussion boards, and self-tests (Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth, 2001; Gannon, 2004).

(4) Hybrid courses cater to non-traditional students such as working adults and parents and allow them to complete their education to a large extent over the Internet (Davis, 1988; Young, 2002).

(5) They can increase enrollment while reducing institutional costs and seat time (Sanders, 2005).

This list is by far not exhaustive but provides the rationale for the development of the hybrid modules described below. For additional benefits, see, for example, the *CALICO Journal* special issues on computer-mediated communication and foreign language learning (Thorne & Payne, 2005) and on online language teaching and learning (Stickler & Hauck, 2006), Sanders' literature survey (2005), and Wang (2005).

These benefits are promising in addressing the outlined challenges. Larger student numbers can be accommodated at reduced costs when moving portions

of instructional time online. The interactive and student-centered nature of online tools can also increase the amount of exposure to and engagement with class materials, particularly increasing communicative language skills, as will be explained further below. In addition, the Internet offers a plethora of authentic materials that can be implemented as part of a hybrid component. Lastly, the problem of articulation can be alleviated by developing a smooth sequence of courses that integrate literature, culture, and language from the beginning, which can be supported by online technologies. However, hybrid education also has some inherent problems that need to be resolved. Recent research has identified various areas of improvement that require thorough consideration on behalf of the educator. Among the most widely cited difficulties are:

(1) Technical problems, accessibility to the Internet, and lack of web support (Hara & Kling, 1999).
(2) Ambiguous instructions and lack of clarity about hardware and software requirements (Rivera & Rice, 2002).
(3) Hidden costs (Valentine, 2002).
(4) Questionable effects on foreign language proficiency (Sanders, 2005).

While the first three problems can be easily resolved, the last one seems to be particularly troublesome for language educators and needs to be addressed in more detail. Sanders' study reported results of the redesigned first-year Spanish program at Portland State University. While his study generally yields positive results and serves as a stellar example for why to move toward hybridity, he reported a significant difference in written proficiency between the traditional and the experimental (hybrid) group, where the former outperformed the latter. As possible explanation, Sanders offered that "[r]educed seat time may have influenced lower proficiency scores in the redesign" (p. 530). He continued to address one of the limitations of the study that may have led to these negative results in written proficiency:

> While most of the "traditional" instructors had 2 or more years prior experience teaching Spanish as a foreign language, all 9 instructors for the experimental courses had only 1 year or less prior experience. It seems reasonable that an 86% decrease in instructor experience would have an effect on proficiency outcomes. … Employing experienced, part-time instructors the last year of traditional instruction may have contributed to high base-line proficiency outcomes. (p. 530)

It seems that the issue of proficiency can be effectively addressed by employing experienced instructors who can give adequate feedback in both spoken and written formats. More research on the effects of hybrid education on proficiency and other learning outcomes is necessary.

To address how hybrid course components affect student perceptions of foreign language courses, the following section will describing case studies in German that were conducted at Michigan State University and will give specific examples of how all four language skills can be practiced as part of hybrid course components.

Integrating technology and language skills: Case studies in German at Michigan State University

Over the last five years, the German Studies Program at Michigan State University has tested various approaches to implement technology in their language classrooms, moving toward hybridization of language courses that address the integration of all modalities (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and the integration of literature, language, and culture on all levels of instruction. Two course models will be described in the following that included hybrid modules in a second-year language and fourth-year content courses. These case studies showcase different technologies that can be used effectively in and outside of foreign language classrooms, highlighting benefits and challenges of hybrid education. Empirical results of qualitative perception studies are reported throughout and offer insights into promising technologies that yielded increased confidence, motivation, and fluency as part of increased opportunities for students to produce language output.

The majority of the online technologies used for these case studies were developed by the technology staff at the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR) at Michigan State University, who created a variety of Rich Internet Applications for Language Learning that offer diverse opportunities for students to engage with course materials in the target language and to practice the language in interactive and creative ways (http://clear.msu.edu/teaching/online/ria/index.php). These applications were combined with additional online tools: a course management system (ANGEL) and social computing technologies (this article describes the use of blogs and wikis). In line with recent research results (Chenoweth, Ushida, & Murday, 2006; Jones, 2002; Lafford & Lafford, 2005; Lee, 2005; Polisca, 2006; Scida & Saury, 2006; Ushida, 2005; Van Deusen-Scholl, Frei, & Dixon, 2005), it was hoped that the implementation of these online technologies would shift the learning environment to the way students use the Internet today, making their learning experience more meaningful and increasing their intrinsic attraction and motivation. In addition, Internet resources were used to address the challenge of limited access to authentic materials from a variety of sources that cover different modes, registers, regional dialects, and levels of difficulty.

Lower-level language courses

In the summer of 2004, data were collected on students' perception of technology applications for language learning as part of a larger study on portfolio assessment in a second-year language course, GRM 201 (Kraemer, 2005). Data included pre- and post-surveys, tape-recorded interviews with all students at the end of the semester conducted by the instructor/researcher, and classroom artifacts including all assignments. The rationale for the hybrid modules was to expand the amount of speaking practice students get in class by having them respond to prompts online. Eleven students were enrolled in the course, eight males and three females of which two were sophomores, three juniors, and four seniors (two students did not provide any information on their year in college).

Summer German language courses at Michigan State University are a condensed and more intensive version of the equivalent courses offered throughout regular semesters and generally require a lot of focus, drive, and dedication on part of the students as they cover the materials taught over the course of a regular semester (15 weeks, 50 minutes 4 times a week) in 6.5 weeks (100 minutes 4 times a week). All students had had previous German courses and five of them had traveled to Germany before. When asked about their rationale of taking this course, nine students indicated that it was a degree requirement, but four of them also stated that personal motives had led them to enroll in this class.

In this course, the program *Audio Assignments* (http://www.audioassignments. com) was implemented with high success rates for additional speaking and listening practice.

> Audio Assignments is a program that allows teachers to create structured speaking assignments. Assignments consist of a question prompt, student responses, and teacher feedback. Teachers create assignments, students record their responses, and teachers listen and give feedback to the students. (Hoopingarner, 2007a, p. 1)

This asynchronous program (i.e., communication does not take place in real time) offered excellent opportunities for students to use the language in a non-threatening environment, removed from other speakers in class, and at their own convenience and pace. It does not require programming skills and is available free of charge for non-commercial, educational uses by students; instructors need to create an account for a minimal fee of $50, which will also give them access to a second program, *Audio Portfolios* (www.audioportfolios.com). *Audio Assignments* can be used for working on pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns in the target language and for practicing connected speech. The instructor records audio prompts to which the students respond individually. Examples can include a prompt asking for individual words the student has difficulties with, a prompt asking students to repeat a sentence or short paragraph the instructor recorded, or a prompt asking for longer responses in connected speech. After listening to the students' responses, the instructor can provide individualized feedback that the students in turn can listen to.

For GRM 201, students had to complete three picture description tasks over the course of the semester that gave the instructor and the students the opportunity to assess improvement over time. The picture stories described common scenarios such as going for a walk or inviting friends over for dinner. They contained many details, which allowed students of varying proficiency levels to focus on different aspects. The instructor recorded a brief prompt for each of these assignments that asked students to describe the pictures at hand. Students then had to respond orally and record their picture descriptions. They received brief oral and detailed written feedback on each assignment that focused on five sections: (1) content and comprehension; (2) pronunciation, intonation and stress; (3) vocabulary; (4) fluency; and (5) grammar.

Figure 1 gives an example of the audio assignment, including the three prompts. The first student subscribed to the assignment is Brad Meijer. The instructor can record prompts, listen to student answers, and record feedback. The program enables instructors to establish a more personal relationship with each student and to assess individual strengths and weaknesses over the course of a semester, which would never be possible in the same amount of time in traditional classroom settings.

Figure 1
Audio Assignments

Note. This is a screenshot of the instructor's view of *Audio Assignments*. For this assignment, entitled "Bildbeschreibungen" [picture descriptions], three prompts were recorded by the instructor. The student responses can be played back here and the instructor can record feedback on this page as well. The instructor also has the option of adding new prompts and renaming the assignment or individual prompts. This page also provides the code students need to subscribe to the assignment (in this case MzM).

The time commitment for instructors in using this program can be minimal to moderate, depending on the number and complexity of prompts recorded. It serves as an excellent way to monitor progress in oral proficiency, as students and the instructor can review and compare assignments completed throughout the semester. The program allows for implementation at all levels of instruction. Instructors can even choose to create individual prompts that are directly tailored to each individual student's needs.

The level of interactivity for students is high and the program has the potential for offering high levels of engagement when prompts address topics of interest to the students and assignments that allow them to develop their language proficiency

as part of a meaningful task. It can offer innovative ways to integrate linguistic skills and academic content by engaging students in oral production about course materials.

Of the eleven students enrolled in the class, seven reported improvement in speaking abilities at the end of the semester. The other four felt they had remained at the same level. One student found the picture descriptions to be one of the best activities of the semester because they offered meaningful practice in speaking and "there was a lot of leeway, variables that were in the student's control there. Using what vocabulary I felt comfortable using, I could tailor that assignment very well." While the focus of this course was not on technology per se (but on portfolio assessment), several students addressed this aspect in the interview and post-surveys administered at the end of the semester, stating that the online activities were meaningful because they were task-based and provided additional contextualized language practice.

Upper-level content courses

While the hybrid component in GRM 201 focused on the implementation of additional speaking and listening assignments outside of class, hybrid components in upper-level content courses were aimed toward the integration of literary and cultural content with linguistic skills. In the spring of 2007, hybrid modules were implemented as part of a fourth-year course on 18th and 19th century literature and culture that provided the students with varied interactive and engaging options to use the language in multiple literacies online. This study served as the pilot for a larger study on student perceptions of hybrid courses. For the pilot, the researcher redesigned existing course materials and activities that were developed by the instructor. Instead of assigning stand-alone complex readings that were discussed in large group discussions and individual writing assignments on the course topic, the hybrid component included collaborative and interactive assignments such as online discussion boards, web quests, interactive pre-, during-, and post-reading activities, podcasts, online speaking activities, pronunciation practice with oral feedback, vocabulary work and grammar self-tests, real-time chats, and creative writing activities. The hybrid modules were aimed at taking today's students' habits, interests, and lifestyles into account, catering to different learner styles and learning modes, and enhancing students' motivation for and enjoyment of the course. Two modules were created: Module 1 covered week 10 of the semester (two class sessions), module 2 was implemented in weeks 12 and 13 of the semester (three class sessions). The content covered during both modules was a German novel and the students met only for half the class time (40 minutes per class session instead of 80 minutes).

The participants' perceptions (students and course instructor) of the regular and hybrid classroom activities were collected via pre- and post-surveys, tape-recorded interviews with randomly sampled students and the instructor at the end of the semester, and classroom artifacts including all assignments. The face-to-face classroom sessions were video recorded and transcribed. Perceptions of regular activities were compared with participants' perceptions of the communicative and integrative activities that were part of the hybrid component.

Fourteen students were enrolled in the course, five males and nine females of which three were juniors and eleven were seniors. Five of these students had German as their primary major, eight as secondary major, and one student took the course because he was interested in German language and culture. All but two students had traveled to Germany before. When asked about their rationale for taking this course, twelve students indicated that it was a requirement and specified that they hoped to improve their understanding of the literature and culture of the specific period and improve their German language skills, particularly gaining speaking practice and maintaining listening, writing, and reading skills.

The hybrid modules consisted of a set of assignments students had to complete before, during, and after reading a section of the assigned novel. The pre-reading activities prepared students for the general content of the novel and sensitized them to difficult linguistic and grammatical aspects of the text. Word associations focused their attention on semantic aspects, a web quest prepared students for new and unfamiliar concepts that were treated in the text (e.g., historical events), and interactive activities previewed vocabulary items and grammar concepts in the form of multiple-choice, cloze, true-or-false, crossword, and sentence scramble activities. While reading, students were asked to keep notes on certain aspects in a drop box online and the chapters were made available as mp3 files for students to download and listen to. Post-reading activities included short chapter summaries that were used as springboard for in-class discussions, the same word associations from the pre-reading activities tested if students' vocabulary use changed after reading the text, interactive comprehension activities were used for self-tests on content, and online speaking activities (using *Audio Assignments*) prompted students to respond to content questions and to hypothesize about the next chapter of the novel.

Results showed that students enjoyed working online and felt it gave them more exposure to and diverse opportunities using the language in a non-threatening environment. Of the fourteen students enrolled in the course, only one specifically expressed a strong negative influence of the hybrid component on his attitude toward the course because it was "unexpected and irritating." This student, however, gave the class the overall worst rating and assessed improvement in content knowledge and language proficiency in all areas as none to minimal. Three other students expressed a negative influence of the hybrid component on their attitude toward the course because the activities were too time and labor intensive and seemed as an add-on to the class. The other nine students highlighted positive aspects of the hybrid component, including better vocabulary retention, improved listening comprehension, improved understanding of complex 19th century authentic texts, and higher attention rates. "I preferred the online activities, especially the listening comprehension parts. Hearing the text while reading was very helpful."

The instructor reported that in-class discussions were more engaged as a result of the hybrid modules and more students participated than usual. She observed a more positive attitude because students seemed to have understood the readings better and were able to engage more during in-class discussions. She particularly

liked the podcasts of the texts as they addressed the need for listening components in an upper-level class.

As mentioned before, these modules served as the pilot study for a hybrid fourth-year course that was implemented in the fall of 2007. Students' problems and suggestions were taken into consideration to formulate a reconceptualized, technology-enhanced framework that integrated academic content with linguistic skills. For example, students in the pilot study had commented on the lack of integration of the hybrid modules within the overall course design or uniform due dates of assignments. Such aspects were specifically taken into consideration as the hybrid course was developed.

The content of the hybrid course was "Major Themes in German Cultural History" and focused on the German fairy tale tradition. One third of face-to-face classroom sessions were replaced by online assignments and three class sessions were used to model the online technologies and give students supervised practice opportunities. Hybrid activities included online self-assessments, blogs, wikis, chats, interactive comprehension activities, web quests, co-authored papers, online readings, interactive speaking assignments, podcasts, online discussion boards, and a multimedia team-project. Data were collected from pre- and post-surveys, videotaped classroom observations, a reflective journal kept by the instructor/researcher, tape-recorded interviews with all students at the end of the semester, and classroom artifacts including all assignments.

Nineteen students were enrolled in the course, four males and fifteen females of which three were juniors and sixteen were seniors. Six of these students had German as their primary major and nine as secondary major. All but two students had traveled to Germany before. When asked about their rationale for taking this course, sixteen students indicated that it was a requirement and specified that they hoped to improve their understanding of the literature and culture of the specific topic and improve their German language skills, particularly grammar and vocabulary, speaking and pronunciation, and listening and reading.

The following section will describe four online technologies that were implemented in the hybrid course and will discuss benefits and challenges of these tools as well as students' perceptions.

Conversations: Listening and speaking

One of the online technologies that was implemented with high success rates for practicing listening and speaking skills is a program called *Conversations* that simulates conversations.

> Conversations is a program that allows language teachers to create a series of audio/video prompts for their students. Learners can access the questions in practice mode or real-time mode. Students' responses to the prompts are automatically saved onto a central server so that teachers can monitor their work. (Hoopingarner, 2007b, p. 1)

Just like *Audio Assignments*, *Conversations* (http://clear.msu.edu/teaching/online/ria/conversations/index.php) is an asynchronous program that offers

excellent opportunities for students to use the language in a non-threatening environment, removed from other speakers in class, at their own convenience and pace, and with the option of practicing. It can be used to simulate conversation, role-plays, or virtual interviews and enables instructors to establish a more personal relationship with each student and to assess individual strengths and weaknesses over the course of a semester, which would never be possible in the same amount of time in traditional classroom settings. The program requires no programming skills and is free of charge for non-commercial, educational uses by students and instructors.

Conversations lends itself as an excellent homework tool and can range from short answer questions at the beginning of a course, where the objective would be for the instructor to get to know the students and to quickly assess each students' level, to more complex assignments where students need to provide specific answers on course content. An example of a meaningful task that was implemented in the fourth-year German course on fairy tales is listed below.

1. Welche drei Elemente, die Lüthi bespricht, sind für sie besonders typisch für Märchen? [Which three elements, as discussed by Lüthi, are typical for fairy tales?]
2. Welches Märchen ist Ihr Lieblingsmärchen? Woher stammt das Märchen, welche Elemente gibt es in diesem Märchen und warum es Ihr Lieblingsmärchen? [Which is your favorite fairy tale? Where did it originate, which elements are in it, and why is it your favorite fairy tale?]
3. Stellen Sie sich vor, Sie müssen eine moderne Version Ihres Lieblingsmärchens kreieren. Wählen Sie ein Element und erklären Sie, wie Sie es für das 21. Jahrhundert adaptieren würden. [Imagine that you have to create a modern version of your favorite fairy tale. Select one of the elements and explain how you would adapt it to a 21st century context.]

These prompts first reviewed materials that were discussed in class. The first prompt allowed the instructor to check the students' comprehension of the content and set the context for the students for the following questions. The second prompt allowed students to focus on their personal experience while connecting with the topics discussed in class. The last prompt broadened the context even further and asked students to transfer their knowledge to a new context and become creative users of their newly acquired knowledge. Additional example prompts for an initial assignment that simulates a face-to-face conversation and for a more advanced assignment that focuses on specific course readings and resembles a virtual interview are provided in Appendix A.

Figure 2 provides a screenshot of *Conversations*. Once logged in, all conversations started by the user are listed on the left side (left screen shot). The functionality of the program is the same for teachers and students, meaning that both can create conversations to which they invite others or join existing conversations created by others. The pencil allows the user to edit each conversation (i.e., set

Figure 2

Conversations

Note. These are screenshots of the user view of Conversations once logged in. On the left, there are five questions that were recorded by the instructor for the assignment for week six. The screen shot on the right shows the instructor's view of student responses. For week seven, two students have joined the conversation. On the right side, Zachary's conversation is playing back.

the number of prompts, set the option for students to practice or complete the assignment in real time, and access the conversation code students need to join). The x deletes a conversation, the speaker icon allows for recording prompts, the eye allows for listening to students' answers (see screen shot on the right), and the open/closed lock permits/prevents students from joining the conversation. Users can join conversations below by entering a specific conversation code provided by the instructor. The left screen shot shows the assignment for week six, including five instructor prompts, the first of which is currently playing. In this window, instructors can record and review their prompts. The video function is not enabled for this assignment. The screen shot on the right shows an example of the instructor's view when listening to students' answers (the eye icon).

The time commitment for instructors in using this program can be minimal to moderate, depending on the number and complexity of prompts recorded. Conversations serves as an excellent way to monitor progress in oral proficiency, as students and the instructor can review and compare assignments completed throughout the semester. The program allows for implementation at all levels of instruction. Instructors can even choose to create individual prompts that are directly tailored to each individual student's needs.

The level of interactivity for students is moderate and it has the potential for offering high levels of engagement when prompts address topics of interest to the students and assignments that allow them to develop their language proficiency as part of a meaningful task. Conversations offers innovative ways to integrate linguistic skills and academic content by engaging students in oral production about course materials, as was seen in the above example.

Overall, students reported that the online speaking activities helped them increase their confidence and fluency in spoken German, which directly translated to higher motivation in the course. As mentioned earlier, varying proficiency levels can pose a problem for in-class discussions. One student addressed this topic in her weekly self-evaluation for week three: "I wish that my speaking skills were better. I'm trying to improve them, but it's very intimidating to be in a class full of people who have already been to Germany and can speak it without flinching. This is mainly why I hesitate to participate, and worry about future oral presentations of mine. I'm going to do my best though to improve!" Later in the semester, the same student reported to feel more and more confident as a result of practicing her communication skills every week with Conversations. Another positive comment came form a very proficient speaker who had spent several years in Germany who wrote: "I really liked the mündliche übungen [speaking assignments] ... I like it probably the most out of all the assignments." When asked why he liked those assignments, he said they offered targeted language practice on a regular basis. One of the students, a native speaker of German, raised the issue of authenticity: "Ich persönlich finde es sehr 'akward', mit einem Computer eine Konversation zu haben. Es ist so unnatürlich und unpersönlich." ["I personally find it rather 'awkward' to have a conversation with a computer. It is very unnatural and impersonal."] While his comment is correct in its criticism of the lack of a natural conversation, the program still offers valuable targeted

language practice for all students, particularly those who are hesitant to speak up in a traditional classroom.

Blogs and wikis: Reading and writing

Blogs and wikis are two social computing technologies that students are assumed to be familiar with and often use on a regular basis outside of class. Therefore, when implemented in foreign language classes, such programs tap into what students do and like to do in their native language and can increase their intrinsic motivation for language learning. They are collaborative tools that focus on reading and writing and are well received by students due to their interactive and engaging character. They only require basic technology skills similar to word processing and are generally free of charge.

Blog is short for weblog, "a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer" (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 1999). Their high level of interactivity stems from connections (in the form of hyperlinks) made to other resources and the option for readers to directly comment on what the author wrote. In the language classroom, students can show development over time and use them as a creative outlet for language use. One of the major advantages of blogs is that the readership can extend beyond the instructor and classmates. "Self-publishing encourages ownership and responsibility on the part of the students, who may be more thoughtful (in content and structure) if they know they are writing for a real audience" (Godwin-Jones, 2003, p. 13). Many course management systems now include blogs and wikis and restrict accessibility to the secured environment of the class. However, many free online services provide blogs and wikis as well (e.g., Blogger, www.blogger.com and Wikispaces, www.wikispaces.com).

Figure 3 shows an example of a blog used in the fourth-year hybrid course. The blog is part of the course management system used (i.e., ANGEL). The assignment asked students to keep a bi-weekly blog on reactions to class assignments or discussions or other experiences in connection with the course topic. They were also required to comment on their classmates' blogs. As can be seen in Figure 3, the content of the blog focused on literature and culture but it also allowed students to attend to language issues, as evidenced in the provision of corrective feedback (see Student B's comment). The timeline on the right side lists all entries in the blog in reverse chronological order, allowing for easy access. The specific date and time of each posting is noted, which facilitates grading for the instructor in case specific due dates were assigned.

As noted above, blogs are organized in chronological order. Wikis, on the other hand, use content as their organizing principle and are a great tool for collaborative online projects. "They feature a loosely structured set of pages, linked in multiple ways to each other and to Internet resources and an open-editing system in which anyone can edit any page (by clicking on the "edit this page" button)" (Godwin-Jones, 2003, p. 15). One of the best-known examples is Wikipedia. Wikis allow users to create, edit, and link web pages. When used as an educational tool, the instructor can restrict open access to certain pages but allow students to enter

Figure 3
Blog

Note. This is an example of a blog entry, followed by a student's comment that provides corrective feedback: "p.s. Gerneralisierung ist nicht ein Wort, aber Generalisierung ist. Es tut mir leid aber ich muss es sagen." ["p.s.: Gerneralization is not a word, but generalization is. I'm sorry but I have to say this."]

and edit existing content. As the organizer of the space, the instructor can invite students as members and can restrict editing to members only. The page can still be viewed by other users, but for a small fee, space permissions can also be set to private. As space organizer, the instructor can review any changes made on any page and compare different versions of pages that are logged (see Figure 4). Wikis can function as great resources for students to review course content and create a collaborative drop box of materials related to a course. Particularly in upper-division content courses, wikis can help students share references and materials for course assignments and encourage interaction with authentic materials found on the web. Wikis can also be implemented in lower-level courses where the content can focus on language-related material such as vocabulary lists or grammar points or they can be used for collaborative writing assignments.

Figure 4 provides a screen shot of the wiki created for the course on fairy tales. The task was to create an online resource that would cover the major topics discussed in class (see navigation on the left). This allowed students to continue engaging with the course materials outside of class by summarizing and reformulating class readings and additional online resources. Students collaborated on the content and were encouraged to go beyond the materials on the syllabus to create a comprehensive source of information. In Figure 4, the main body shows the history of changes made on September 13, 2007 between 12:52 pm and 2:00 pm. The instructor can also access information about which student made what change.

Blogs and wikis also represent asynchronous tools that provide diverse opportunities for students to use the language in a non-threatening environment, at their own convenience and pace, and with the option of editing and revising. They integrate content and language by asking students to synthesize and summarize course materials and express them using their own words. Links to authentic online materials can be included to supplement students' own written products. Due to the collaborative nature of these tools, they provide ample opportunities for students to interact with each other outside the classroom.

The time commitment for instructors in setting up blogs and wikis is minimal but grading can be time-consuming. These programs allow for easy implementation at all levels of instruction and the content of blogs and wikis can be used to prompt further discussion in class. As indicated above, the level of interactivity and engagement for students is high and the tasks themselves are meaningful because students write for real audiences (the audience extends beyond the teacher to include other students and, in the case of telecollaboration with students abroad, native speakers) and create a pool of useful resources that supplement other course materials (in the case of wikis).

Students reported that even though time-consuming, the blogs and wikis were fun activities that allowed them to use the language in creative ways. The blogs were seen as a means to extend class discussions and students commented on the similarity of the content in the blogs and the discussion forum. A recurring suggestion was to delete one or the other. The collaborative aspect of the wiki increased the students' awareness of their own language use and resulted in increased attention to language forms before they posted their entries.

The above examples focused on one or two skills at a time. In authentic contexts (i.e., abroad), students will be confronted with information in multiple modalities at the same time. To simulate such a context and to combine and apply all four language skills to a single assignment, students had to create a mashup, which is described in the following.

Figure 4
Wicki

Deutsch

Actions
- New Page
- Recent Changes
- Manage Space

Search

Navigation
Home
Merkmale und Elemente
Märchensammler
Brüder Grimm
Perrault

Sozialisation
Dornröschen
Aschenputtel

Tierbräutigam
Löweneckerchen
Froschkönig

Familienbeziehungen
Hänsel und Gretel

Moderne Märchen
edit navigation

☆ Merkmale von Märchen   page ▾ | discussion | history | notify me

☒ My Account ·

Dates: Sep 13, 2007 12:52 pm to Sep 13, 2007 2:00 pm
Actions: show wikitext changes
Key: Inserted Text Deleted Text

Merkmale und Elemente von Märchen

Grausame Strafen

Mit grausamen strafen in Märchen sehen wir die alte Form der Gerechtigkeit – Auge um Auge – und auch diese Idee, dass eine große Untat eine ebenso große Strafe verdient. Oft die Strafen sind Strafen von vom Ertrinken oder verbrennen Verbrennen und die klassische Bedeutung von verbrennen und ertrinken ist Reinigung. Der Verbrecher war mit seinen Untaten so unrein, dass er wieder gereinigt durch ein Reinigungsmittel (hier: Feuer oder Wasser) gereinigt werden muss.

Menschenopfer

Menschenopfer ist eine sehr alte Arte von Art vom Glauben indem das Opfer wehrt Dürre, Überschwemmung, Hungersnot usw. ab und dieses Motiv spiegelt sich in Märchen, wenn der Drache ein Opfer will oder sonst wird er wird das Königreich zerstören, wenn er das nicht bekommt. Ein anderes Motiv des Menschenopfers in Märchen ist das Menschenopfer als guter Wendepunkt. Oft ist der Oft Besteht der Drache eine Prinzessin als Opfer Held des Märchens oder die Partnerin des Helden geopfert und das führt zum Sieg des Helden, der

Note. This screen shot compares two different versions of the web page and highlights inserted and deleted text. In this case, the student editing the page only focused on linguistic aspects and not on content.

Mashups: Combining all four skills

In order to demonstrate accomplishments in multiple literacies, all four language skills can be easily integrated through mashups. A mashup combines different online data sources such as video clips, audio files, and images in one webpage. The free CLEAR program Mashups (http://clear.msu.edu/teaching/online/mashup/index.php) brings together all aspects discussed so far. Mashups can be used to create a larger learning context by (1) integrating academic content with linguistic skills in multiple literacies (e.g., students summarize learned information in their own words in written form and pose oral questions or provide spoken narrative); (2) implementing links to authentic materials such as web pages or video clips; (3) adding interactive comprehension activities; and (4) providing a communication forum, for example in the form of a blog, that allows for input from other students and native speakers in the target culture, with whom the mashups can be shared.

For the fairy tale course, students were assigned the following midterm project:

> This semester you will work on a multimedia team-project about identity. We will discuss issues of German cultural identity based on our readings and by looking at authentic German video clips from YouTube. For your project, you will need to produce a short video or audio clip in German that represents your own culture and identity. If you do not have a video camera or web cam available, you can use the web cam in the language learning lab or you can prepare a digital slideshow or presentation using photos, pictures, art, quotes etc. and supplement it with an audio file. You will also need to create activities corresponding with your video/presentation using SMILE. Both components will then be uploaded to Mashups and shared with English high school classes in Germany (so you are producing these projects for an actual audience!). Your audience will provide comments and feedback in our blog.

Constructivist learning theories see teaching and learning as a bi-directional activity (e.g., Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978). Empowering students to teach themselves and each other helps them process information in meaningful ways, which leads to more efficient learning and greater retention (Carlson, 2003). To develop interactive comprehension activities, the free CLEAR program SMILE (Server-Managed Interactive Language Exercises, http://clear.msu.edu/teaching/online/mimea/smile/v2/index.php) was used. It offers easy access to templates for creating interactive language practice activities that include a variety of exercise types (i.e., multiple choice, true or false, drag and drop, sentence mix, paragraph mix, cloze, and multiple select). Teachers can create SMILE activities for their students to test their comprehension of any language and content area, for example, vocabulary and grammar. A more effective and for teachers less time-consuming use of SMILE may be to have students create comprehension activities on course content for their peers and in the process review what they have learned and rephrase the information to make it suitable for online exercises. Most exercise

types allow for immediate feedback, which the student has to provide as well. SMILE therefore offers deeper engagement with content materials but can also include linguistic exercises (e.g., semantics, pragmatics, sentence- or paragraph-level processing). All individual exercises can be grouped into one activity that is assigned its own URL and can be published online.

The SMILE activities that had to be created as part of the midterm project needed to reflect the content presented in the mashup. Figure 5 is one of the midterm projects created by a team of three students.

Figure 5
Mashup

Note. This mashup combines text, video/audio, image, and SMILE activities. The text is a summary of the team's perception of identity and being American. The students created a slide show with pictures that they commented on in spoken German. This video was uploaded to YouTube and included in the mashup. The image on the bottom right is an adaptation of an authentic German image that serves as the logo of a social marketing campaign that was launched in 2005 in Germany called "Du bist Deutschland" [You are Germany]. On the bottom left are the SMILE activities on the content of the mashup. Further down and not visible

in this screen shot, the page also contains the link to the blog in which the students in Germany are encouraged to leave comments.

Student feedback on the midterm project was positive throughout. They liked the creative freedom they had to express their own opinions and to develop a representation of themselves for a real audience. All groups went above and beyond the minimum requirements and created outstanding projects. They were very excited to share their work with the German high school students and were anxious to read the blog. Another recurring positive aspect in the comments was that this project enabled them to learn about each other, much more than they would have during traditional assignments, which led to closer relationships between course participants and a positive classroom atmosphere. A more detailed description of the hybrid course and its effects on student learning is underway.

A final quote summarizes the perceptions of the majority of the students regarding the hybrid course elements:

> I think this class is a very good example of how teachers can integrate four skills of teaching and learning (reading, writing, speaking and listening) into technology. With essays, Wikispace and discussion forums the students can improve their writing skills, with Muendliche Uebung [speaking assignments] they can improve their speaking skills, we listen to Podcasts which is helpful to improve listening skills, we are reading the articles….. What I like most is the self-evaluation part. Here a student not only evaluates his/her performance, but also makes a summary of what he/she learned from the previous class. I love that idea!!!!! This class is not a traditional class type, so using the technology is changing the framework of this class. I have really enjoyed the variety of experiences that I have gotten from this course.

Conclusion

Technology is only a means to an end, not the end itself. The benefits of using technology will depend on the nature of the assignment outlined by the instructor and the actual implementation and integration of such assignments within a course. It takes careful planning to implement technologies in the language classroom and a strong need to address the outlined challenges, but when done properly, all stakeholders involved can benefit on a variety of levels. Students benefit from access to authentic materials and varied opportunities to use the language in multiple literacies with diverse learners, which can help improve their overall engagement with course materials, which in turn can positively influence confidence, motivation, fluency, and classroom atmosphere. Instructors can take advantage of online management systems that reduce time spent grading. Institutions can increase enrollment while reducing seat time in classrooms and overall institutional costs.

This article described a small variety of existing educational online tools that have been implemented successfully in lower- and upper-division German language courses. Results from qualitative perception studies added to the research base on hybrid education and offered evidence for the benefits outlined above.

Limitations of the present studies include the small scale in number of participants and duration and issues in design. The hybrid course covered too many different online technologies, which made it difficult for the students to keep up with the functionality of the programs and the number of assignments throughout the semester. Further in-depth studies on a longitudinal basis that include measures of proficiency in a variety of languages are needed and underway.

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Appendix A

Example prompts for Conversations used in the fourth-year hybrid course

Examples for an initial assignment that simulates a face-to-face conversation:

(1) Wie heißen Sie? [What is your name?]
(2) Seit wie vielen Semestern studieren Sie Deutsch? [How long have you been studying German?]
(3) Warum belegen Sie diesen Kurs? [Why are you taking this course?]
(4) Was erwarten Sie von diesem Kurs? [What do you expect from this course?]
(5) Erzählen Sie mir etwas Interessantes über sich. [Tell me something interesting about yourself.]

A more advanced assignment that focuses on specific readings and resembles a virtual interview:

(1) Wir haben über die Geschichte und Entwicklung von Märchen diskutiert. Was sagt Max Lüthi auf Seite 40-55 zu diesem Thema? Nennen Sie bitte mindestens 4 Dinge, die Märchen beeinflusst haben. [We have discussed the history and development of fairy tales. What does Max Lüthi say on pages 40-55 about this topic? Please mention at least four things that influenced fairy tales.]
(2) Jack Zipes spricht in Kapitel 1 von typischen Funktionen oder Elementen im Märchen, die von Vladimir Propp beschrieben wurden. Welche Funktionen gibt es im Märchen? Nennen Sie mindestens 4. Bitte verwenden Sie ein Märchen als Beispiel, um diese Funktionen zu erklären. [Jack Zipes talks in

chapter 1 about typical functions or elements of fairy tales as described by Vladimir Propp. Which functions are there in fairy tales? Name at least 4. Please use a fairy tale as example to illustrate these functions.]

8

Digital Recordings and Assessment: An Alternative for Measuring Oral Proficiency

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Encouraging and motivating student engagement in the foreign language classroom is challenging on multiple levels, not the least of which is overcoming perceptions of irrelevance in real-world applications and the affective barriers, such as public-performance anxiety within a group of peers and learner struggles to convey authentic representations of the self and learner abilities. In order to address these and other de-motivating elements with regard to oral proficiency development, a closer evaluation of student values in language learning is required. In a recent survey of undergraduate elementary Spanish students, learners overwhelmingly reported that they place a higher value on speaking and listening proficiency as opposed to reading and writing skills (Swanson & Early, in press), and yet current practices of oral proficiency assessment do little to empower student ownership of language skills.

One way to approach the task of engaging students in the tasks related to oral proficiency development is to encourage students the opportunity to create out-of-class recordings in order to demonstrate their proficiency, thus allowing students to self-select the recordings they believe best represent their true level of accomplishment. However, prior to the decision to begin such assessments, considerations must me made in regards to the most appropriate technology, the specific indicators of proficiency to be assessed, the design of the assessment tool, and the creation of meaningful and authentic tasks.

Oral language assessments and current technology

Communicative second-language instruction at every level focuses on the development of language proficiency in four distinct skills: written language, reading proficiency, listening comprehension, and oral language production (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1999). The first three

skills are routinely evaluated within the classroom as well as through formal assessments, whereas the challenge to assess spoken language ability has resulted in more frequent formative assessments in the classroom, but fewer formal assessments. This is due primarily to the challenges presented by oral assessment, namely the difficulty inherent in the development of useful and flexible rubrics for scoring (Foster, Tonkyn, & Wigglesworth, 2000) and instructors' time required for individual learner assessment (Flewelling, 2002).

In addition to these challenges, traditional, formative oral assessments conducted in the classroom rarely leave an assessment artifact. The creation of assessment artifacts contributes greatly to evaluation, in that they can be archived for future reference and can be used for comparison between-subjects to measure overall progress towards proficiency goals. Digital technology and the conversion of analog language lab systems to digital recording capability are advancing the capabilities for whole-class, concurrent archival recordings (Flewelling, 2002). Researchers in language learning and instruction are beginning to investigate the uses of emergent digital technologies for the potential benefit they promise when incorporated into the language curriculum for the purpose of oral proficiency development and assessment (Chan, 2003; Egbert, 1999; Volle, 2005).

Rapid advances in personal digital technology and the availability of both hardware and software resources for individual recording may provide instructors with the capabilities to collect digital oral production artifacts, while at the same time reducing the amount of class-time required for oral assessment. Each year new digital tools are introduced into the interactive web environment for the use of bloggers, podcasters, amateur (and increasingly, professional) artists, and multimedia aficionados, and although primarily created for the non-educational market, these tools are easily adapted for use in the language curriculum. To begin, we will briefly outline the functionality, challenges, and advantages of digital tools in three distinct groups: portable hardware (Sanako™ mp3 recorder, Creative Zen V™, and the Phillips 1210™), software (Windows Sound Recorder™ and Audacity™), and webware (YackPack™ and gCast). Then, we outline a nine-step procedure to create rubrics to assess students' oral language proficiency. Afterwards, we discuss an oral language assessment research project and the instructors' opinions of digital voice recordings.

Hardware and software resources

Portable, personal hardware

With the widespread diffusion of digital music technology, the prices for personal, portable devices have fallen within a comfortable range for educational purchases. Although the large capacity iPods are still among the digital elite, it is possible to find mp3 recorders with built-in microphones for prices ranging between $35 and $120, depending upon the features and the storage size of the unit. (The iPod was not evaluated as part of this research due to the requirement of an accessory microphone in order to facilitate recording. Only devices with integrated microphones were included.) The underlying premise of using a portable device is that instructors could issue a written prompt to the class or

prerecord an audio prompt onto the devices, check out the units to each student, who then record their responses outside of class. The students would then return the device to the instructor, who could either offload the recordings onto a master archive, or simply evaluate the recordings at their leisure. The primary challenges inherent in this approach could be the transfer of the prompts to each unit and the administration requirements of checking the equipment out to students (considering the possibility of loss or damage).

The lowest-priced unit investigated was the Phillips SA1210 ($35), a basic 1GB mp3 player and voice recorder with push-button recording and an integrated microphone. Although the quality of the recording had a distinctly mechanical tone to it, the articulation was clear and comprehensible. The midrange recorder was a Creative Zen V ($55), also with 1GB of storage and an integrated microphone. The process of recording was rather simple, with "microphone" selected from a list of resources on the main menu, and the recording quality was clearer than that of the previous device. An additional advantage to the Creative recorder is the ability for the instructor to transfer, not only an audio prompt to the students via a prerecorded message stored on the player, but also deliver images as prompts, by transferring digital images to the player and having them called up by the student.

At the upper end of the price range, the Sanako mp3 recorder ($120) was evaluated. Although equipped with only 512 mg of storage capacity, this recorder, designed specifically to serve the needs of language learners and teachers, does have the advantage of featuring a dual track recording system, in which the student can record their voice while concurrently listening to a teacher-track. This recorder expands possibilities for question and answer assessments or simulated, asynchronous "interviews". The recording quality was excellent; however, one significant drawback to the Sanako recorder is that, in ease of use comparisons with other products, the Sanako recording process was not intuitive. Therefore, significant training or detailed user guides would need to be provided to the students in order for them to complete their recording assignments.

Software

Although application software exists in many forms and environments, for the purposes of this article, software is defined as an executable computer application that is directly installed on an individual workstation. Through a search of software download sites, it is possible to identify dozens of shareware and freeware digital recording programs, each with its own interface and features, but all capable of recording oral production in one or more recording file formats, the most common formats being .wav and .mp3. For more information regarding these file types, refer to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audio_file_formats. Whenever recording via software (or webware, to be discussed next) a minor investment in microphones and headphones will be required. These accessories are easily purchased from any electronics or discount store and can be as low as $10 for a reasonably durable and functional model.

For the purposes of this article, we dispense with the discussion regarding the issues surrounding the digital divide and acknowledge that instructors must evaluate their students and consider whether or not most students will have access to computers outside of the school environment. If students are requested to produce recordings via a personal computer at home, it is highly recommended that parents be informed or included in the process prior to the assignment. It is ethically essential to be certain that the recorder installation requested is free of adware, spyware, or license limitations, and that the tool itself will not monopolize computer processing and storage resources.

The free Audacity recorder (Mazzoni & Dannenberg, 2000), available at http://audacity.sourceforge.net/, is an open-source recorder (available to the public with relaxed or non-existent intellectual property restrictions) that meets these requirements. Its familiar buttons and interface contribute to ease of use, and for the more technically proficient user, the software also allows relatively sophisticated editing capabilities. Sound files are recorded in the .wav format, but if .mp3 recording is required due to file storage limitations, an additional LAME encoder can be easily downloaded and installed from an associated website.

Every computer that utilizes the Windows operating system comes already equipped with the Windows Sound Recorder™. This program is accessible via the Start Menu by clicking on Programs > Accessories > Entertainment > Sound Recorder. One main disadvantage inherent in the Windows Sound Recorder™ is the limited recording time available (60 seconds). In addition, the only file format available with the Sound Recorder is the .wav format, but the limited functionality of the recorder can also contribute to its ease of use, as users do not have to download an additional file encoder.

Webware

Webware encompasses online applications of software that do not require downloads and installation of software on individual computers. As such, these tools are available from any web-enabled computer provided it is capable of sufficient connection and processing speed. An immediate advantage presented in these tools is the non-dependence on computer operating system, making them accessible to all platforms: Windows, Apple, and Linux. An administrative, and potentially legal, concern in using webware for student assessments is the fact that these recordings are created, and stored, via third-party servers, raising questions of confidentiality and reliability. However, in each of the systems presented below, it is possible for instructors to limit access to the accounts and the student recordings to only themselves and others they delegate, with the exception that internet service providers and webware developers maintain access and archives of the recordings for security purposes.

A popular free web tool for voice recording is YackPack (Fogg, 2005), obtainable at www.yackpack.net. Using this software, instructors can establish class "packs", or groups of students, and then interact asynchronously with the students. Prompts and responses can be recorded via the online interface and delivered to either an individual or the entire class, and ongoing discussion threads

can be created to share information and create truly communicative exchanges. One disadvantage of YackPack is that teachers would need to create a "pack" for each class, and then invite the students to join the "pack" via email accounts. As a result, it is necessary for each student to have an active email account prior to joining the class "pack".

For optimal results, instructors may care to utilize the language lab environment, where instructors or media specialists assist students in creating their accounts and joining the group. However, once the initial setup has been completed, recording and submitting recordings is intuitive and the interface is easily accessed and utilized. An additional advantage is the ability to personalize the recording environment by uploading student images to the "pack", reducing the impersonality of the digital environment. The greatest advantage offered by the YackPack, however, is its ability to accommodate open class discussions and threaded conversations, bringing the opportunity to archive and assess interactive discussion skills between students, and not inauthentic responses to programmed prompts.

The final tool to be discussed is gCast, developed as a tool to make podcast production and distribution easily accessible to bloggers, and accessible at www.gcast.com. While categorized as a web tool, it holds a distinct advantage over the other tools in that it requires no student computer in order to record student voice. gCast is unique in its ability to record input via telephone, and archive it on an established web account. In order to utilize gCast, the instructor must first create a gCast account. Again, it is highly recommended that separate accounts be created for individual classes to facilitate organization of recordings. Once the account is created, a gCast web page is created for that user (the instructor) and a PIN number, or access code, is identified for that account. Instructors may then distribute a toll-free telephone number indicated by gCast, and the access code, to their students.

Using any telephone, students can call into the gCast account, record their responses, review them, and then submit them using simple commands that are now familiar to anyone who has used an electronic voice mail system. By logging into the gCast account, instructors can review and evaluate their student recordings. Because the microphone technology in telephones is quite sophisticated, the high quality and clarity of recordings is remarkably consistent. One disadvantage of this system is that the filenames as they appear on the account website do not indicate the name of the caller, so it would be necessary for students to state their names orally at the beginning of each recording. Of course, the primary advantage for this system of recording is that it does not make presumptions regarding student access to digital technology; any student with access to a telephone can record their voice.

In conclusion to the technical section of this article, it is important to note that the tools mentioned here are the tools that are available at the time of this writing; new digital recording tools are developed and existing tools refined each year, adding greater capabilities and user interfaces that are easier to navigate. These tools, although created for the general web population, add functionality

and practicality to both oral production and listening comprehension development and assessment in the language curriculum. What remains is to establish reliable measures of language ability that can be both generalized to a student population, but specific enough to be useful as analysis tools for individual student oral production.

Rubrics as assessment tools

For years, rubrics have become one of the standard tools to measure student achievement because "rubrics can help teachers analyze and describe students' responses to complex tasks and determine students' levels of proficiency" (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2000, p. 22). Defined as a set of scoring guidelines for evaluating student performance that classify performance into different categories that vary along a continuum, rubrics provide educators a means to evaluate student performance. Additionally, rubrics can help inform students of what is expected in terms of assessment criteria and can help improve student performance, especially if given to the students prior to assessment.

The advantages of using these scoring guides are manifold. Rubrics allow for more consistent and objective assessment as well as allowing teachers to clarify the specificity of assessment criteria. Additionally, these scoring guides show students how performance-based activities will be evaluated and help promote student awareness about the criteria. Further, rubrics can provide benchmarks for educators to measure and even document student progress over time. Lastly, they can function as a useful vehicle for structured feedback to students and for measuring instructional effectiveness. Clearly, rubrics can serve as an integral educational tool especially when implemented alongside the framework of Backwards Design, where instructors first determine the learning outcomes, agree on acceptable evidence of competency for the outcomes and results (assessment), and then plan instruction based on the performance objectives (Wiggins & McTighe, 2001).

There are two distinct types of rubrics: analytic and holistic. Teachers who select a holistic rubric attempt to describe the overall quality of the task to be evaluated. Mertler (2001) summarizes researcher sentiment that holistic rubrics are utilized when errors in some part of the process can be tolerated provided the overall quality is high (Chase, 1999), that use of holistic rubrics is probably more appropriate when there is no definitive correct answer (Nitko, 2001), and that holistic rubrics offer a somewhat quicker scoring process than analytic rubrics since holistic rubrics focus on the overall quality and proficiency students demonstrate on specific tasks in order to get an "overall" sense of what the student was able to accomplish. Additionally, he posits, "only limited feedback is provided to the student as a result of scoring performance tasks in this manner" (p. 2).

However, when a fairly focused type of response is required, analytic rubrics are usually preferred (Nitko, 2001). Here, the instructor identifies important elements of a certain performance task (grammar, fluency, or vocabulary use for example) and assigns a point value for each criterion. Students are evaluated based on performance on each criterion and a summary score of all the different criteria

is obtained. Such inspection of multiple criteria may require more precision and even more time on behalf of the instructor. In fact, Mertler (2001) recommends, "an individual's work should be examined a separate time for each of the specific performance tasks or scoring criteria" (p. 3). From such detailed scrutiny, the degree of feedback for both students and teachers can be tremendous. Students can receive specific feedback on their performance on each of the individual criteria and teachers can adjust instruction as needed based on the results. By design, the analytic offers more detailed information on students' specific strengths and weaknesses while holistic rubrics do not (Nitko, 2001). (Refer to Appendix A and B for an example of each type of scoring guide.)

Viewed as one assessment tool among many, holistic and analytic rubrics use different perspectives to evaluate student performance. Even though rubrics can be designed in a variety of formats, they contain three common features: a stated objective, a range to rate performance, and specific performance characteristics arranged in levels indicating the degree to which a standard of performance has been met (Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Typically, numbers are assigned in ascending order to indicate better performance. In order to further the notion of what constitutes a rubric, we now present specific suggestions for FL educators to construct quality rubrics for oral language assessment. Our step-by step strategy offers instructors a means to create rubrics that dovetail with instructor-determined learning objectives for oral language proficiency.

Rubric construction guidelines

While scores of rubrics are only a click away on the Internet, their integrity can remain problematic due to an array of issues from lack of precision to determine differences in student ability to a lack of congruence between learning objectives and assessment of those objectives. Additionally, many of these easy-to-find rubrics lack any certainty of peer-reviewed approval and seemingly appear to belong in the category of assessment where one rubric serves all purposes. We advocate a 10-step procedure that FL educators can use that not only improves rubric integrity but also increases the accuracy of measuring student oral ability.

1. Determine and state learning outcome(s).
2. Align outcomes to national and state standards for FL education.
3. Determine assessment objective(s) and decide if an analytic or holistic rubric would best measure student achievement.
4. Work collaboratively with others from different schools to develop assessment criteria.
5. Select succinct titles for the performance levels.
6. Articulate quality definitions for each criterion.
7. Assign a numerical scale that is congruent with overall grading measures.
8. Solicit student and colleague opinion and revise as necessary.
9. Share the rubric with students before assessment is administered.
10. Following assessment, encourage students to archive rubrics as a means to document oral language development and progress.

To begin, the FL teacher should determine the learning outcomes. These outcomes should be written as statements regarding what teachers expect students will be able to do as a result of a learning activity. We recommend stating the outcomes using brief statements or phrases utilizing verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy. For example, students will be able to describe their families using the vocabulary from the chapter. Or perhaps, students will be able to compare Christmas traditions in France and the United States. Note, that the outcomes are written in terms of student performance. Additionally, when composing outcomes, FL teachers must determine where students reside regarding the development of language skills. Clearly novices will not be able to express the same levels of competence as advanced students.

Next, once the learning outcomes are established, we encourage FL educators to take into account state and the national standards for FL learning and align the designated outcomes to the standards. The national standards (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, ACTFL, 1999) revolve around the five goal areas of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. The standards support the notion that FL students should function in three modes (the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) that serve as a framework for describing language performance at the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels. Further, these three modes are intended to provide a more integrated and natural way of examining communication rather than the traditional approach of teaching and testing the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in isolation (Ohio Department of Education, 2007). Therefore, we strongly urge FL educators to align the standards to the objective(s) for the evaluation.

Once the learning objectives and accompanying standard(s) are determined, the assessment objective(s) need(s) to be articulated in a manner that is consistent with the learning outcomes. For example, if the learning outcome deals with being able to describe one's home, the assessment should deal with the important details surrounding the description such as vocabulary. Once decided, the FL educator needs to make a decision regarding appropriate rubric format, analytic or holistic, to evaluate student performance.

As mentioned earlier, analytic rubrics identify and assess individual components of a performance task whereas holistic rubrics assess student performance on the basis of an overall impression of student performance (Pomplun, Capps, & Sundbye, 1998). As Montgomery (2001) notes, one type of rubric is not inherently better than the other. Instructors should utilize a format that works best based on their purposes for assessment. For example, the decision to use a holistic or analytic rubric can be viewed on how the assessment results will be viewed. If an overall, summative score is desired, a holistic scoring approach may be more appropriate. However, if formative feedback is the required, we recommend an analytic scoring rubric. Additionally, the choice of rubric design can also rest on time requirements to create assessment tools, the nature of the performance task itself, and any specific performance criteria the instructor chooses to isolate.

In the fourth step of our rubric construction model, we suggest working with colleagues at different schools, even at distance if the FL educator is the sole

member of the department, to determine the performance criteria (grammar, vocabulary, etc.) for the assessment. Penuel and Riel (2007) reported that getting help from outside one's immediate circle is valuable for obtaining new information and expertise. Many times information shared among a teacher's close circle of colleagues, especially those who have worked together for many years, may not be sufficiently diverse. Sharing ideas with those outside of one's school may develop new ideas for performance criteria that could be perceived as useful.

However, before writing the performance criteria, we recommend labeling the performance levels with succinct titles. Gradient titles such as "Exemplary, Excellent, Acceptable, Unacceptable" or "Distinguished, Proficient, Apprentice, Neophyte" are common and applicable. Equally, "Superior, Good, Fair, Needs improvement" functions well too. The titles do not require lengthy catchy labels. We propose using titles that promote student confidence, that are a reflection of teachers' expectations and titles that avoid using negative wording for the lower levels of performance. Instead, FL educators should opt for titles that encourage students.

Once the criteria have been named, we recommend using between three to five distinct criteria for analytic rubrics. Too many criteria can become overwhelming for students and concentration on several distinct aspects can garner ample understanding of current student performance. For oral language assessment purposes, criteria such as vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and references to culture should be considered appropriate. As a matter of importance, FL educators should continually reflect on the purpose of the assessment when selecting assessment criteria. For example, if the instructor is working primarily with new vocabulary along side well-known grammar skills, perhaps less focus should be placed on grammar whereas vocabulary knowledge should be the assessment target. Additionally, the criteria should be compared constantly with the names for each of the performance levels as a way to ensure descriptions match the appropriate titles.

Once the criteria have been established, we recommend placing the criteria on the left side of the rubric grid. Positioned in such a fashion it allows the reader to view the performance level descriptions from left to right, which is congruent with textual layouts of books or even this article. Once the criteria are placed on the grid, quality definitions for each criterion need to be developed. It is crucial that distinct descriptions are composed for each level of performance. That is, if four different levels of quality are assigned, each level contains accurate descriptions that clearly discriminate between levels. Popham (1997) reminds educators that excessive rubric length is problematic and we concur. Quality definitions need to be constructed in such a manner that indicates performance differences clearly.

Therefore as an example, we suggest avoiding words such as "several, few, some" when describing number of errors students make during performance tasks. It is difficult to discern what distinguishes these words whereas using numerical indicator (less than five, more than three) are much more specific. However, if educators are not interested in knowing precise numbers for criteria such as vocabulary, we recommend descriptors such as "Broad, Adequate, Limited, Very

Limited" for a rubric containing four levels of description. Regardless of choice of wordage, we strongly urge FL educators to be consistent and clear throughout the descriptions and not to blend qualitative and quantitative measures.

The seventh step addresses the numerical scale that works along a continuum. Many times rubrics progress from 4, 3, 2, 1, where students earn minimal points for substandard performances. As researchers, we advocate that the lowest rating still be assigned a positive point value. By doing so, differences between students who participated in the assessment and displayed low levels of performance can be differentiated from those students who did not even participate in the assessment. Additionally, we recommend a total numerical value for the assessment to be directly aligned with teachers' grading schema.

For example, if the archetypal scale (90% A, 80% = B and so forth) is used to determine students' overall grades, the rubric should reflect the same scale such as one that totals 10 points or multiples of 10. Thus, an eight on a performance task would easily reflect a B performance. If teachers prefer to maintain rubrics that do not mirror overall grading categories, Shrum and Glisan (2005) present specific procedures to convert rubric scores to grades. In either case, we recommend placing the rubric's grading scale (A=18-20 points and so forth) near the bottom of the page for student reference since our informal conversations with secondary and collegiate students revealed that students become perplexed by having to use multiple mathematical steps to arrive at a letter grade for their presentation.

Once the rubric is constructed, it is advisable to solicit student and colleague opinion during a pilot test. Since students will be evaluated using the rubric, it is important for students to have the opportunity to review the document and provide feedback. Additionally, prior knowledge of the assessment characteristics allows students to focus their attention specifically on the rubric criteria in hopes of improving performance. Further, once teachers have established a FL colleague community with whom to share issues related to language instruction, expert feedback can help polish quality language assessments.

The final two steps of the rubric creation process include giving it to students prior to assessment and encouraging students to archive graded rubrics as a means to document student second language progress. We recommend giving the rubric to students at the beginning of units so students can begin to prepare for specific upcoming oral assessments much like a teacher-created study guide for written examinations. Once presented to students, we urge teachers to remind students about the upcoming assessment(s) and to emphasize its linguistic components during instruction and activities.

After evaluation has taken place, we strongly advise FL educators to implement student portfolios because they can provide students with opportunities to display quality work, serve as a vehicle for critical self-analysis, and demonstrate progress toward mastery of a foreign language. Besides archiving the rubrics and showcase pieces of linguistic achievement, we suggest adding voice and video recordings to DVD. Additionally, teachers can archive students' recordings to document second language proficiency and progress. Such documentation can be displayed during parent-teacher conferences as well as during accreditation visits. Further, archived

recordings can serve as a metacognitive strategy where students reflect and act on the knowledge of mental processes to improve learning.

Now that the rubric has been constructed and tested, minor modifications can be made for diverse student bodies in today's FL classroom. For gifted and talented students, rubrics can be modified to include additional criteria and possibly more stringent descriptions. Conversely, modifications can be made for special needs students. Additionally, FL teachers can implement strategies to weight some criteria more than others by doubling, for example, the impact vocabulary usage has on an oral assessment. Finally, teachers should leave room on the page for students' and teachers' names, unit plan or chapter designation, the date of assessment, and space for teachers' comments.

As a matter of formatting, ideally the scoring guide should be comprehensive enough to fit on a single piece of paper. At times, text size may need to be reduced to accommodate margin requirements depending on the size and shape (portrait vs. landscape) of the scoring guide. As a suggestion for assessing oral language proficiency during paired activities, we recommend placing two rubrics on the same side (one next to the other) of a sheet of paper. Using this side-by-side strategy, FL educators do not have to move from sheet to sheet when evaluating student performance, eliminating possible performance rating errors. Additionally, not only do we feel that a one-page rubric can be a comprehensive tool to determine students' oral language proficiency, when given prior to assessment, it can help reduce student anxiety since students will be aware of performance expectations.

Activity and accompanying rubric examples

Clearly, using digital technology to assess student oral language ability has serious implications for increasing valuable classroom instructional time. In this section we showcase several examples of oral language activities that FL teachers can be assigned to students as an out-of-class assignments and accompanying rubrics that can be used to assess the performance task. Many tasks that are currently performed in FL classrooms can be adapted for use as out-of-class recorded oral assessments. In the following examples, students are instructed to record responses to learning objectives. While these objectives could be evaluated using different criteria or rubric format, these examples serve as ideas to stimulate FL teacher thought and ultimately FL teacher assessment practices.

The first task is for first-year students at the beginning of the semester where L2 ability is emerging. A two-point rubric was designed to measure students' pronunciation ability and their fluidity of speech.

Task 1	Read a short paragraph (30-40 words) in the target language.
The teacher gives students a sheet of paper with the paragraph (30-40 words) in the target language. They are told that 10 words from paragraph will be selected for assessment of pronunciation and fluidity that the students demonstrate while reading. Students have two days to record the paragraph and email the recording to the teacher.	

	10 points	9 points	8 points	7 points
Pronunciation	Pronounced all selected words correctly.	Pronounced 9 selected words correctly.	Pronounced 8 selected words correctly.	Pronounced 7 or less selected words correctly.
Fluidity	Speech sustained throughout without pauses or stumbling.	Speech sustained most of the time and contains some stumbling.	Speech is choppy with frequent short pauses.	Speech contains long pauses.

The next speaking task is a common first-year assignment where students are learning to describe people. Here, the instructor is evaluating students' ability to use appropriate vocabulary, correct grammatical usage of noun-adjective agreement, and the completion of the task. While the educator could choose to evaluate students on other criteria, such as those from Task 1 (above), the assessment focus is different.

Task 2	Describe a friend in the target language.
	The teacher asks students to select a friend to describe using at least 10 descriptive adjectives. The teacher carefully shows students the vocabulary from the textbook that he/she expects students to use in their recordings. Further, the instructor models an example by playing a recording he/she made where he/she describes a friend using at least 10 descriptive adjectives from the chapter. Students have two days to record the description that lasts a minimum of 30 seconds and upload their recording on the teacher's web page.

	10 points	9 points	8 points	7 points
Vocabulary usage	Wide range of vocabulary that is appropriate for task.	Adequate range of vocabulary and generally appropriate for task.	Limited range of vocabulary that is sometimes inappropriate for task.	Inadequate range that is appropriate vocabulary for task.
Noun-adjective agreement	Student correctly used at least 10 descriptive adjectives when describing the friend.	Student correctly used at least 9 descriptive adjectives when describing the friend.	Student correctly used at least 8 descriptive adjectives when describing the friend.	Student correctly used less than 8 descriptive adjectives when describing the friend.

Task completion	Student speaks for at least 30 seconds.	Student speaks for 25-29 seconds	Student speaks for 20-24 seconds.	Student speaks less than 20 seconds.

The final example may be an assessment for an upper-level course. Note that the teacher has opted to measure student performance using a holistic rubric design to get an overall impression of the students' ability to articulate a progression of events instead of concentrating on discrete elements.

Task 3	Students are to compose a story that narrates events shown in a series of pictures.
The teacher gives the students a sheet of paper that contains seven pictures in cartoon layout that shows a person ordering food at a restaurant and the customer experiences a few problems. Students are requested to narrate the conversation between the customer and the waiter. Students have one day to record their response and email the recording to the teacher by 10pm.	

Exceeds Expectations	Superior completion of task, progression of events is readily understandable with very few pauses or hesitations, rich use of vocabulary without grammatical errors.	10
Meets Expectations	Completes task with limited difficulty, progression of events are understandable with minimal interpretation needed, hesitates during presentation, sufficient use of vocabulary, and demonstrates limited grammatical errors.	9
Almost Meets Expectations	Partially completes task, progression of events are understandable requiring moderate interpretation by the listener, uses frequent short pauses and speech is erratic, inadequate use of vocabulary, and demonstrates emerging use of grammatical structures.	8
Does Not Meet Expectations	Does not complete task, progression of events are not understandable and much interpretation is required by the listener, speech stops accompanied with long pauses, insufficient / inaccurate use of vocabulary and grammatical structures.	7

What is important to note from these three examples is how not only the activity but also the rubric is tailored to address the language task. Again, the tasks are written as learning objectives using suggested verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy.

Conclusions

In this article we discussed the usefulness of out-of-class student digital recordings as a means to both empower and motivate students in their oral language proficiency achievement and to facilitate the creation of oral language assessment artifacts. To that end, several inexpensive or free technology tools were highlighted that educators can easily use in the classroom. As with any educational resource, the tool itself is only as beneficial as the pedagogical foundation and instructional objective upon which it is employed. Each tool presents its own unique advantages and disadvantages dependent upon the educational culture and environment. Within the spectrum of technology resources, educators can locate an appropriate application that will fit their needs and budget as well. Once the technology tool has been identified, the educator can then turn to creation and implementation of the evaluative tool, the rubric, and the design of meaningful and authentic oral proficiency tasks.

Clearly, digital voice recordings can have an integral place in FL classrooms, but also hold the potential to reap valuable benefits outside of class instructional time. We believe that once the educators begin to work with the technology, they will not only share the opinions of the instructors from the study, they will also find new and innovative uses to broaden the information shared here.

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9

Motivation in the Foreign Language Classroom by Elimination of Winners and Losers: Mastery Goals versus Performance Goals

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Introduction

Is there a teacher who has not seen the rush to compare grades when a quiz or test is returned to students? The more successful students may flaunt their grades while the less successful try to ignore or even hide the grades on their papers. This is social comparison which is common among academically competitive students (Alderman 2004). The more successful student bases his self-worth on his superior performance as compared with that of his less successful classmates. He is successful only if others fail (Arends, 2007; Ormrod, 2008). Such comparisons create a highly competitive classroom, one in which learners are defined as "winners" or "losers" (Ormrod, 2008). In business and sports this clear delineation between superiority and inadequacy serves to announce to the world who is "best". While being "The Best" or "Number One" may bring increased earnings or public acclaim in the outside world, we have to ask ourselves as teachers, what purpose does competition serve in our foreign language classrooms? Do we want to designate a few winners at the cost of dooming the majority of students to being losers? According to Bailey (1983) less successful students who are subjected to competition and social comparison may experience anxiety, inadequacy, and hostility, fear of failure, guilt, or an unrealistic desire for praise or approval. Categorizing learners as winners or losers is extremely discouraging to students who are perceived, or who perceive themselves to be second best or "losers". They may follow a downward spiral of self-worth and lowered self-efficacy until they develop learned helplessness (Alderman, 2004). They have accepted their perceived inadequacy and have internalized a sense of hopelessness, creating a belief that they are incapable of accomplishing tasks and

cannot exercise any control over their environment (Ormrod, 2008). This bleak attitude renders students helpless when faced with new challenges. It is particularly true when children attribute their failures to lack of ability in the face of their classmates' success (Diener & Dweck, 1978). In a foreign language classroom students with low self efficacy may display behaviors that reflect performance avoidance (Alderman, 2005; Bråten, Samuelstuen, & Strømsø, 2004). They may be reluctant to participate in communicative activities; they may procrastinate, or may simply try to escape the notice of the teacher and their fear of embarrassment (Alderman, 2004). Some students demonstrate highly developed "disappearing" skills and become almost invisible among their more aggressive, high-achieving peers as they seek to avoid speaking the target language to escape criticism, and to protect their self-worth from what they fear will be a public display of their failure (Alderman, 2004). These passive students are less likely to take risks and are less likely to succeed in the foreign language class. According to Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) the learner not only must have an opportunity to use the target language, but also must engage with the language and construct meaning in order to learn the language. Lightbown and Spada (2006) support the importance of participation by listing characteristics of the "good language learner". A "good language learner" is willing to guess and make mistakes, practices as often as possible, and has good self-image and confidence. A student who has repeatedly suffered the negative consequences of social comparison or other public embarrassment in a foreign language class is unlikely to challenge the competitive atmosphere prevalent in many middle and secondary classrooms (Barrett, 2006).

Competition versus Collaboration

Why does this social comparison take place at all? Are we all products of social Darwinism competing to determine our place in the hierarchy by diminishing others? Cognitive psychologists bypass such grandiose explanations in favor of goal orientation theory (Alderman, 2004). Academic competition both produces and is the product of performance goals. Students who are invested in performance goals are more likely to be concerned with how competent they appear to the teacher and their classmates rather than how much they have learned (Ormrod, 2008). However, this sense of competent superiority and belief in their success as a product of ability carries risk, especially in the foreign language classroom. Performance oriented students who believe in getting the "A" or getting "it right from the beginning" (Lightbown and Spada, 2005) are less likely to value learning the target language for its own sake. Many of these "smart" students rely so much on high ability that they interpret failure as a sign of low ability and loss of self-worth (Ormrod, 2008). In contrast, students who are mastery oriented are more likely to recognize an intrinsic value in learning a foreign language for its own sake. They tend to engage in the very activities that promote second language learning. They are more willing to speak the target language and they are more likely to collaborate with peers; they listen in class, and practice more cognitive learning strategies that enhance retention of information (Alderman, 2004). Additionally, students who pursue mastery goals in their language study usually

practice adaptive behavior, realizing that failure is a temporary setback, and success is more related to perseverance and effort than to ability (Ormrod, 2008). This willingness to make mistakes and to continue learning after setbacks was recognized by Collier (1989) and Oxford (1990) when they stated that learning a foreign language is a long-term undertaking, and that risk-taking, practice and perseverance are critical to language acquisition and to building proficiency.

Performance oriented students may lack these coping skills that assure them that mistakes, especially in foreign language classes, are normal and that occasional failure is a part of learning (Alderman, 2004). They may become frustrated, and view future tests and oral activities with anxiety (Ormrod, 2008). Performance oriented students may also display a lack of trust in classmates in cooperative learning situations. They are often reluctant to share information or to help another student whom they view as competition in their pursuit of the top grade. They may not want to participate in activities that require interdependence among group members for success of the whole group. In a study of communicative activities in the foreign language classroom, based on Palinscar and Brown's study of Reciprocal Reading (1984), students whose grade point averages ranked them at the top of their class were quite resistant to sharing or accepting information from group mates. During a Jigsaw extension of the study the top ranked junior in the school announced that she did not want to work with other students. "I don't want my grade depending on what someone else does," (Barrett, 2003). Arends (2007) describes similar behavior as characteristic of an Individual goal structure in which students do not believe that their own success is dependent, or should be dependent on what other students do.

Mastery oriented students are more accepting of activities that require cooperation in groups. Arends (2007) defines their goal structures as Cooperative, in which students perceive that they can achieve a goal only if the other students with whom they are working can also reach the goal. Competitive or performance goal structures exist when students believe that they can succeed only if other students fail to meet the goal. Individualistic goal structures may embody mastery goals, but only Cooperative goals enhance group learning and diminish competition. Competition is often motivational only to the competitive top achievers, the winners. If we, as teachers believe that all students can be successful learners, how do we motivate the foreign language students who are not competitive to work toward "…a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical" (National Standards for Foreign Language Education, 1996)?

Motivation

Motivation is key to learning (Alderman, 2004), and foreign language teachers must develop and implement techniques to diminish the negative effects of competitiveness and performance goals in order to assess, address and encourage the potential of every student to achieve. Ormrod (2008) states, "in most incidences mastery goals are the optimal situation (p. 423)" to encourage learning. A teacher perceives a motivated student as one who participates, expresses interest in

the subject, and studies diligently (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). If that teacher believes that all students have the potential to be motivated learners, he/she has the ability to influence the attitudes toward learning in the language classroom and to promote mastery rather than performance goals.

Teachers can start with the firm conviction that all children can learn, and demonstrate their own teaching efficacy to positively influence the attitudes, behaviors and achievement of their students (Alderman, 2004). Effective teachers can motivate students by acknowledging that individuals learn at different rates and by different methods and by never giving up on a student who may need more time to learn a word, a pronunciation or a concept (Barrett, 2006). The teacher must recognize even small, incremental steps as progress in language acquisition. The first time a student correctly reads a passage in a text or an answer she has written for her homework, praising that accomplishment provides intrinsic satisfaction to the student and encourages further effort.

Praise must be prompt, specific and meaningful to the situation as well as sparingly used so that it never becomes routine (Alderman, 2004). Praise must also be appropriate to the situation. A student may appreciate a private word after class rather than public acclaim in front of her peers. Encouragement should be lavish (Barrett, 2006). Neither praise nor encouragement should focus on ability, which promotes performance goals and competition to prove who is best or smartest. Instead, teachers should praise and encourage effort, which students perceive as being more under their control than pure ability (Alderman, 2004).

Rewards must be equally attainable by all students (Alderman, 2004). Giving stickers only to the first student who correctly guesses the cognate or defines the vocabulary word in the target language discourages the rest of the class. If rewards are available only to one or two students, students who need more time to finish may see no point in continuing their efforts once the prize is awarded to someone else. Stickers should be given to every student who completes the task satisfactorily. Rewarding the whole class after satisfactory completion by all students will also encourage peer scaffolding, modeling that the individual student's reward depends upon his classmates' success. He has become invested in the achievement of others rather than exclusively his own. Competition has been minimized because the process of learning has diminished the need to "beat everyone else" and all students can feel successful at having completed the task. There are no "losers".

Teachers can also motivate learners by helping to insulate them against fear of ridicule for making mistakes. As stated previously, errors are normal and risk taking is a constructive approach for learning a foreign language (Oxford, 1990). Risk taking can be encouraged by avoiding excessive error correction during communicative exercises (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Since frustration on the part of the teacher and student are reduced when meaning, rather than absolute accuracy, is the focus of instruction (Shrum & Glisan, 2005) students are more likely to participate voluntarily. When the teacher declines to over-criticize a student for his errors the class is provided with a role model who signals that criticism and ridicule are not appropriate in the language classroom. It is important

to enforce this attitude. Freedom to speak and participate in class activities without embarrassment builds student confidence and helps to eliminate the scapegoating of some students by those who feel successful only if they can ridicule or belittle others. The potential for winner/loser situations is diminished, thereby promoting motivation for all students. A sense of humor helps too. If a teacher can laugh at his/her own slips of the tongue, or point out common vocabulary errors that might bewilder or amuse a native speaker, students will recognize that even experts are allowed to make an occasional mistake, and that it will not be fatal to the learning process or to their perception of competence or self-worth.

Teacher Efficacy

Alderman (2005) defines two of the most influential determinants of student success as teacher efficacy, the teacher's confidence in his/her ability to teach, and teacher expectations. A teacher who demonstrates confidence and efficacy in teaching is more likely to inspire trust and respect in students. Mutual trust and respect are the foundations for building a supportive community of learners (Alderman, 2004). In a community of learners students are invested in the success of each person. This creates a sense of belonging. Individuality should be encouraged because a true community preserves and nourishes the individual members, but also underscores the relationships among these individuals (Kohn, 2001). Both students and teacher display a sense of caring about one another, thereby creating a collaborative atmosphere in which the importance of performance goals is diminished and effective learning can occur.

Teacher expectations are equally important. A teacher must expect the best of all students. Students will usually live up or down to our expectations, and a belief in the capability of all students to learn in a language class is crucial to setting mastery goals. Basic achievement goals, referred to as floor level goals by Alderman (2005) must be attainable by all students. There should be no competition to meet these basic mastery levels of competency since all are expected to achieve them. Enrichment materials and activities may be offered to motivate students who have attained the basic mastery goal (Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Enhancement of the learning process should be presented as an opportunity to learn more, and not as a reward for ability or an incentive to prove one's superiority to classmates. It is also important to remember that enrichment opportunities must be available to all students, and not just the few. Motivation is vital to every learner, and should reflect our efforts to assist all children to develop their talents and reach their full potential (Alderman, 2004).

Teachers sometimes complain that unmotivated language students are only in the class because of a college requirement, parental pressure or a needed credit for graduation. This may be true, and in a perfect world we almost certainly would wave a wand and transform the bored, indifferent, discouraged, and the competitive performance goal oriented student into an engaged, enthusiastic, caring learner interested only in the pursuit of becoming linguistically and culturally competent in a foreign language. We have no magic wands, but we can develop an understanding of the forces behind social comparison and implement

strategies to diminish competition and motivate all students to participate in a mastery learning experience that expands their linguistic, cultural and intellectual horizons, not to mention their sense of self-worth through satisfaction in their achievements.

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10

Differentiated Instruction – One Size Does Not Fit All!

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Introduction

According to James VanSciver (2005), "Teachers are now dealing with a level of academic diversity in their classrooms which was unheard of just a decade ago" (p. 534). The change in student population in today's U.S. schools has prompted researchers and theorists to take a closer look at how students learn different subject matters, what factors influence their successes, and what contributes to their failures. With the diversity of backgrounds, the learners arrive at schools with different emotional, social, and cognitive maturity. As a result of this, teachers are faced with mixed-ability classrooms. Their students differ in their learning styles, attitudes, values, academic self-efficacy, interests, aspirations, and academic readiness for schools. Their dispositions vary in their intensity, focus, and direction and depend on the subject matter. Some students might have a strong interest and positive attitude for some subject matters but the opposite feelings for others.

Acknowledging that students learn differently and at various speeds and they differ in their ability to think cognitively is like acknowledging that students are not the same in terms of height and weight. In order to accommodate this reality, establishing a positive, safe, and student-friendly environment where teachers adapt their pacing, wait time, and approaches to teaching, and provide different venues for student expressions in response to their different needs is crucial. The goal of an effective curriculum is to help students grow by providing challenging materials, tasks, and activities that push students to reach their potential level (Vygotsky, 1978). Echevarria and Graves (2007) have emphasized "a challenging atmosphere is balanced by a positive affective climate" (p. 161). While the curriculum ought to be challenging in order for students to grow and learn, students will benefit from an explanation that the teacher's high expectations mean

different things to different learners, taking their varying interests and readiness levels into consideration.

This article focuses on helping teachers address students' basic psychological needs by providing differentiated instruction and empowering students to make choices and decisions in the classroom, which in turn promotes their motivation, self-esteem, and self-efficacy in studying a foreign or second language and content. Differentiated instruction is guided by three student characteristics such as readiness, interest, and their learning profile (Tomlinson, 2001). Students learn better if there is a close match between activities and students' skills and understanding of a topic (readiness), if activities inspire students' curiosity (interest), and if activities encourage students to work in their preferred manner (learning profile).

In this article, research on students' basic psychological needs is introduced first to provide background and foundation for differentiated instruction. Second, differentiated instruction is explained and defined to provide readers with an understanding of why it is important to use in mixed-level classes. Finally, principles and strategies of differentiated instruction are outlined to help teachers address varying student learning styles, interests, and readiness levels.

Basic Psychological Needs

Students behave better and learn more in an environment that meets their basic psychological needs (Jones & Jones, 2008). All students learn best in settings that are characterized as warm, friendly, comfortable, safe environments.

Although different theoretical perspectives on basic needs provide valuable insight, Abraham Maslow's (1968) concept of basic human needs summarizes key elements of many theorists in a form that allows teachers to assess systematically and respond to learners' needs. He has suggested that there is a hierarchy of basic human needs and that lower level needs take precedence over higher-order needs. These needs from lowest to highest are: physiological needs, safety and security, belongingness and affection, self-respect, and self-actualization. He has proposed that people have an innate need to be competent and valued. While some of these needs, such as physiological needs for shelter, food, and nourishment, can be met outside of school, the others become crucial in a school environment. In order for students to reach their potential, teachers need to provide a positive environment where all differences are valued and appreciated, where children are liked by their peers and the teacher, and where they can develop an "I can" attitude and feel in control of their future.

Rudolf Dreikurs (1971) has centered his ideas on the belief that children's basic need is to be socially accepted. He believed that children had four goals associated with their disruptive behavior: attention getting, power, revenge, and displays of inadequacy. Dreikurs and Cassel (1972) suggested that "when a child is deprived of the opportunity to gain status through useful contributions, he usually seeks proof of his status in class through getting attention" (p. 34). If teachers are not effective at responding to children's attention getting techniques, the students will seek power and revenge. A child may eventually become very discouraged

and will give up hope of belongingness and will expect only failure. One of the central goals for teachers is to help students develop their sense of belongingness by providing a nurturing environment where their social need is served.

William Glasser (1986), on the other hand, advocated for increasing the sense of efficacy and power learners experience. He has suggested that there are at least five basic needs such as to survive and reproduce, to belong and love, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun that are built into people's genetic structure. He believed that students would function productively and attain high academic achievement if they can experience a sense of control and power over their learning.

Another useful concept of students' basic needs is offered by Stanley Coopersmith (1967) who researched factors associated with self-esteem. He found that in order to possess high self-esteem, students need to experience a sense of significance, competence, and power. He defines significance as a sense of being valued in a two-way relationship where individuals care about each other. Competence is described as performing a socially valued activity as well as or better than others, while power is referred to as an ability to control one's environment. His research also indicates that students need to be involved and experience trust as well as a sense of success if their needs are to be met. In addition, for individuals to feel good about themselves, they need to feel in control of their learning. Teachers can accommodate this by letting students choose their topic of interest to study, asking them for suggestions in decision-making and instructional processes, and helping them understand their learning styles and connections between their learning styles, learning, and teacher instruction.

These four researchers believe that for students to have their basic needs met, they need to experience positive relationships with others (belongingness, love, and significance). Based on the review of research and interview with students, Topper, Williams, Leo, Hamilton, and Fox (1994) have reported that students think similarly regarding their basic needs. The following are the needs described by the students in their study:

- Friends who care for you and you for them
- Fun and challenging things to do
- Having choices and learning how to make choices
- A chance to master skills needed to pursue a dream, for self-advocacy, and cultural interdependence
- Physical well-being
- Status and a "cool" reputation
- Unconditional love, someone who will always be your advocate
- Chance to make a difference in someone's life. (Topper, Williams, Leo, Hamilton, & Fox, 1994, p. 7)

These needs are very similar to the ones proposed by the theorists. Therefore, students want and need to have positive relationships with their peers, teachers, and other adults, to feel cared for and supported, to have an opportunity to demonstrate mastery and accomplishments, to feel in control of their own learning and decision-making, and to make a difference in somebody's life.

Schools that have taken these students' basic psychological needs into consideration have a higher level of student achievement, less discipline problems, and a common underlying philosophy of learning and teaching (Marzano, 2007). A central role of these effective schools is played by teachers who learn side-by-side with their students and take a proactive role in analyzing and reflecting on ways to make the classroom a better match for its students. As Marzano (2007) has pointed out, "Among elements such as a well-articulated curriculum and a safe and orderly environment, the one factor that surfaced as the single most influential component of an effective school is the individual teachers within that school" (p. 1).

Differentiated Instruction

To meet students' basic needs and accommodate different learning styles and interests in mixed-ability classrooms, the concept of differentiated instruction has been put forth (Tomlinson, 2001). Students differ in how they approach learning, internalize information, and showcase what they know. In a classroom where these differences are neglected and teachers adopt a philosophy of "one size fits all", students are deprived of success in school and future. On the other hand, teachers who acknowledge student differences, validate, and incorporate them in class set a stage for student and teacher success. These teachers embrace challenges of accommodating students' needs by providing differentiated instruction.

A well-known expert on differentiated instruction, Carol Ann Tomlinson (2001), has suggested: "At its basic level, differentiated instruction means 'shaking up' what goes on in the classroom so that students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and expressing what they learn" (p. 1). In order to have a better idea of what differentiated instruction is, teachers should have an understanding of what differentiated instruction is not. First, according to Tomlinson (2001), it is not the individualized teaching of the 1970s where each learner had a different reading assignment to complete and instruction was cut into skill fragments that made teaching irrelevant and fragmented. Second, it is not chaotic to the point that teachers lose control of their classroom because of students' movement and talking. Third, it is not a way to provide homogeneous grouping where students are tracked into same ability groupings. Last, it is not "tailoring the same suit of clothes" (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 3) where the teacher asks some students more complex questions, grades some papers a little harder, and lets some students skip some questions on their tests.

So if this is not what differentiated instruction is, then, what is it? Tomlinson (2001) posits that differentiated instruction is proactive where the teacher understands that different students have different needs and therefore prepares lesson plans with a variety of ways to express learning. It is also more qualitative than quantitative in nature where the nature of assignment to match the student needs is adjusted.

Differentiated instruction is tied to assessment, where the latter drives instruction and is used not just at the end of a unit, but also the beginning of it to determine the needs of students (McTighe & Brown, 2005). Throughout the

unit, teachers use multiple forms of alternative assessments such as role playing, projects, skits, discussions, etc. to assess students' developing academic readiness levels toward standards, interests, and growth in general. The final assessment of the unit plan can also take many forms and should not rely on a traditional paper-and-pencil test or exam.

Differentiated instruction also provides a variety of approaches to content (input: what students learn), process (how students make sense of what they learn), and product (output: how they demonstrate what they have learned) as outlined in examples in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Elements and Examples of Key Concepts of Differentiated Instruction

Elements	Examples
Content: provided input and access to the information	Use varied text and supplementary materials; provide learning contracts between teacher and student; incorporate student interests and examples; present content using visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes
Process: how students make sense of the content and input they have received	Provide choices to students; use cooperative learning activities; provide tiered assignments; encourage multiple perspectives on topics and issues
Product: what students can demonstrate based on knowledge, understanding, and skills learned	Teach and accept a variety of product formats; create clear assessment tools (rubrics, checklists); Provide clear expectations for product assignments

Source: Adapted from van Garderen and Whittaker, 2006, p. 14.

In addition, this instruction is student-centered where teachers help students to take responsibility for their own learning and provide learning experiences that are interesting, engaging, and meaningful to learners. As far as a grouping strategy is concerned, differentiated instruction utilizes a variety of a whole-class, group, pair work, and individual instruction depending on the purpose of a task or activity.

Lastly, differentiated instruction is based on "evolutionary teaching" (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 5) where teachers and students are learning side-by-side and where teachers monitor students' learning and make adjustments appropriately between learning and the learner. Teachers who use differentiated instruction do not see it as a strategy to use when there is a free time in class, but as an inseparable part of a healthy classroom. Overall, according to Tomlinson (2001), "In a differentiated classroom, the teacher proactively plans and carries out varied

approaches to content, process, and product in anticipation of and response to student differences in readiness, interest, and learning needs" (p. 7).

Differentiation by Readiness

Instruction can be differentiated based on three student characteristics: readiness, interest, and learning profile. Readiness can be assessed by determining a learner's knowledge, understanding, and skill as it relates to what is being studied in the classroom. A task that will be a good match for student readiness extends the student's knowledge, understanding, skills, and thinking abilities a bit beyond the student's current level of knowledge and understanding. This notion fits well with Lev Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development where a student can perform at an actual level independently, but needs support and help to reach his or her potential level.

According to Tomlinson (2001), "A good readiness match pushes the student a little beyond his or her comfort zone and then provides support in bridging the gap between the known and unknown" (p. 45). To differentiate instruction according to student readiness successfully, teachers need to have a guide for planning and monitoring the effectiveness of their curriculum. Teachers adjust different levels of instruction based on various students' needs in order for learners to be appropriately challenged by materials, tasks, and products in the classroom. These levels are outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Planning Differentiated Instruction

Levels	Examples
Foundational to transformational	Information, ideas, materials, tasks, applications
Concrete to abstract	Ideas, applications, materials, representations
Simple to complex	Resources, problems, skills, research
Single facet to multiple facets	Application, solutions, disciplinary connections
Small leap to great leap	Application
Structured to open-ended	Approaches, solutions
Dependent to independent	Planning, designing, monitoring
Slow to fast	Pace of study, pace of thought

Source: Compiled from Tomlinson, 2001, pp. 46-49.

To use this plan successfully, teachers should concentrate on the students' readiness level and adjust their teaching according to the levels. When an idea or task is new, students need ample time to practice it, which is a foundational level. Once the students have a good grasp of the information, they need to move along and see how this information correlates to other ideas, which will require the use of materials and tasks that are more transformational in nature.

In order to reach an abstract readiness level, students need to be familiar with concrete ideas. For example, in order to evaluate a story which requires an abstract readiness level, students need to understand the plot of the story and its characters (concrete level). For the complex readiness level, students need to understand how simple problems, issues, etc. work before moving on to more complex tasks. Depending on their readiness level, some students can handle multifaceted problems and can make more connections between subjects that did not seem related before than some other students who can only handle making a connection between what they studied today and what they studied yesterday.

Small to great leap levels of continuum do not provide students with a possibility to stay at the same level. Students need to make mental leaps from reading information on a page to using that information. The greater leaps are when application, insight, and transfer of knowledge are used (Tomlinson, 2001). As far as for structured to open-ended levels of continuum, novice learners need more structured, basic tasks with teacher modeling steps; once the modeling and demonstration have served its purposes, students should get more creative to explore other options.

For the dependent to independent levels of continuum, there are four stages where students' needs can fall into: skill building, structured independence, shared independence, and self-guided independence (Tomlinson, 2001). By guiding students across these levels at their individually appropriate paces, students and the teacher are less likely to become frustrated by activities that require more independence. Lastly, slow to fast levels of continuum require some students to move faster through the material at some times, while at other times they might need to spend more time researching and studying a topic in depth.

When designing differentiated lessons based on student readiness, three tips are essential to follow. First, all learners need instruction that is relevant, meaningful, authentic, and transferable to the real world. Second, a good, relevant curriculum challenges learners to get out of their comfort zone in order to learn. Students' sense of self-efficacy comes from "recognizing their power after accomplishing something they first thought was just 'too big' for them" (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 49). Third, a teacher should encourage students to match themselves to tasks that will stretch them. A good task is one that is just a bit too hard, but where support and help are present for student success.

It is also helpful to think of particular strategies used in differentiated classrooms in response to student readiness levels. A unit plan based on travel will serve as a demonstration of some of the strategies that foreign and second language teachers can implement in their classrooms based on Tomlinson's (2001) readiness differentiation. First, varying texts and supplementary materials by reading levels is essential. An example of this strategy is to provide more advanced speakers of the language authentic travel magazines written for native speakers of the target language, while for less proficient speakers use materials dealing with travel and tourism written for U.S. students learning a foreign language for the first time. Teachers can ask students to find interesting, pertinent information related to a foreign country of interest. Second, scaffolding in reading, writing, research, and

technology should be varied. As Peregoy and Boyle (2005) have stated, "Literacy scaffolds include predictable elements as a result of repetition of language patterns and/or routines" (p. 226). An example of a predictable text for language beginners can be in a form of a chart, a graph, or a timetable with information about flights and times of arrival and departure from a target country to a local airport in the U.S. that can be found on travel websites in a target language. More advanced speakers of the language can benefit from searching travel websites for places to see while visiting a foreign country.

Small-group instruction is another strategy that can be used in response to student readiness. Teachers can allow students to work in groups based on their chosen target countries. While working in small groups in order to create a travel brochure or prepare a presentation about travel plans, teachers can individualize instruction according to students' needs by working with each group separately. A variety of assessment tools, graphic organizers, and homework options can be used to incorporate student readiness levels into instruction. In the context of a travel unit plan, teachers might offer options to students to create a travel brochure, prepare a presentation based on the information found about a target country, or write a journal about "visiting" places of interest in a foreign country. Depending on students' language proficiency levels, teachers can use from simple to more complex charts, semantic maps, outlines, etc. that can help students internalize vocabulary and content related to travel and tourism. In addition, establishing mentorship among grade levels and language proficiency levels can help learners advance their knowledge and skills in a less threatening environment.

Teachers can differentiate any of the three components of the curriculum: content, process, and product based on student readiness level. When teachers use readiness level as a focus of differentiating content, process, and product, their goal is to push students to get them out of their comfort zone so that they stretch themselves in order to learn new information and skills and grow as language learners.

Differentiation by Interest

It is well known that a key feature to successful teaching is having a plan to engage students in the topic at hand. Two powerful motivators for engagement are student choice and student interest (Brandt, 1998). If a student has a fire of curiosity about a particular topic, learning is likely to occur for that student. In the same vein, a sense of choice about how and what students learn is empowering and enhances their learning.

Since not all students have the same interests, differentiated instruction is a key to successful teaching and learning. Content, process, and product can be differentiated according to student interest as well. To differentiate content based on students' interest in a language class, for example, teachers can guide students in selecting reading materials and topics they care about and they can use these selections for building lesson plans. As a way to differentiate the process in response to interest, teachers can use a cooperative learning activity such as Jigsaw where students choose their part of a topic to become an expert on. To

differentiate a product, teachers can offer students a variety of ways to express what they learn. Teachers can provide key ingredients and skills of a quality product, but students themselves develop their own product assignments such as a poster, a paper, a skit, etc. that demonstrate the mastery of knowledge and skills required to attain specific standards.

There are at least two ways teachers can think about student interest. They can try to identify the actual interests student bring to class with them and they can create new interests in students by being passionate about topics at hand in the classroom. According to Tomlinson (2001), the goals for interest-based instruction are:

1) Helping students realize that there is a match between school and their own desires to learn,
2) demonstrating the connectedness between all learning,
3) using skills or ideas familiar to students as a bridge to ideas or skills less familiar to them, and
4) enhancing student motivation to learn. (p. 53)

All these goals can be achieved if students can look at a topic of study through their own interests.

The following are some of the guidelines teachers can use to make interest-based differentiation more effective. For example, the key components of the curriculum with interest-based exploration should be linked. If teachers can help students see how key curricular components are revealed through learning about an interest area, then both goals of students and curriculum can be satisfied. Structure that leads students to success needs to be in place. Providing scaffolding for students helps them to grow in independence. Establishing ways of sharing interest-based results and findings is also an important element. Sometimes it is more time efficient to ask students to share their findings with the students who share the same interests, while at other times, students learn more from others who explored other interests. Inviting students to openly share their interests at the beginning of the year using either a written or an oral questionnaire can help teachers incorporate these interests into their instruction later on. Teachers should be open-minded about students' serious interests and passions. As Tomlinson (2001) has pointed out, "For some students, the greatest gift a teacher can give is permission to explore a topic, time to do it, and an interested ear" (p. 58). These ideas based on interest differentiation can be combined with other types of differentiation.

There is a variety of strategies that can be implemented to differentiate instruction based on student interests in a language classroom. For example, group investigation, a cooperative learning strategy, is excellent in helping students decide on a topic of interest, find information related to the topic, work collaboratively, and present findings and results. Looking at the same unit based on travel, teachers can guide students to select topics related to customs and traditions, meals and past times, politics, economics, or places of interest. Next, students are provided with carefully selected websites to find information related to their

linear ways present in schools), practical (preference for seeing how and why things work in the real world), and creative (preference for innovation and making connections). Both of these theorists have proposed that when learners are involved in learning and approach it in ways that address their intelligence preferences, their achievement is higher.

The third factor, culture-influenced preference, refers to how culture affects how individuals learn. Depending on one's culture, for example, time can be seen as fixed or flexible. In addition, some individuals learn best in a general-to-specific or specific-to-general approach, while others prefer to work in a group or by themselves. Some students value creativity while others prefer conformity. Learning patterns differ from culture to culture and there is variability within one's own culture as well. A successful teacher understands these cultural differences based on learning preferences and provides a flexible environment where students can work in ways that they find most productive.

The fourth factor, gender-based preference, refers to how gender affects how individuals learn. While some males are more competitive and prefer competitive games, some females might also be competitive in nature. Some of the same elements that are influenced by cultural preferences may be influenced by gender (e.g., reserve versus expressiveness, analytical versus creative/practical thinking, group versus individual orientation).

There are some tips, according to Tomlinson (2001) that teachers need to keep in mind when trying to differentiate instruction based on learning profiles. Remembering that not all students share their teacher's preferred learning style is crucial. Student learning preferences might be different from the teacher's, but a sensitive teacher will take these differences and try to create options and choices that make everyone succeed in a classroom setting. In addition, teachers can help students reflect on their own preferences. A teacher can provide students with a vocabulary of learning-profile options and invite them to talk about which approaches made learning more effective for them. Both teacher-structured and student-choice venues to learning-profile differentiation are beneficial. As Tomlinson (2001) has pointed out, "When students are partners with teachers in making the learning environment a good fit, more is accomplished with less strain on the teacher" (p. 63). At the beginning, teachers should select a few learning-profile categories. Since there is so much information about learning preferences nowadays, it might become overwhelming for teachers to pay attention to all of them at once. It is better to concentrate on a few at the start and offer students learning decisions that they can make to better match their needs to the classroom.

Teachers also need to watch their students' learning clues in their classes, to talk with the students about what works and what does not for them, and to invite them to propose suggestions and alternatives to instruction. Parents should also be invited to shed some light on their child's learning preferences.

There are numerous strategies that support learning-profile needs. One of them is a questionnaire based on Gardner's (1993) multiple intelligences, which can be used to help students find out their preferred intelligence. This information

topics while working in pairs or in groups. By communicating freely with each other and cooperating in planning, students can achieve more than they would as individuals. The final outcome in a form of a poster or a Powerpoint presentation, a story, a journal, or a travel brochure reflects each member's contribution, but is richer than work done individually.

Another example is WebQuests at http://webquest.org/index.php, which is a platform that helps teachers design Internet lessons with learning goals in mind, specified Internet links, and guidelines that support students in their research. These lessons can be differentiated by readiness as well as by student interest (Kelly, 2000).

In addition, Jigsaw, a cooperative strategy, can be used to differentiate instruction based on student interest. In this activity, students work with their fellow students in their "expert" groups, which consist of three to five students who study one aspect of the topic. Then they return to their "home-base" group for sharing what they have learned. The home-base group consists of experts on different aspects of the topic where they share information so they all can learn from each other (Clarke, 1994).

Literature Circles at http://www.literaturecircles.com/, a student-led discussion, is another example which allows students to read on topics of interest and share readings with others who read the same material (Daniels, 1994). Literature response groups or literature circles consist of three to six students who have read the same piece of literature and are ready to discuss it together. Some teachers provide groups with response sheets for inexperienced learners to scaffold their initial responses to literature. In the travel unit, for example, students can be asked to read stories based on traditions and customs, morals, and habits of the people of a target country.

Differentiation by Learning Profile

Learning profile refers to the ways individuals learn best. Teachers can help their students understand what their learning profiles are so each learner can find a good fit between his or her learning preference and learning in the classroom (Sternberg & Zhang, 2005). According to Tomlinson (2001), there are four categories of learning profile factors such as learning style, intelligence preference, culture, and gender. These factors may overlap to some extent, but each has been well researched to be included as an important factor for the learning process.

The first preference, learning style, refers to environmental factors. Environmental factors are the ones that describe a particular learning environment such as a classroom setting. The setting could be quiet or noisy, warm or cool, still or mobile, flexible or fixed, colorful or spared of colors.

The second factor, intelligence preference, refers to the predispositions of the brain that all individuals possess. Howard Gardner (1993) has suggested that individuals have varying strengths which he calls verbal linguistic, logical mathematical, visual spatial, musical rhythmical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. Robert Sternberg (1985), on the other hand, has summarized intelligence preferences as analytic (preference for learning in

can be very useful to teachers as well when considering using groups. Depending on a goal of an activity or task, homogeneous (same multiple intelligence) or heterogeneous (a variety of multiple intelligences) grouping might be used. The following website contains a questionnaire that students can take on-line and get instant results regarding their multiple intelligences: http://www.bgfl.org/bgfl/ custom/resources_ftp/client_ftp/ks3/ict/multiple_int/questions/choose_lang.cfm.

Another example is based on 4-MAT (McCarthy, 1996) at http://chiron.valdosta. edu/whuitt/col/instruct/4mat.html, an approach that emphasizes that learners prefer at least one of the following: mastery of information, comprehension of key information, personal involvement, and the design of something new related to a topic. Teachers can use this strategy to prepare lesson plans. This will ensure that students will experience the topic through a preferred approach but also will have an opportunity to strengthen learning in less preferred approaches, which in turn will help to prepare them for all formats of instruction.

It is advisable in the early stages of differentiation to think about student readiness, interest, and profile in order to differentiate content, process, and product. When teachers break down the task into elements, it helps them focus on more manageable pieces of teaching as well as to assess how well they address students' learning needs. The end goal for teachers is to have a flow of differentiation so that what teachers do is a fit for individual students much of the time. There are many published tools to help teachers determine student readiness, interest, and learning profile. However, teachers can learn a great deal about students using teacher-made tools and by monitoring and reflecting on student learning in the classroom every day.

Content Differentiation

This section shifts the focus from student needs to the content of the curriculum. Even though each subsequent section will be devoted to three different categories such as content, process, and product, these elements are more interconnected in practice. It is often difficult to separate curricular elements of content, process, and product; however, for the purpose of understanding how differentiated instruction works, it is important to break them apart.

Content is input teachers provide and is what they want students to learn. In differentiating content, teachers can do it in two ways: adapt what they teach and/ or modify how they provide students with access to what they want them to learn. Teachers can differentiate content based on students' readiness level, interests, and learning profile.

To differentiate content based on their readiness level requires teachers to match the material or information to students' capacity to learn this material. In the abovementioned unit on travel, it is inappropriate to ask a struggling beginning language learner to read independently from authentic travel books and materials written for native speakers of that particular target language. Teachers should ask themselves if materials they are using are at an appropriately challenging level of complexity, pacing, independence, etc. based on the above-mentioned Figure 2.

To differentiate content based on students' interests requires teachers to use curriculum materials, ideas, and activities that build on and extend students' interests. For example, a teacher can help language students find more information about travel and tourism by providing audio-lingual materials, books, magazines, newspapers, and Internet Web sites related to this topic.

On the other hand, to differentiate based on learning profile requires teachers to provide a variety of instructional approaches to ensure that students have a chance to understand and generalize material based on their preferred way of learning. Some students can handle teacher-directed instruction if enough visual clues are provided, while others need to use manipulatives in order to understand the same material. In our example of a travel unit, to help students who learn better from hands-on experiences, the teacher can use learning stations where learners go from station to station to find information related to a question posted on each of them. They can also get involved in role playing where one student is a flight attendant and the others are passengers on an imaginary plane.

There are many ways to differentiate content based on student readiness, interest, and learning profile.

First, teachers can use varied text and resource materials so students have more chances at being successful with content. The widespread ability of the Internet to bring resources to any classroom on any topic is limitless. As Tomlinson (2001) has suggested, "The key is to match the levels of complexity, abstractness, depth, breadth, and so forth of the resource materials with the student's learning needs" (p. 76).

Second, teachers can use contracts with their students where both skills and content (knowledge) components are outlined. They can be used to manage a differentiated classroom because parts of contracts vary according to different students' needs. Students have to map out their plans of action for a week or two, depending on their age, to decide what needs to be done in class or at home, and to progress at a pace and depth of content that is slightly challenging for them. Contracts allow students and teachers to have mutual goals and to set time aside for individual or small-group conferences to check progress and needs.

Third, teachers can also use mini-lessons based on an ongoing assessment of student knowledge and understanding. They can sometimes reteach a part of a lesson to a whole class if all students have a gap in understanding a particular topic, or just teach a group of students or an individual student at other times.

Fourth, teachers can vary their support systems, such as study buddies, video and audio strategies, reading partners, and peer and adult mentors. Students can help teachers create audio and video materials. For example, in the unit based on travel, students with higher language proficiency can create videos for beginning level students to help them comprehend a particular cultural aspect of the target language. Other advanced students can audiotape travel brochures to help struggling students with reading fluency and accuracy. Some students might prefer to have a graphic organizer based on a particular component related to travel to follow along with a teacher explanation of that concept or a text, while others might find it too restricting. Teachers can also provide support by highlighting material for

students who are struggling with comprehending a text related to travel. At other times, some students would benefit from a one page summary of ideas based on a travel unit. Such digest can be in a form of sentences, graphs, concept maps, or a combination of these strategies. It can also include important questions and key vocabulary in helping students understand the unit. Adult and peer mentors can help less proficient students, which in turn will enhance knowledge and skills for all parties involved, success, and contributions to each other's learning.

Process Differentiation

This section provides ideas on using a variety of processes in instruction. Process means opportunity to make sense of the input students are receiving from instruction. The input gets processed with sufficient time and practice. James Lee and Bill VanPatten (1995) have suggested that the brain filters input (raw data) that becomes intake (filtered input), which is used to create a linguistic developing system based on form and meaning connections. Learners tap their linguistic developing systems to produce language output.

Any effective activity is designed to help students progress from a point of understanding to a more complex level. A good differentiated activity is the one where students are exposed to a variety of modes, varied degrees of difficulty, and varied time spans. It is also the activity where students experience a varied amount of teacher and peer support to understand and use essential ideas and principles.

To differentiate process according to student readiness requires teachers to match a complexity of the task at hand to a student's current level of understanding. To provide differentiation of the process based on students' interests means giving students choices and control over aspects of a topic they can specialize and help them link personal interest to the topic at hand. To differentiate process according to student learning profile, on the other hand, requires teachers to encourage their students to make sense of a concept or an idea in a preferred way of learning.

The following strategies are among the ones used to help teachers differentiate the process based on student readiness, interest, and learning profile: learning logs, journals, graphic organizers, problem solving activities, learning centers, literature study circles, role playing and mime, model making, cooperative learning activities (e.g., Jigsaw, think-pair-share, information-gap activities), and experiments.

Product Differentiation

While the previous section described the sense-making strategies students use to process and understand ideas and concepts, this section will concentrate on differentiating products that allow students to demonstrate the results of information processing. Product tasks should make students reuse, rethink, and reapply what they have learned over a period of time. Products are essential in assessing student knowledge, understanding, and skills. In the travel unit previously mentioned, teachers can replace some of the vocabulary quizzes and exams at the end of a unit related to travel and tourism with product assignments

where students put together their expertise on different components of the travel topic in order to create a brochure, video, or presentation or combine these options together so students are challenged to think about, apply, and expand their knowledge, understanding, and skills of travel to a particular target country. The possibilities of the products are endless. For example, teachers can provide the following product options to their students related to travel: design a Web page with useful links and information about a particular country, create costumes of a particular culture, decorate a bulletin board with important information related to travel; write a travel book, poems, a screenplay; design a game, puzzle, simulation based on the travel vocabulary; produce a play, mime, dance from a particular culture; write a letter to a foreign travel agencies requesting more information about their country; do a demonstration, puppet show; write a song lyric and music; create a class/school newspaper with information about travel to foreign countries; make a video documentary based on a particular cultural aspect of a target country, answer questions related to travel in learning centers, create an itinerary; and present a news report related to travel in a particular target country, create a photo-essay based on an aspect of travel, or a radio program combining all information from the travel unit.

To create a product assignment, teachers need to follow specific guidelines. First, they need to identify the essentials of the study/unit/term. Teachers need to understand what they want students to know and be able to do as a result of this study/unit/term. Second, teachers need to identify formats or options for the product. Third, they need to determine expectations for quality in content, process, and product. It is essential that teachers know and explain core expectations of quality products so students can reach high to attain success. Rick Stiggins (2008), a recognized expert on assessment, has pointed out, "Students who see the target as being beyond reach will give up in hopelessness" (p. 12). To promote student success, teachers have to provide enough scaffolding throughout the product span. They need to make everything explicit so students are not "in the dark" trying to hit the target.

Fourth, teachers need to decide what type of support or scaffolding they need to provide to ensure student success. Fifth, teachers need to develop a product assignment that clearly outlines to the students what they need to understand and do, what steps or stages are involved with the product development, and what level of quality is needed to succeed at this assignment. Sixth, teachers need to modify versions of the assignment based on student readiness, interest, and learning profile. Seventh, they need to become coaches and facilitators for students to succeed.

There are a few additional guidelines to help students build success with product assignments, according to Tomlinson (2001): use product assignments that help students see a connection between the classroom and the real world; help students build a passion for ideas being pursued; require students to use multiple sources of information to develop products; provide timelines and deadlines so procrastination is limited and the product receives a high quality grade; ensure that students actually use the time allotted for the product assignment

productively throughout the time span instead of waiting to start working on it when the assignment is due; support students' varied use of materials, modes of expression, and resources; help students learn not only the content, but also production skills required for a successful product assignment (e.g., provide a clear guidance on quality presentation if a student chooses to teach a topic to the class as a product assignment); communicate with parents regarding requirements, timelines, purposes, and support provided to their children; encourage students to use different ways to create products instead of a usual poster-presentation mode; use formative (during the project) and summative (at the end of the project) assessments as well as peer and self-assessments; and encourage different presentation modes where students share their products in groups, pairs, triads, or individually as an alternative to whole-class presentations that can be very time-consuming and become uninspiring if students are not high-quality presenters

If teachers provide students with written guidelines that outline structure, challenge, and clarity of purpose and expectations of a product assignment beforehand, ensure appropriate support is in place when necessary, stress timelines with check-in dates, and encourage creativity and expression of ideas, student products will achieve an unprecedented quality. This success will set a stage for another success, which is reflected in the following statement by Stiggins (2008):

> If that early evidence suggests that they are succeeding, what begins to grow in them is a sense of hopefulness and an expectation of more success in the future. This in turn fuels enthusiasm and the motivation to try hard, which fuels even more success. (p. 18)

Conclusion

With the diversity of students' backgrounds in today's schools across the country, teachers are faced with a challenge to address particular state grade-level standards and at the same time to tailor instruction to meet their students' different emotional, social, and cognitive needs. The demands placed on teachers today require them to search for instructional strategies and approaches that are research-based but applicable to their practice and can accommodate different students' learning styles, attitudes, values, academic self-efficacy, interests, aspirations, and academic readiness for schools. In classrooms where these differences are neglected and teachers adopt a philosophy of "one size fits all", learners are deprived of success in school and future. Therefore, differentiated instruction can be an answer to the teachers who want to make a shift from "single-size instruction" to "all-size instruction". As Tomlinson (2001) has said about differentiate instruction, "A teacher does not see differentiation as a strategy or something to do when there's extra time. Rather, it is a way of life in the classroom" (pp. 6-7).

In a standards-driven world, teachers who possess a keen understanding of their students' basic psychological needs, who challenge traditional ways of thinking about learning and teaching, and who take time to analyze and reflect on how differentiated their instruction is in order to improve their teaching practices,

to accommodate student needs, and to increase student achievement, are the ones who can make a difference in students' lives. Teachers can differentiate curricular content, process, and product based on student readiness, interest, and learning profile. By providing differentiated instruction, teachers can empower students to make choices and decisions regarding their learning and instructional practices (George, 2005). By giving students a chance to control their own environment, they can experience success which in turn will increase their motivation, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. In addition, it is essential for teachers to realize that students will rise to the expectations teachers have for them. As Van Garderen and Whittaker (2006) have pointed out, "The basic premise of differentiated instruction is to systematically plan curriculum and instruction that meets the needs of academically diverse learners by honoring each student's learning needs and maximizing each student's learning capacity" (p. 15).

Recent research has suggested that the factor that makes the greatest impact on student achievement is how well prepared and effective teachers are (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Marzano, 2007). Therefore, the strategies and techniques of differentiated instruction described above provide a basic foundation for ensuring that teachers are effective in their instruction that meets students' basic needs and curricular demands.

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11

Bellringer Reading

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Which student learns more successfully, the one who skips into the classroom with a sparkle saying confidently, "I can do this!" or the one who drags in with a sigh and the eye-roll that expresses all the despair of anticipated failure? It seems to me as a veteran teacher that the foundation of learning rests on an attitude of confidence in anticipated success, a sense of competence. Without the possibility of success, there is little motivation to persevere (Stiggins, 1999). How can we start the day in such a way as to maximize the positive?

I begin each class with an activity that I call bellringer reading to offer the students a boost to their sense of accomplishment, a connection to current events that interests them, and an authentic context in which to examine language. I use a document camera to project an online French newspaper article on the classroom screen, but a teacher could instead use overhead transparencies, photocopies, or authentic documents to provide this reading activity. I am finding that although my original purpose was to provide meaningful instruction in French, bellringer reading is an investment in the overall success of my students as readers and learners. The larger benefits reflect the improvements that are delivered by increased confidence and the use of metacognitive strategies in diverse learning situations.

I propose to describe this classroom practice that seems to offer many benefits to my middle school French students, benefits in their language learning, in their attitude, and in their reading strategies. Following a review of current literature that supports this classroom activity, I will describe bellringer reading in the classroom and consider the perceived benefits.

Research Backdrop

My decision to engage in daily bellringer reading is based on what Francis Mangubhai (2006) calls "personal practical theories" (p. 1), but significant

research supports my observations. Pressley's (2000) summary of what makes a good reader points the way to significant topics of interest:

> Good readers are aware of why they are reading a text, gain an overview of the text before reading, make predictions about the upcoming text, read selectively based on their overview, associate ideas in text to what they already know, note whether their predictions and expectations about text content are being met, revise their prior knowledge when compelling new ideas conflicting with prior knowledge are encountered, figure out the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary based on context clues…, interpret the text, evaluate its quality, review important points as they conclude reading, and think about how ideas encountered in the text might be used in the future (Active Comprehension Strategies, para.1).

Perencevich (2004) states that "outstanding reading teachers provided academically rich and connected activities, taught reading strategies, and offered a variety of challenging texts" (page 5). All of these reading tasks can be accomplished in bellringer reading, with the larger benefit of increased student self-confidence and metacognitive strategies useful in problem-solving tasks other than reading. I will review the literature in the areas of motivation and engagement, use of bellringers, the importance of reading in the target language, contextualized learning, difficulty level of texts, modeling metacognition, impact of self-confidence, and addressing culture standards.

Motivation

According to Guthrie (2000),

> Engaged reading is a merger of motivation and thoughtfulness. Engaged readers seek to understand; they enjoy learning and they believe in their reading abilities. Classroom contexts can promote engaged reading. Teachers create contexts for engagement when they provide prominent knowledge goals, real-world connections to reading, meaningful choices about what, when, and how to read, and interesting texts that are familiar, vivid, important, and relevant. Teachers can further engagement by teaching reading strategies. A coherent classroom fuses these qualities (Overview section, para.1).

What is the value of engaging readers?

> In cross-age comparisons, 13-year-old students with higher reading engagement achieved at a higher level than did less engaged 17-year-old students. Engagement in reading can also compensate for low achievement attributed to low family income and educational background. In the same national data, engaged readers from low income/education families achieved at a higher level than did less engaged readers from high income/education backgrounds. Engaged readers can overcome obstacles to achievement and become agents of their own reading growth (Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang, 2001).

Guthrie (2000) discusses three aspects of motivation: 1) performance, which focuses the reader on achieving praise, 2) task mastery, which focuses more intrinsically on accepting a challenge and learning new skills, and 3) self-efficacy, which focuses on the reader's judgment of his own abilities. Citing Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele (1998) and Eccles & Pintrich (1996), Guthrie (2000) notes that "practices that focus on social comparison between children, too much competition, and little attempt to spark children's interests in different topics can lead to declines in competence beliefs, mastery goals, and intrinsic motivation, and increases in extrinsic motivation and performance goals" (Motivation research, para.6). To work to prevent the decline in reading motivation of middle school students cited by Guthrie, we must encourage collaborative reading that addresses diverse interests and builds an attitude of anticipated daily success for each student. Guthrie also notes that there is a difference between motivation and attitude or interest. A highly motivated reader may not like reading certain topics or may not like to read at all. "Students who were … dedicated to understanding content, using strategies effectively, and linking their new knowledge to previous experiences—were likely to be more highly engaged than other students" (Guthrie, 2000, Learning and knowledge goals section, para.1). The value of teacher recognition for student success is a means to increase student motivation. "When praise is sincerely given and interpreted as recognition of achievement, it can increase students' self-perceived competence and motivation" (Guthrie, 2000, Praise and rewards section, para.2). Guthrie concludes that "teachers who aspire to increase engaged reading in the classroom can do so by building a context for it. To create this context, teachers can:

- Identify a knowledge goal and announce it
- Provide a brief real-world experience related to the goal
- Teach cognitive strategies that empower students to succeed in reading these texts
- Assure social collaboration for learning
- Align evaluation of student work with the instructional context (e.g., grade students for progress toward the knowledge goal)" (Guthrie, 2000, conclusion).

Use of Bellingers

I have used a bellringer of some kind in all my classes because an anticipatory set engages the attention of students. The purpose is to involve all students and "to initially focus learner attention on a problem in a way that captures their interest" (Magruder, 2007, Definition). "Some teachers have found that turning the lights down low and projecting the morning's bell ringer activity onto the chalkboard with an overhead projector helps focus students' attention on the day ahead. Such 'bellringer' activities get the day off to a purposeful start by focusing kids' energies and attention" (Starr, 2006, Calm down, para.1). An anticipatory set, or bellringer, is a recommended opening to a lesson, which aims to "provide a brief practice and/or develop a readiness for the instruction that will follow" (Combs, 2007, para.2).

Input, Input, Input

Mangubhai (2007) states that extensive input in the second language improves learning dramatically. Some evidence for this comes from the early work of Elley and Mangubhai (1983) where children (10-12 years old) learning English as a second language (in a foreign language-like context) were provided with extensive input ("Book Flood") in English through regular reading (20-30 minutes) in the classroom. These children outperformed the control group who did not have this printed input but continued with their structural program for the same duration. The superior language development through extensive reading has been labeled "acquisition" by Krashen (1993b). Further examples of acquisition through reading have been documented by Elley (1991) and Krashen (Krashen, 1993a; 1993b).

The Mangubhai study involves much longer reading time than my bellringer reading activity, but our daily reading of authentic language provides a regular practice of this important activity, establishing a habit. Mangubhai concludes that,

> To become fluent in a language, one must receive extensive L2 input. Research suggests that language learning occurs best when learners are engaged in communicative acts (Lightbown & Spada, 1999), or to put it in another way, when learners are engaged in encoding and decoding meanings in acts of communication (oral or printed). In other words, teachers should have dinning through their head the word 'input', 'input', 'input' (Mangubhai, 2006, Insight #5).

The National Council of Teachers of English SLATE fact sheet citing Elley (1991) and Krashen (1993) notes that "research suggests that extensive reading may promote the acquisition of grammatical structures better than explicitly studying or practicing such structures. Indeed, for both first and second language learners, extensive reading significantly promotes grammatical fluency and a command of the syntactic resources of the language" (NCTE SLATE fact sheet, n.d., What works better section, para.5). Students find the bellringer reading more like leisure reading than assigned textbook content reading since there is no comprehension testing. There is ample evidence that reading outside the formal reading sphere boosts vocabulary acquisition (Iyengar & Bauerlein, 2007). "While school reading programs peddle their rival curricula, cognitive scientists are busy proving that informal exposure to language—through heavy doses of leisure reading—can influence a child's vocabulary growth far more than classroom training" (Iyengar & Bauerlein, 2007, para.10).

Contextualized Learning

Mangubhai (2007) also reinforces my sense that a vocabulary word, a grammar point, or an idiom that we encounter in our brief reading allows me to teach or reinforce language structure when the students are open and interested in learning it for the purpose at hand, which is far more effective than when the grammar or linguistic structure is addressed in isolation. He discusses the learner trait of noticing, making reference to the work of Schmidt.

A quick lesson on the correct form at that particular instance when students need the form might lead to a greater amount of noticing between what their current knowledge is and where they need to be in order to communicate with grammatical accuracy (Mangubhai, 2007, page 1).

The National Council Teachers of English position paper on grammar exercises states that "ample evidence from 50 years of research has shown the teaching of grammar in isolation does not lead to improvement in students' speaking and writing, and that in fact, it hinders development of students' oral and written language" (NCTE, 2007, Background section). The Nebraska Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy (1993) states that

Contextualized learning is nothing new. It is based on the proposition that people learn more effectively when they are learning about something that they are interested in, that they already know something about, and that affords them the opportunity to use what they already know to figure out new things. It is similar to a fairly common approach in reading instruction which emphasizes the value of prior knowledge in enabling readers to make sense of what they read (Nebraska Institute, 1993, para. 2).

Difficulty Level of Text

The choice of a real time online French newspaper as the daily reading text for middle schoolers with no previous target language learning may seem to be overly difficult and likely to thus discourage even the most able. Mangubhai (2007) addresses this concern by reminding us that comprehension far outstrips production. He supports the use of materials "that may, on the surface, appear quite difficult for the learners but which may still be understood, provided that the activity or activities associated with such use do not expect learners to get detailed meanings of the text, but rather the gist of what has been heard or read" (p. 1).

Pressley (2000) notes "that children do develop knowledge of vocabulary through incidental contact with new words they read is one of the many reasons to encourage students to read extensively. Whenever researchers have looked, they have found vocabulary increases as a function of children's reading of text rich in new words" (Pressley, 2000, Vocabulary section, para. 3).

Modeling Strategies of Metacognition

Students read "to make sense of the world around them" (Harvey, Goudvis, & Graves, 2007, page xv). As teachers, we need to show students how to read, rather than simply telling them, by modeling reading strategies (Harvey et al, 2007). Bellringer reading provides a dynamic forum for modeling reading strategies and the inner voice that interacts with the text during reading, strategies that are useful in diverse reading contexts beyond the target language classroom, metacognitive strategies that are, in fact, useful in wider learning contexts other than reading.

Zakin (2007) addresses the process of teacher modeling and the acquisition of strategies for student metacognition as well.

Metacognitive instruction predicated on inner speech differs from typical good teaching practice in its systematic reliance on inner speech. The 'ARE' approach maintains that the steps for thinking through a problem need to be made as explicit as possible for students to identify the problem, brainstorm and select best approaches, avoid errors typically made by the individual, and evaluate their process and progress. The approach is dependent on teacher modeling and incremental scaffolding of students' work process. While the goal of this pedagogical approach is automatic inner speech-facilitated problem solving, it emphasizes process over product, and accordingly takes into account each step of the learning process and the student's pace of learning (p.4).

DeLaO (2001) cites the work of Chamot and O'Malley (1994), explaining "that learners that are engaged in organizing new information into existing schemata create more channels for comprehension and recall versus students who simply memorize new information; these metacognitive strategies can be taught and through meaningful practice students can propel their learning; this new repertoire of learning strategies, once internalized, can be generalized and applied to new academic tasks; and students learn academic language easier via learning strategies" (para 8). "The development of metacognition appears to be linked to proficiency in learning" (Collins, 1994, para.17). As the classroom application of bellringer reading will demonstrate, this short reading activity allows the classroom teacher to engage students in the development of metacognitive strategies to improve their target language reading skills and to apply metacognitive strategies to other learning tasks.

Guthrie (2000) notes that "strategy instruction involves the explicit teaching of behaviors that enable students to acquire relevant knowledge from text. Explicit instruction includes teacher modeling, scaffolding, and coaching, with direct explanation for why strategies are valuable and how and when to use them. In the domain of reading, students are given a sense of self-perceived competence when they are taught strategies for learning from text" (Strategy instruction section, para.1).

Pressley (2000) emphasizes the value of modeling when he advises that "Teachers should model and explain comprehension strategies, have their students practice using such strategies with teacher support, and let students know they are expected to continue using the strategies when reading on their own. Such teaching should occur across every school day, for as long as required to get all readers using the strategies independently -- which means including it in reading instruction for years" (Active comprehension strategies, para.4).

Impact of Self-Confidence on Learning

As Stiggins (1999) reminds us, "Students succeed academically only if they want to succeed and feel capable of doing so. If they lack either desire or confidence, they will not be successful. Therefore, the essential question is a dual one: How do we help our students want to learn and feel capable of learning?" (p. 1). Wang (2007) offers support for this contention when she includes student attitude toward

the subject as a category of influence on academic learning (category 4). The application of bellringer reading activities can provide a springboard to improving and supporting student self-confidence.

Citing Vroom (1964), Huitt (2001) explains that expectancy theory proposes the following equation: motivation equals the result of multiplying Perceived Probability of Success (Expectancy), Connection of Success and Reward (Instrumentality), and Value of Obtaining Goal (Valance, Value). Since Expectancy, Instrumentality, and Value are multiplied by each other, a low value in one results in low motivation, so all are vital for motivation. If students don't believe they have a possibility of success, if they don't see a connection between their effort and success, if they don't value the results of success, then they probably will not persevere in the activity. "All three variables must be high in order for motivation and the resulting behavior to be high" (Cognitive section, para. 5). "Franken (1994) states that 'there is a great deal of research which shows that the self-concept is, perhaps, the basis for all motivated behavior. It is the self-concept that gives rise to possible selves, and it is possible selves that create the motivation for behavior' (p. 443)" (Huitt, 2004, para.3).

Oldfather (1993) studied the consequences of students' lack of success. She reports: "Marcel, a fifth grade student who participated in an interpretive study of student motivation, described how he felt when he was not able to do an assignment:

'Just my whole body feels like I want to throw up or something, if I don't like something....I can't do it at all....I feel like sick, and I feel so sick....My body feels completely wrong.'

This paper offers the perspectives of Marcel and his classmates on their experiences when they did not feel motivated for academic tasks. Their views provide insights about the social, affective, and cognitive processes that may enable some children to become engaged in literacy activities, and prevent others from even beginning those activities" (p. 1).

Guthrie (2000) notes that "fundamental to most theories of intrinsically motivated learning is self-perceived competence" (Strategy instruction section, para.1). Bellringer reading of authentic documents can be a means to address the need to provide opportunities for students to improve their self-perception as readers and as learners in general with the goal of increased engagement and motivation. This increased engagement and motivation in turn benefits reading success.

Collaboration

Guthrie (2000) refers to collaboration as "the social discourse among students in a learning community that enables them to see perspectives and to construct knowledge socially from text. Many teachers use collaboration to activate and maintain students' intrinsic motivation and mastery goal orientation" (Collaboration section, para.1). Citing Harmer (1998) and Nielson (1989), Baker (2007) concludes that students in collaborative discussion have increased talking

time, benefit from exchanging strategies with others with different learning styles, and increase the development of individual thinking (para. 2).

Bellringer Reading in Practice

Bellringer Reading

In my French classroom of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, each class begins with a minute or two of individual reading of a current news article. Students know that when they come in, they will see an online newspaper article projected onto the screen. A classroom without access to that technology could use an overhead transparency of a printed article, a printed copy of a news article that students pick up when they enter, or an authentic document other than the news. My students' task is to identify the topic and at least three words they recognize either as cognates or from experience in French and to note questions that they ask while reading. I challenge them to read enough to be able to engage in a discussion of the topic, in English. During these few minutes they are immersing themselves in French while I take attendance.

Reading Response

After a minute or so of reading, I ask students to turn to a partner or a small group to share their observations and respond to the reading. In a class discussion that ranges from 1 to 5 minutes following the individual reading and sharing time, we address the questions that students raise, discuss the implications of the topic, or note interesting language structures. The discussion varies from one class to the next and will often raise different language questions in each class.

Paired Collaborative Sharing

After an additional short individual reading, students are instructed to discuss with a seat partner what they have read. I specifically instruct them to summarize, question, observe, predict, and infer. As I move among them I frequently hear conversations asking for the meaning of a key word, observations of language structures recently studied, and invariably the eager hands in the air squealing, "I know! I know!" This talk time gives me a chance to interact and to listen, to compliment and to reassure. This brief buzz time generally sees all students engaged in conversation.

Class Discussion

I call the class to attention after a short opportunity to share and ask for their questions and observations. One class might debate whether the topic of an article was Sports or the Rugby World Cup, so we take the opportunity to note the difference between a general topic and a detailed focus. Since the World Cup was being played in France that month, the sports fans enthusiastic about this discussion found a personal connection to French. By purposefully choosing a revolving variety of topics, different students have prior knowledge to share and interest in the article. We have discussed the changing school calendar in France, the proposed addition of extracurricular activities for latch-key kids, the

California forest fires, riots in the Parisian suburbs, fishermen and student strikes, and the World Cup of Handball, all in the context of the day's front page article.

Cognate Recognition

During discussion, a class might share key words that they identify as they summarize the article. There is regular exultation at the success that students have in deciphering this new language to arrive at meaning, with me as the head cheerleader. Students find cognates, vocabulary words from previous lessons, or words that they can decode from the context. I regularly see students of all ability levels turn to a classmate to crow, "Hey, I GET this!"

Questioning

I always ask what questions students have in response to the text. Although many times students want to know the meaning of a key word, students' questions range from the content, as in, "How is rugby different from football?" to language questions, like "Why is there an extra 'e' on that word?" Questioning is a part of the inner dialogue that goes on in a reader as they address a text. We often address this internal conversation as a metacognitive strategy which examines the process of reading.

Grammar in Context

Frequently, students comment on seeing language elements they have been studying. For example, in a recent article, students pointed out several different forms of the word "this" and "these," which came on the heels of our study of demonstrative adjectives. I see far more "aha" looks lighting up faces when we encounter these language structures in a reading than when we are practicing them in the workbook or in textbook exercises. My students already recognize the –ant ending on verbs as equivalent to an –ing in English, the –é verb ending as a past participle, and the –ment as an adverb equivalent to –ly from the frequent occurrence of those structures in their daily reading. The newspaper reading moment seems to find them more open to this sort of grammar explanation, so that when in later textbook chapters we come upon them, they are familiar structures.

Modeling Metacognition

I occasionally model my thinking as I read as a teaching strategy that improves reading (Harvey and Goudvis, 2007). For example, in an article from the "Économie" section of **Le Monde** online newspaper on October 2, I shared my distaste for Economics as a first reaction to having to read the article. I saw that it was long, which made it seem hard. By modeling my inner voice negotiation, I identified strategies for talking to ourselves while we read (DeLaO, 2001). My compromise with the "I don't want to read this" inner voice was to decide to just read the headline and look at the picture and its caption to get an overview. I saw "The 27 pays of the European Union" and I wondered aloud what pays means. I asked myself what Europe has 27 of and concluded it must mean countries. I read "courier" in the headline and connected "message carrier" to the picture of mail in the photo. The caption refers to the "libéralisation totale du courier" so I

postulate that this article is about the 27 countries of Europe sharing mail service, and I connect that thought to my prior knowledge of the way they decided to share money with the euro. My negotiation voice suggested that I go on to read the first short paragraph because it's only 2 lines, hoping to prove my interpretation. My "aha!" moment when I see "traffic postal" at the end of the line clinched my satisfaction at having correctly decoded the topic. Modeling my own inner voice in the struggle to make meaning from the French text validates the students' anxiety and celebrates the sense of accomplishment that follows successful deciphering.

Pressley (2000) notes that teachers must ask students to consider why they understand what they are reading, to question the source of their comprehension, because young readers will not always realize that they are connecting their prior knowledge to their present comprehension. "Readers should be encouraged to relate what they know to information-rich texts they are reading, with a potent mechanism for doing this being elaborative interrogation" (World knowledge section, para. 3).

Student Success

Inviting the students to turn to a partner to share their response to the reading gives them control and maximizes individual participation. It also allows me to move among them, listening. Within the first few minutes of every class, this provides me with an opportunity to exclaim, "My word, you are so good at reading French!" I point out on a regular basis that this is an authentic text, not a watered down student version with limited vocabulary, and congratulate them on their achievement. Every student can find key words and identify the topic, thus completing the task successfully.

Choosing the Reading

My choice of a text depends on the news available on the online French newspapers. I try to vary the articles to touch diverse interests of the students in sports, art, theater, film, science, technology, the environment, the weather, and current events. Sometimes I will see a topic that offers links to our current focus of instruction, like spelling numbers or the names of European countries bordering France. During Red-Ribbon Week I found articles that would connect to the consequences of making choices; during the week announcing the Nobel Prizes, students walked in wondering in what field the day's prize would be, or they crowed triumphantly that they had heard it already on the news and knew the topic.

Assessment

My students earn a point of credit per day for the bellringer reading. I call these "News Notes" and use them to monitor organizational skills. I check the News Notes every 3 weeks, so a part of the assessment is the ability to find the notes every day and add each day's topic and at least 3 words. We discuss the optimal ways to accomplish this task. Students suggest writing in their planner, in a notebook, or in the back of their workbook. I ask them to keep the notes in one place that they can easily find, not on loose-leaf notebook paper. Most choose

to write in the blank journal pages at the end of the workbook or on a page in the school planner. They number the entries to simplify my coming around to check them.

Make-up

I copy the website address of each article to paste on my homework webpage each day so that students who are absent or late to class can read the article later. This also allows students to show articles to their parents or read them again at home.

Benefits of Bellringer Reading

Contextualized Learning

Second language acquisition in a 46-minute daily dose of interaction with other English speakers presents multiple barriers to learning. I seek ways to use communication skills in a meaningful context. This reading activity remains one of the most grounded in the daily routine of language use, since reading the news is a familiar activity for most of my students. For a different population of learners, reading other authentic documents than the newspaper might provide a more familiar context.

Connecting to Students' Personal Interests

Another benefit is the opportunity that diverse current events offer to connect to students' individual interests. One day we read about men's volleyball and the next about the exploding price of French train tickets. The new interactive subway station technology fascinates one child who yawns through the disappearance of the plastic bag from French stores, which is gripping to the child deeply concerned with the environment. One of my seventh graders asked today for a pass to the media center from study hall to find a cool picture of the World Cup of Rugby being played in France. He had decided to draw a picture of the French rugby team for his creative project. "I got interested in it when we read that article about it," he volunteered, "and I've been watching the matches at home on our satellite channels. It's a cool sport!"

It seems to me that students who are engaged in classroom activity and feel connections with their personal interests come into the classroom more eagerly, regardless of their ability. I choose news stories with this goal in mind: to appeal to as many different interests as possible, in the arts, music, theater, science, and society. One class discussion of the article announcing Pavarotti's death, with an audio clip of a famous aria, keeps my young vocal music student sparkling. The Paris Plage article that shows beach volleyball on the square in front of city hall delights the sun lovers who are fascinated by the city government's effort to bring the beach to those who can't leave the city.

When I ask these students to practice writing sentences in their workbook or to write a conversation using vocabulary words, I sense a willingness to work through the process of linguistic acquisition, a willingness that was less common in my classroom before I began this bellringer reading. The self-confidence

that comes with every day's success at the beginning of class reaps a harvest in momentum into the rest of the days' lesson.

Wider Application of Strategies

The payoff of this investment of class time shows up in unexpected places. Reviewing a cloze conversation with a word bank on a quiz, one of my seventh graders remarked that making sense of the conversation was a lot like reading the news articles: if you asked yourself questions, you could figure it out, even if it looked hard. I was delighted to know that our strategies were finding their way into the problem-solving repertoire of the students. We periodically talk about other kinds of decoding and comprehension tasks to which we can apply our reading strategies.

Daily Culture Elements

State and national standards require that we address many facets of culture in a classroom schedule already hard pressed for time to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. My bulletin boards and walls offer glimpses into French culture, as does the textbook, but the bellringer reading takes us onto the front page of French culture every day.

Conclusion

On the United States Department of Education website for parents, there is a section called Tools for Student Success which states that "other than helping your children to grow up healthy and happy, the most important thing that you can do for them is to help them develop their reading skills" (Helping your child become a reader, para.10). Bean (2000) concludes his article on reading in the content areas by saying that "the more recent studies of adolescents' multiple literacies, and the significant role of popular culture in their identity development, suggests that we need to think about curriculum more broadly. We need to engage students in reading and reflecting on the multiple forms of print and other sign systems that constitute their world" (Conclusions section, para. 11). I have chosen a bellringer activity that gives my students a daily affirmation of success in reading in the target language, a reminder of or introduction to reading strategies, an exposure to world culture, and input from an authentic French language source.

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