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Student-Centered Instruction: Linking Career Goals and Instruction

Rosalie Cheatham
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Abstract

In 2002 French faculty at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock began the process of curricular revision to prepare for the challenges of a standards-based French major. After five years of experience and positive evaluations from students, faculty are gratified that the number of graduates in French has increased. However, new challenges have emerged recently. Institutional pressure to graduate a larger number of majors, professional expectations that graduates have acquired a higher level of proficiency than was previously expected, and a significant change in student access to and usage of technology for communication have demanded attention and offered new opportunities. Faculty members have chosen to embrace these challenges by modifying course syllabi to provide for more student-centered learning. This article suggests strategies for a student-centered curriculum that also utilizes technology for communication in the second language (L2) similarly to the ways students communicate in their native language (L1).

Background

The challenge of increasing competency and communicative fluency in second languages among students at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) and among citizens of Arkansas is not unique in the United States. The recent report by the Modern Language Association, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World* (2007) recognized what it called a sense of crisis around the nation's language deficit. At the end of the first decade of a new millennium, studies still indicate that the United States is not in a position to compete on the global stage as well as it should because of an inability to communicate in languages other than English (LOE). For more than half a century, Title VI and the Fulbright-Hays Act have promoted international and foreign language expertise, yet a report from the Committee to Review the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays International Education Programs (2007) begins by stating that "a pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign language threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to compete in the

global marketplace and produce an informed citizenry." Another study (Robinson, Rivers, & Brecht, 2006) found that the national capacity in foreign languages and attitudes toward LOE have changed very little in recent decades.

Even so, the decades-old question, "Why study a foreign language?" continues to be posed often by students, parents, and administrators questioning second language requirements in K-12 and in higher education. The perceptions are that English is becoming increasingly the global language of business and government, that Americans rarely need to speak another language, and that individuals who speak another language did not acquire their skills in school. Why, they reason, should we waste our valuable educational time and dollars on courses we do not really need? A study funded by the Ford Foundation (Hayward, 2000) found that foreign language enrollments declined substantially as a percentage of all enrollments in higher education and that the number of four-year colleges and universities requiring a foreign language for admission dropped from nearly 34 percent in 1965 to just over 20 percent in 1995. The report further noted that among four-year institutions with language requirements only 20% required language for business majors. The most recent survey in trends in enrollments in LOE by the MLA (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2007) indicates that enrollments in LOE are rising but that still only 8.6% of total students attending postsecondary institutions were enrolled in modern language courses, less than half of the percentages reported in the 1960s. Only approximately 1 in 5 of these enrollments is in upper-level courses, indicating a continuing lack of student commitment to persistence in language study leading to fluency.

While there are significant differences in percentages of students enrolled in second languages today, discussion of perceived need and national interest replicates in many ways the findings of previous generations. Members of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (Perkins, 1979) concluded that foreign languages and international studies were being neglected to the detriment of national security and the nation's economic well-being. Title VI was created in the post-Sputnik era a generation earlier to help the nation respond to the need for greater capacity in LOE.

Still, Robinson, Rivers, & Brecht (2006) reported a survey indicating that while 67% of those who learned a second language in a home environment considered themselves to be competent users of the language, only 10% of those who studied the language in a school setting considered themselves able to speak the language well or very well. This self-assessment perpetuates the frequent comment of former L2 students that they are unable to communicate with native speakers even though they have studied a L2 for several semesters or years.

Without a doubt, foreign language educators have engaged in an energetic response to this need. Researchers and language professionals have attempted for years to improve success rates among students enrolled in L2 courses, and instruction has changed dramatically. The proficiency movement is an outgrowth of the recommendations of the 1979 Perkins report. The recent development of discipline-based standards in all major academic areas is transforming education throughout the country. *The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006)

have provided outstanding guidance for the revision of L2 programs K–16. *The National Educational Technology Standards (NETS*S) and Performance Indicators for Students* (International Society for Technology In Education, 2007) provide useful guidance in establishing appropriate expectations for students' use of technology to create with language in the new millennium, and *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000) assist in defining content and processes necessary for students to be considered information literate. Much work has been accomplished in understanding how students learn and retain language. Studies in self-reliance (Schunk, 1996, 2003) and (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2006) provide some insight into diminishing student anxiety in order to encourage persistence and achievement. Studies on the role of motivation and strategies in language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), (Oxford & Crookall, 1989), (Ramage, 1990), (Oxford & Shearin, 1994), (Cohen, Weaver, & Li, 1996), (Norris & Ortega, 2000), (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), (Graham, 2004), (Parks, & Raymond, 2004), (Kouritzin, Piquemal, & Renaud, 2009,) are essential for consideration in the modification of classroom instruction and anticipated course outcomes.

Clearly, our best efforts to date have not resulted in the improved capacity in LOE that the various commissions have envisioned. The MLA report (2007) issued a number of challenges to higher education and to second language departments to embrace a "transforming approach to language and culture study in higher education" (p. 8). Subsequently, Pope (2008), in an essay suggesting strategies for consideration in revising and improving L2 majors, has challenged the profession to do a better job in preparing today's students for the needs and demands of this century.

Change in L2 curricula should not be contemplated, however, without recognition of forces external to second-language teaching and learning that impact the educational environment. In three short years, students graduating from high school will have completed all of their formal education in the 21st century. These millennial students or digital natives approach the topic of education and communication in specific from a perspective vastly different from what has been true up until now. Bowman (2008) posits that educators are no longer holding fast to unchanging standards of scholarship, choosing instead to meet today's students in their world. Bauerlein (2008) goes even farther when he discusses a concern that today's students are spending most of their education energy on learning information retrieval systems rather than on learning content. Since language acquisition requires more than information retrieval, meeting millennial students in their communicative environment and providing relevant instruction in order to encourage them to persist for longer sequences of study in the L2 become increasingly important strategies for a successful L2 program.

Framing the Issues

The paradigm shift in the program at UALR (Cheatham, 2008) is a concrete manifestation of Pope's (2008) suggestion that we reevaluate the language

major in terms of faculty expectations and expectations of our students. The change in the structure of the major at UALR is radical and has resulted in an increase in the number of majors and program graduates since the curricular innovations were established in 2002. In response to Pope's question that asks if language professionals can do a better job, the French faculty are making additional modifications that are more pragmatic, provide more relevance for students to the study of French, and offer promise for program quality and enhanced productivity.

Consonant with Pope's suggestion that the profession should stretch its imagination in considering the form and content of a language major, this author proposes that a series of different questions should be considered when structuring courses and curricula, since one way to conceptualize the difference for educators facing digital natives is to ask different questions about the value of the educational experience.

- What motivates a millennial student to acquire knowledge?
- In what environments will this new generation of college graduates have the opportunity to use a second language?
- How can language study connect more closely to real world usage?
- How can the program connect students' career paths and proficiency in the L2?
- How can technology used by a millennial student for L1 communication be utilized most effectively in L2 acquisition?

The approach suggested here reflects steps at the author's university to respond to these questions and to the language deficit crisis (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2007).

Influencing Perception

The aphorism that perception is reality must be taken seriously by program faculty. If students or administrators perceive that the second language program or courses are not marketable or are not producing adequate numbers of graduates when compared to other academic disciplines or against an arbitrary standard, even the best L2 program with the best qualified faculty will not be valued.

Second language faculty, like colleagues in many other disciplines, generally do not believe that student recruitment and promotion of their discipline are faculty responsibilities. After all, they reason, marketing a language curriculum to prove the importance of increased national capacity to communicate in languages other than English and to increase enrollments somehow feels inappropriate and should be unnecessary since there is a documented need for more citizens fluent in a LOE. Even when some of the best materials developed by the professional language organizations are shared with students, they often resemble the same kinds of promotions for every other curriculum area and, therefore, have limited effect. Simply offering statistics suggesting that French is an important world language or providing a list of the top 10 reasons to study another language does not necessarily result in support outside the profession. It is naïve for L2 educa-

tors to assume that educators in other academic areas view second language competency as a requisite component of baccalaureate degree requirements in the 21st century. Moreover, a substantial increase in extended study abroad programs is unlikely as program and travel costs soar and exchange rates fluctuate. Financial pressures throughout higher education suggest that disciplines requiring a longer sequence of study to achieve mastery, such as second languages, are even more threatened than they would otherwise be.

The concept suggested here is to utilize the standards for connections and communities (NSFLEP, 2006) as points of departure for program promotion in the three courses that comprise the university's L2 requirement. The first step is to seek local data, since it is too easy to dismiss national statistics as irrelevant to the local situation. At UALR, a public university in a land-locked southern state, the common perception is that Spanish is the only language that really matters, given the marked growth in the Hispanic population. However, perception is not reality in this case. France has the largest business presence in the state. France is the largest investor in terms of numbers of French-owned businesses in the state, followed by Japan, Canada, and Germany respectively (Arkansas Economic Development Commission, 2009)**.** Not only are these data surprising, but they also add instant credibility for students to the relevance of studying French in the state, and the data capture the attention of individuals who find facts more compelling than faculty assertions that French is central to the mission of the institution.

To make the point evident to students, a very brief questionnaire has been developed (see Appendix A) for use at the beginning of the elementary and intermediate French courses to assess students' knowledge of the applicability of the French language locally. The value of awakening students to immediate relevance of the language requirement should not be overlooked. Clearly, statistics on foreign investment vary from state to state and may be more predictable in some areas than in others. Nonetheless, the value of helping students realize that there is a significant amount of foreign investment in their state helps begin the conversation about the relevance of L2 study in the 21st century. The intent is to guide perception to be informed by authentic information rather than by hearsay comments

A second survey helps students formulate a possible relationship between the study of French and their career goals. These surveys have only recently been developed, so it is too soon to determine whether there is a correlation between survey results and retention. However, anecdotal responses and comments indicate that students' interest in learning French for real-world usage as opposed to simply checking off a degree requirement is increasing. The intent of this effort is to encourage students to think differently about the language requirement and to stimulate discussion and thought about how proficiency in French relates to a range of careers.

In another effort to impact perception in lower-level courses, instructors regularly pose questions in class about why students are being asked to learn and study certain vocabulary and language structures, and they also connect course assignments to real-world usage. In other words, if in a real-world situation it

would be normal to retrieve information rather than to know it, then students are encouraged to learn how to retrieve the information they need and to utilize it appropriately. If, on the other hand, it would be more common to simply know the information or answer in a given situation, then the student is encouraged to realize the importance of knowing the second language information or structure. An analogy to the study of math helps students understand the rationale of this approach. For example, most students understand that they need to know arithmetic from memory well enough to know that 8 x 12 = 96. However, it is not as reasonable to expect them to know 12 x 42 without using either pencil and paper or a calculator to determine the answer. Once they use the calculator, they understand the answer should be correct. Similarly, in French, a student should know forms and pronunciation of regular verbs in basic tenses along with the forms for a selection of very commonly used irregular verbs. On the other hand, it is reasonable to retrieve forms of less common irregular verbs, but the retrieval process must result in a correct answer. This process of teaching students to separate need for knowledge from retrieval strategies enables them to accept that language learning is a process and not purely a frustrating memory challenge. Although the approach may seem heretical to some instructors, it is appreciated by students who are much more likely to gain confidence in their language acquisition ability and to develop real-world strategies for retrieving assistance in communication.

Enhancing Student-Centered Instruction

The strategies to influence perception are supported by a number of significant changes in the elementary and intermediate courses that provide opportunities for students to choose some course content and to perform real-world functions necessary to survive in a country where the target language is spoken (Cheatham, 2008). As instruction moves into the advanced level, the skills courses are divided among the three modes of the communication standards, interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Faculty chose to separate the communicative modes into discrete courses at this point in sequencing the major in order to assure that each mode received significant emphasis and to encourage students to recognize that knowledge and ability in one mode is not necessarily the same as in another mode. It is also possible to allow students greater control over the course content than was true in the lower-level courses so that their motivation to communicate is enhanced. Rather than envisioning the product of these courses as though all topics are of equal value and interest to each student, some content in each course is chosen by the student and then assessed according to guidelines for evaluation established by the instructor. Reflective of the *9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning* (American Association for Higher Education, 1996), student interest in course content and opportunities for real-world applications of the language studied are recognized as important. If students do not perceive that their efforts and energies are resulting in increased ability to use the language for purposes that matter to them, they are unlikely to persist in subsequent courses.

Objectives for the interpretive course build on strategies from the elementary and intermediate courses that are extrapolated from Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis, which posits that learners acquire language through comprehensible input by reading or hearing language containing structures a little beyond their current level of ability. Instructors work with students to select authentic materials in students' areas of interest for listening and reading input. Thus, the interpretive syllabus includes an overt attempt to encourage students to acquire language that interests them from sources they use. On the one hand, they bring to the tasks schemata that assist them in interpreting accurately. In addition, they participate in retrieving the information they will interpret. Given that information retrieval is recognized as one of the skills valued by millennial students, the information to be interpreted appears more relevant to the student. Again, utilizing the theme that perception is reality, if the students perceive they have the opportunity to select the message, they understand more readily that the language they are learning is relevant to their interests and career goals.

This approach offers an additional benefit. Inasmuch as students may enter the three required communication-mode courses in any sequence, some students may have completed only nine credit hours of French before enrolling in one of the courses, while others will have earned more credit hours. The content in the courses is not sequential, and anecdotal evidence from several years of experience indicates that students progress at least as well as was true when a required sequence was expected.

In this student-centered environment, the challenge for the instructor is to assure that students' work is assessed equitably, recognizing that students are not working with the same input. While the format suggested here might not be a perfect solution, the students perceive it as fair, and it does give the instructor needed evidence of progress. The equitable assessment is regulated in the expectations established for student performance. For example, all students are required to listen to four 10-minute segments of news broadcasts from French media sources weekly. While it is likely that students invest differing amounts of energy in this assignment, they are asked to listen not more than four times to each selection. Sources are suggested by the instructor from mainstream media such as *France 2* or *Radio France Internationale*. However, students may choose to listen to news from other sources if they request source approval from the instructor. They select what they listen to, they maintain a journal in which they document the source, date, time, and segment(s), and they provide bulleted notes in English of what they understood on at least three of the stories they selected. They are asked to identify the selection they found most difficult and to state why they found it difficult. The instructor, then, randomly chooses one of the selections identified by a student as difficult for in-class listening by the entire class. All students work cooperatively toward comprehension in an attempt to understand as much as possible from the selection, using a team approach similar to the collaboration required for peer editing of written work. Among the advantages of this activity is the fact that students are responsible for selecting topics of interest to them and they are required to share that interest with other students. The real-world value of

this activity is clear to them. Not only is the listening activity itself authentic, but also it is likely that in a real-world listening experience, friends, or colleagues would work cooperatively to infer meaning from a situation if they needed to understand what was occurring. In-class listening activities in another unit utilize *You Tube* instructional segments in French in which students are asked to interpret details on topics of general interest.

In an interpretive reading unit, students demonstrate their information retrieval skills by selecting printed materials in French related to their individual career focus. If it is reasonable that the material would be accessed online in a non-academic setting, then this medium is acceptable for students to use to find authentic information for the class assignment. If, however, it would be more likely that information would be retrieved from a non Web-based source, then that medium should be used. In the first interpretive activity of the unit, students are asked to read for the gist looking up no more than five words deemed to be essential. An assessment rubric is provided (see Appendix B) so that students understand that successful completion of this component does not require complete, detail comprehension, but only comprehension adequate to understand the general content of the selection. The rubric is also designed to reflect L1 interpretive behavior and to encourage development of skimming, scanning, and reading for the gist skills in the L2.

Once students have established the topic of interest and worked with several self-selected documents, the instructor provides a new document on the same topic for students to interpret as the unit assessment. When students select the focus of the unit and understand in advance the evaluative criteria, they are more engaged in learning language since it is pertinent to their own interests, and they also understand the real-world value of interpretive communication skills in the L2.

In the first week of the interpersonal communication course, students select a social networking environment (e.g., blog, wiki, *Facebook*) to be used by all class members for dissemination of interpersonal entries. Course units are structured to require students to perform functions that they would carry out in L1 communication. Communicative tasks that reflect authentic situations are organized according to functions. For example, one function that students can easily relate to is complaining. During the preparation phase of the unit, a variety of situations in which it would be common to express complaints are utilized for role-play. Students are paired randomly, and they have the opportunity to refine the situation they attempt. The medium they choose must demonstrate a real-world environment. For example, a face-to-face medium would be logical for a problem with an item that was not properly cleaned by the dry cleaner or for problems in a restaurant or a hotel. Another authentic situation might be complaining to a friend about another person or situation using e-mail, a blog, or *Facebook*. On the other hand, contacting a landlord about a problem with living accommodations while studying abroad would be a reasonable written activity.

The study of structure is derived from the function studied in the unit. The structure emphasis for the unit on complaining is the subjunctive to express

volition, sentiments, and doubt. In addition, alternative structures and syntax are emphasized. The final unit activity, again assessed using a rubric, takes advantage of the premise that since there are a number of French-owned companies in the area near the university, there are native speakers of the language in the community. Because many students have a job while in school, the situation assumes the student is at work and encounters a native speaker of French who comes to the student's workplace to complain about a problem. The student must identify the problem and assist in obtaining a solution.

The third course in the communications sequence focuses on the presentational mode. Aware that computer literacy varies among students and that some students may not request assistance as readily as others, instructors have added a presentational skill assessment at the beginning of the course to assure that all students begin the class with basic functional competence in presentational software. During the third class meeting, each student presents a brief presentational slide show on a topic of the student's choosing comprised of a minimum of 10 frames including 3 inserted pictures or clip art, some animation, and at least 1 slide with text in French. Inclusion of a sound file is optional. The instructor is available to assist if a student feels particularly challenged by this requirement, but most students are either already competent or obtain assistance in the department's computer lab or another campus lab. The addition of this ungraded assessment at the beginning of the course enables instructors to separate technical challenges from L2 problems. Students who were new to the software seemed to feel disadvantaged, and it was difficult for the instructor to differentiate language problems from technical challenges.

Beyond the usage of presentational software, students create podcasts and vodcasts of their information using *GarageBand* and *Imovie*. As is true in the other communication courses, the application of current technologies to language acquisition provides relevance to real-world communication that was missing in the early implementation of the revised curriculum. If students are not already comfortable using current technologies and applications for communication, by the end of the course they feel they have improved their language skill and gained technical expertise. While it is always important for the instructor to remember that the goal of the course is L2 communication and not just learning technology, it is clear that students engage in the required activities with a more genuine effort than was typical in the traditional advanced skills courses. Technology standards (ISTE, 2007) provide guidance in terms of expectations for student capacity to use the relevant technologies and are referenced on the course syllabus in order to help students understand that what they are being asked to do is respected beyond the local university. Students who need assistance in any using technology or software application are encouraged to use the languages resource center, to work in partnership with other students, to seek assistance in other campus computer labs or to ask the instructor for help.

Continuing this program faculty's commitment to enable students to connect their academic preparation, L2 knowledge, and career goals at the senior level, students are encouraged to enroll in an internship and to complete a senior project as the capstone of their undergraduate major. These senior-level courses along

with other advanced-level courses beyond the communication sequence all require evidence of integrated communication.

While efforts to establish venues for internships with local French-owned companies are only beginning, program faculty anticipate that opportunities for internships will increase as more businesses and students understand the potential value of the experience. However, some logistical challenges to the internship course exist since most students at UALR are employed while attending classes. Program faculty hope that by sharing information with students about the significant presence of French companies in the state and of the value of professional connections offered through internships students will become more interested in participating in an internship experience and find ways to incorporate the experience into their weekly routine.

The senior project is a very successful component of the revised degree program. Conceptualized as a project rather than a senior paper, this course allows flexibility for students in choice of topic and method of delivery (e.g., in person, Web site, remote location). Most importantly, the capstone is designed to encourage each student to produce a work on a topic of interest and related to personal career goals.

Working with a faculty mentor, each student begins by proposing a topic, a work plan, and a vision for the course product. Often, this phase is time-consuming for both the instructor and the student if the student has not been considering the project in previous courses. For this reason, as students are developing topics in the presentational class, the instructor encourages them to begin thinking about topics or projects that they might like to consider should they enroll in the senior project. Once the topic and plan are approved, each student meets at least monthly with the faculty mentor to assess progress and discuss the next steps. Often, a student becomes so engrossed in the topic selected that it is difficult to complete the entire project in one semester. If such is the case, the student is allowed to continue working toward completion in the following semester, when the project is presented.

While the topics and products vary widely, each project must contain research that utilizes French language resources and be presented orally in French by the student to an audience unfamiliar with the topic. Some students have chosen a topic that connects to their plan for graduate studies. For example, one student's research on French photography resulted in a portfolio used in the student's application to study photography in France. Another student majoring in French and in art created a Web site displaying her jewelry creations as part of a portfolio for graduate study in France. Other students have focused their research on job searches. One prepared an application portfolio for work as a golf instructor in a French-speaking club, and another created an original screenplay that depicted cultural differences in an encounter between a French and an American student. An additional group, embracing the connections standard (NSFLEP, 2006), has developed a project using knowledge of French to research a topic in another major. One student, originally from Haiti, prepared a project in French and in English on her native country for usage in elementary school social studies

units, while another, fascinated by the transcendentalist ideas of 19th century American authors, used his research as a lens to consider the Revolution of 1968 in France. These examples cited reflect the breadth and variety of ways students have connected their personal interests and career goals with their acquired skill in French language. It is likely that several of these students would not have persisted in studying French to obtain a major had it not been possible for them to use their acquired French skills to enhance their career goals.

In addition to the five courses described in detail, the major includes a number of courses with more traditional descriptions, including culture and civilization, pronunciation, and writings of the Francophone world. These more traditional courses blend with courses in which students are expected to assume responsibility for the applied use of the language so that the major these students have earned has decidedly more relevance to 21st century language usage than was true before the program reform.

Although these course modifications may not be precisely the madness referenced by Pope (2008), they have been enthusiastically embraced by students. Instead of simply finishing the number of hours required for a degree and graduating, students are engaged in a culminating academic experience that can be a useful career-focused product. After five years of experience and work with a number of students, it would be difficult to consider returning to the previous degree structure that had been modified only slightly in the previous half century.

Reflections

Within the new structure some adjustments have occurred to encourage students to take more responsibility for course content and connecting the input they use for communicative purposes to topics of real-world interest to them using the communicative technologies they use in real life. Students who begin studying French at UALR willingly accept the challenges of self-direction as described above. Even those students who are not the most proficient in French language may excel in the usage of technology and be very passionate about using French in their careers. Technical competence or individual commitment often compensates limited L2 fluency. The opportunity to regain momentum in language acquisition in an advanced course is an important component in the effort to encourage students to persist in language study for longer sequences. Otherwise, as Graham (2004) notes, the less committed learners may become frustrated or overwhelmed with language-learning anxiety and abandon L2 study after satisfying the language requirement.

However, instructors have recognized that students who did not begin their L2 study in this or a similar program may find such student-centered responsibility for course content and assessment overwhelming. This attitude is supported by Luke (2006), who determined that open-ended, student-centered courses are often disconcerting to students who are unaccustomed to this approach to learning. It is, therefore, important for the instructor to pay close attention to student preparation and success at the beginning of each course in order to encourage

persistence. Instructors are advised to seek out students and offer assistance in an effort to encourage persistence. Pope (2008) rightly observes that students' points of view with respect to degree requirements and those of faculty are very often vastly different, and the logic of the organization of requirements leading to a degree is not easily visible to the student. Explaining the curriculum and course expectations and helping students to acquire learning strategies will enhance not only the students' performance but also their willingness to persist.

Conclusion

Students' views of themselves as learners have shifted toward information retrievers rather than reservoirs of knowledge in the digital age, so it is valid to suggest that educators must reframe their understanding of their role in the classroom. The instructor in this new environment recognizes a primary role as knowledgeable facilitator. If students understand that success depends on their ability to produce, they are more likely to engage actively in the learning process. Additionally, if instructors relinquish control of some of the course content to student choice, they do not have to be the expert in all fields. Inevitably, there will be topics selected by students about which the instructor knows little, even were the material in English. Rather than viewing this reality as a roadblock to student-centered learning, it is an opportunity to empower the student as learner. After all, it is not necessary for an orchestra leader to play every instrument to know whether or not each musician is playing the right notes in the right key.

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Appendix A

Arkansas and the World

Please answer the following questions for the local area.

1.   What foreign country has the largest ownership of companies in the state of Arkansas?

2.   Is there a French-owned company in central Arkansas?

     Yes _____ No _____

3.   Rank these countries in order by number of foreign-owned operations in Arkansas (1 being largest number)

     _____   Belgium
     _____   Canada
     _____   Denmark
     _____   France
     _____   Germany
     _____   Japan

4.   Do foreign companies employ more or fewer than 30,000 workers in Ar kansas?

5.   What industry is this state's number one export area?

Appendix B

Sample rubric for evaluation of Interpretive activity – 25 points

Using weighted point values for 4 elements of interpretive communication, the instructor uses this rubric to evaluate student understanding of written material

Interpretive (comprehension)	25-23 points	22-18 points	17 or fewer points
	Meets expectations	**Approaches expectations**	**Does not meet expectations**
Understands main idea 10 points	**Explains main idea in own words**	**Underlines key sentences refer-ring to main idea**	**Is unable to find main idea**
Comprehends key vocabulary 5 points	**Infers mean-ing of more than 5 non-cognate key terms**	**Explains, from context, the gene-ral meaning of selected terms and cognates**	**Is able to define or translate fewer than 5 of the key vocabulary words**
Infers author's attitude 5 points	**Underlines words /phrases indicating au-thor's attitude**	**Words/phrases selected do not all indicate attitude**	**Unable to find words or phrases indicating author's attitude**
Infers cultural perspective 5 points	**Identifies words/phrases related to cultural perspective**	**Words/phrases selected do not all reflect cul-tural perspec-tive**	**Unable to identify words/phrases re-lated to cultural perspective**

Sample rubric for evaluation of Presentational activity – 50 points

Using weighted point values of 5 elements, the instructor uses this rubric to evaluate student preparation and presentation

Presentational	55-51 points	50 points	49-40 points	39-fewer points
	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Approaches expectations	Does not meet expectations
Comprehensibility 10 points	Documents are clearly comprehensible to all	Document(s) are generally comprehensible to teacher and those unaccustomed to dealing with language learners	Not uniformly comprehensible to teacher or those unaccustomed to dealing with language learners	Difficult to comprehend consistently
Language Control 12 points	Accuracy in spelling and sentence structure evident throughout presentation	Uses structures required to make meaning inderstandable to readers with reasonable accuracy in spelling and sentence structure	Some lack of accuracy in spelling and sentence structure	Significant errors in spelling and sentence structure
Vocabulary Use 10 points	Uses appropriate and idiomatic expressions to communicate content	Uses appropriate vocabulary required to make meaning understandable to readers	Lacks consistent use of new/appropriate vocabulary although some evidence is present	Little evidence of effort to incorporate new vocabulary
Communication 8 points	Circumlocution and restatement are used regularly	Script employs strategies appropriate to topic for assuring understanding	Some evidence of strategies to ensure understanding	Few strategies to assure understanding
Cultural Awareness 10 points	Extraordinary evidence of attempt to imbed contemporary culture	Information presented is culturally accurate and appropriate to the topic	Information presented is mostly culturally accurate and appropriate to the topic	Significant lack of cultural awareness or accuracy