

*Dialog*  
*on*  
*Language Instruction*

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**1999**

**Volume 13 · Numbers 1 & 2**

Defense Language Institute  
Foreign Language Center  
and  
Presidio of Monterey

# *Dialog on Language Instruction*

1999 · Volume 13 · Numbers 1 & 2

*Dialog on Language Instruction* is an occasional internal publication of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) and part of its professional development program. Its primary function is to promote the exchange of professional information by increasing opportunities to share knowledge among DLIFLC faculty and staff and by encouraging professional communication within the worldwide Defense Foreign Language Program.

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## *Dialog on Language Instruction*

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## **Test Usefulness in Alternative Assessment**

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*Test Development and Standards Division*

*Alternative assessment is a recent development in the testing field. It refers to “efforts that do not adhere to the traditional criteria of standardization, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, objectivity, and machine scorability.” (Garcia & Pearson, 1994)*

*The idea of learners as active participants in evaluation is related to their role in the learner-centered classroom. This article explores test usefulness in alternative assessment as the main topic, and discusses the sub-topics of self-assessment, portfolios and diaries, video and peer observations, and peer assessment in separate sections as part of the literature review. The concept of washback (how the test affects processes of learning and instruction) and concerns about alternative assessment are subsequently addressed.*

*In the final section, the notion of a “unicycle” image is brought up in relation to alternative assessment in foreign language teaching and learning. The article finishes with a closer look at the use of self-assessment and relevance to the six qualities of test usefulness (Bachman & Palmer, 1995). Considerations for implementing alternative assessment in the foreign language classroom and benefits for teachers and learners are addressed as well.*

### **Traditional Testing**

Traditional testing usually brings to mind some kind of fear or distrust, not only in learners, but also in teachers. There are reasons for reluctance to administer tests and, according to Finocchiaro and Sako in 1983, “it is the lip service paid to the concept that all teachers and learners are different regarding personality, modes of learning,

philosophy, affective and cognitive needs, when in reality tests prepared for diverse populations are administered without learner or teacher orientation and preparation.”

Fortunately we have come a long way since 1983. However, the pendulum swing in approaches to language methodology, linguistic and teacher theories, and learner involvement and autonomy, has resulted in different views of teaching and testing. Along with the teaching for proficiency movement, the language teaching profession has shifted its perspective from “What is the best language teaching method for a particular learner?” to “How can we best promote learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom?”—a shift away from the teacher-dominated classroom toward a learner-centered environment. The learner is seen as an active participant who focuses on processes underlying language learning and patterns of language use. The focus on the learners and their autonomy in language learning (e.g., developing internal criteria for success) has caused a surge of interest in learner styles and strategies, learner processes, and learner awareness.

As a result, assessment efforts are not viewed to be the sole responsibility of the teacher, but regarded as a mutual responsibility of teacher and learner, moving the learner to a place of active participation in evaluation matters which have bearing on the learning situation (i.e., assessment for formative purposes, classroom-based). As such, there appears to be a trend toward more innovative and alternative informal measures assessing learners’ progress. One might encounter different terminology in the field of testing referring to alternative assessments, such as complementary, performance, supplementary, and multiple.

Since testing is increasingly viewed as one aspect of a larger domain, assessment, a variety of formal and informal procedures are now used to find out what foreign language learners know and can do in a language on a continuous basis. Thus with alternative assessment, the focus is on the learning process rather than the language as an end product. These assessment procedures do not take the place of summative assessment and standardized test scores, but complement these scores with a host of ongoing and comprehensive assessment measures. Liz Hamp-Lyons (1997) in a model of Characteristics of Performance Assessments and Standardized Tests adapted from Meisels, Dorfman, and Steele (1995) shows that performance assessment is longitudinal, has contextual objectives, monitors progress, promotes learner learning, enhances learner motivation, is instructionally relevant, informs instructional decisions, and contributes to classroom change. Standardized tests, on the other hand, are a static view of

achievement, have restrictive behavior sampling, reflect speed and accuracy, promote skill in test taking, promote learner anxiety, are instructionally dependent, impose institutional change, and justify bureaucratic decisions. Last, but not least, performance assessments are criterion referenced and standardized tests are norm-referenced.

In light of these characteristics, one can understand where the issue of test usefulness comes in. This issue was raised by Bachman and Palmer (1995) who stated that in all situations where tests are used we need to ask ourselves a fundamental question: “How useful is the information provided by the test for its intended purpose?” Simply using a test does not make it useful. Usefulness is described by Bachman and Palmer in terms of a set of six qualities:

- **Reliability** (accuracy of a test in measuring consistently what it is supposed to measure).
- **Validity** (degree to which a test measures what it is designed to measure).
- **Authenticity** (characteristics of a test task).
- **Interactiveness** (topical knowledge, affective schemata and metacognitive strategies, the relationship between input and expected responses).
- **Impact** (how the test affects processes of learning and instruction (e.g., washback)).
- **Practicality** (feasibility or usability of a test in the situation for which it is intended).

The overall usefulness (meaningful rather than authentic) of a test is to be optimized and a balance is to be developed among these qualities.

Reviewing literature through the 1980s regarding language testing in general and classroom tests, I was struck by Cohen’s suggestions for *Promising Classroom Testing Procedures* (1994, based on Shohamy, 1985) and what I consider their relation to issues of alternative assessment. The following is a partial list of promising classroom testing procedures (Shohamy, 1985):

1. Broadening the scope of what is included in assessment from tests alone to a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques.
2. Viewing assessment as an opportunity for meaningful interaction between teacher and learner.
3. Judging learners on the basis of the knowledge they have rather than on what they do not know.

4. Using assessment measures intended to help learners to improve their skills.

5. Making sure that the criteria for success on an assessment task are made clear to the respondents.

6. Having learners' grades reflect their performance on a *set* of tests representing different assessment methods rather than being based on just one measure.

7. Training the test-takers in test-taking strategies if performance on the assessment task could benefit from such training.

Considering some of these procedures, a linkage to the present day learner-centered classroom can be made. In other words, one can detect from this information dated more than 10 years ago a tendency for a shift from product-oriented assessment toward process-oriented assessment. As mentioned before, there are various alternative assessment measures currently applied in the classroom. I will review self-assessment, portfolios, and diaries, video and peer observation, and peer assessment. I will also address concerns about alternative assessment.

## **Types of Alternative Assessment**

### *Self-Assessment*

There has been a surge of interest in self-assessment of foreign language proficiency. As learners become more independent, an effective way to assess their progress is by self-assessment, which can take many forms, ranging from questionnaires (descriptive rating scales and checklists) to the use of video and audio cassettes, goal cards, or reading logs.

In 1988, Janssen-van Dieten in her study investigating the validity of self-assessment in the education of adult learners of Dutch as a second language, cites the importance of self-assessment, "the main reason being the belief that reflection on one's proficiency and insight into evaluation criteria will stimulate self-management, motivation and goal orientation." Even though self-assessment was thought to be important, the investigation indicated that the subjects were unexpectedly confronted with the kind of evaluation for which they were not trained. Janssen-van Dieten concluded that it seemed not possible to show a significant tendency for ability to self-assess reliably in this study.

In light of learner awareness in the 1990s, as opposed to the philosophies of the early 1980s, the above-mentioned subjects were

apparently not equipped with the tools necessary for becoming autonomous learners. Lacking critical awareness of their language learning processes may have had an impact on the self-assessment of the study. It might have prevented the learners from gaining insight in the evaluation criteria; after all, learner autonomy and self-assessment are linked to each other.

A significant amount of research has been conducted regarding self-assessment of communicative language ability. It indicates that self-assessment of such ability is promoted when communication in the classroom is conducted as language use for the purpose of expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning, requiring two or more autonomous participants.

Bachman and Palmer (1989) attempted to measure the trait structure of an experimental self-rating test of communicative language abilities, i.e., grammatical competence (including morphology and syntax), pragmatic competence (the ability to express and comprehend messages including the subtraits of vocabulary, cohesion, and organization) and socio-linguistic competence (including the subtraits of ability to distinguish registers, nativeness, and control of non-literal (figurative) language and relevant cultural allusions). They concluded that self-ratings can be reliable and valid measures of communicative language ability.

Shohamy (1995), in addressing the Psychometric Properties of Alternative Assessment, assessed reading and writing skills of immigrant children. The outcome of the study was to be used as feedback for teachers and learners in outlining instructional and learning strategies. Multiple assessment procedures were applied: tests, different types of items and tasks, self-assessment questionnaires, observations by two teachers, and a portfolio (language samples selected from a given list). In her conclusions, Shohamy stated that a learner's score could have been based on the test and a very small portion of self-assessment. She also mentions the need for on-going research on psychometric features of alternative assessment as part of the development of alternative assessment procedures.

Oscarson (1989) addressed the rationale of self-assessment of language proficiency (though he cautions about the possible need for further empirical substantiation). In itemized form, he stated propositions that self-assessment:

1. Promotes learning: training in evaluation which in itself is beneficial to learning.
2. Raises level of awareness: by asking and answering

questions like "What have I been doing lately?" and "How well have I done?"

3. Improves goal-orientation: raising level of awareness and improving knowledge of the variability of language learning objectives of learners.

4. Expands range of assessment: the learners' own appreciation of their competence in the language is superior to that of an outside tester (namely in areas of affective learning).

5. Shares assessment burden: the possibility that learner participation may alleviate the assessment burden on the teacher.

6. Creates beneficial postcourse effects: teaching learners how to carry on learning the language autonomously is considered an important objective in foreign language instruction.

Oscarson sees the importance of giving learners practice in autonomous learning and self-directed evaluation, especially if they are unaccustomed to the notion of self-reliance. Propositions 3 and 4 correlate with Janssen-van Dieten's view of importance of self-assessment. Oscarson also sees computer-assisted assessment as a rapidly developing field providing opportunities for learners to monitor their learning.

### *Portfolios and Diaries*

According to Paulson, Paulson, and Meyer (1991), a portfolio is a "purposeful collection of learner work that exhibits the learner's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include learner participation in selecting contents, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of learner self-reflection." Portfolios have emerged because of the rise of assessment practices that are holistic, learner-centered, performance-based, process-oriented, integrated and multidimensional. Portfolios tune up learners with their strengths and instructional needs. They have been shown to be great means of assessing the learners' achievement, effort, improvement, and self-evaluation. Portfolios serve as a guide for learners to make choices, and demonstrate how they reason, create, strategize, and reflect. Portfolio assessment is a technique for qualitative evaluation. It is characterized by the maintenance of descriptive records of a variety of a learner's work over time; the purposeful and systematic collection of learner work that reflects growth toward the achievement of specific curricular objectives; the inclusion of learner self-evaluation as well as teacher evaluation.

A great deal of the active portfolio work has been conducted in

ESL/EFL classrooms. Tracey (1995) used portfolios in an ESL setting, for a reading project, which helped build an assessment partnership between learners and teacher in the portfolio classroom. The learners appeared to be taking more risks in their writing, instead of relying on the teacher to provide focus. Goal cards, planning sheets, and a daily learning log were created as part of the portfolio. Goal-centered activities helped build the partnership between teacher and learner.

Gottlieb (1995) documented a CRADLE approach to portfolio development, to be envisioned along a continuum of six prototype portfolio categories: Collections, Reflections, Assessment, Documentation, Linkages, and Evaluation. According to Gottlieb, when a portfolio is used as an assessment tool, reliability and validity of the contents needs to be established and maintained. Teachers need training to gain acceptable levels of reliability for the portfolio. The move along the CRADLE continuum is projected to be a three- to five-year journey in the ESL instructional setting.

Huerta-Macias (1995) proposed Triangulation of Data encompassing Learner Employer/Co-worker, and Teacher. In alternative assessment, triangulation refers to the collection of data/information from three different sources/perspectives. It can be applied in varying contexts, and because information from various sources is included in the process, learner growth can be more reliably assessed.

Hamp-Lyons (1997) developed a set of expectations for the behaviors associated with performance assessment, for the context of portfolio assessment-based courses, to see if actual behaviors show features predicted by the model. Hamp-Lyons' descriptions for "characteristics of second language writing portfolio assessments" provide a framework for investigating data regarding portfolio-based assessment construct validity. The framework covers claims for portfolios, teacher strategies, writer strategies, and rater strategies.

Dialog journals (diaries)—language learning diaries—have been widely used to discover learner anxiety, learning strategies (e.g., Bailey, 1983). The longitudinal Dialog Journal study of learners of Dutch as a foreign language (van Daalen, 1992), conducted at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), examined a relationship between end-of-course oral proficiency as measured by Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) oral proficiency interview results, and the type and amount of interactive writing in which the learners had engaged. Looking at the study in light of today's continuous assessment methods, some of the writing by the learners could be viewed as samples of writing similar to what could be encountered nowadays in a process portfolio. The dialog journals could thus become a process

assessment package with incorporation of other components.

### *Video and Peer Observations*

Using a video camera and task-based communicative activities for classroom oral testing, Haggstrom (1994) made oral testing a more realistic communicative experience. She found such testing less time-consuming to evaluate and learners found it more enjoyable and less stressful. By videotaping each learner at three different times during a 50-minute testing period, she ensured enough samples to evaluate their performance. The value of regular non-test mode videotaping as a tool for self-evaluation was stressed, and frequent videotaping prepared them for oral testing and real-world communication. This purported value corresponds with Messick's statement that "the move from learning exercises to test exercises should be seamless" (1996). This type of assessment promoted learning in addition to providing evaluative data. It also helped in reducing anxiety.

### *Peer Assessment*

Murphy (1995) successfully enabled his learners to experience peer-assessed evaluations. Enjoyable tests may seem an oxymoron, according to Murphy (1995), "but putting the learners more interactively in the center of creating and administering the tests reduces anxiety as learners feel more in control and actually have fun." How does this work? Learners are engaged in the test-making process, by listing items they think they have learned over the past few weeks; the list is put in one handout given to them to study. Collaborative learning is encouraged. Learners are practicing negotiating input and making it comprehensible, by explaining known and unknown items. Learners give each other tests, orally, in pairs during class, while walking or sitting outside. Grades are negotiated with partners.

Murphy noted that "the main purpose of these tests is not evaluation but rather stimulation of effective language learning processes that can be used by learners to help them learn whatever they want." The most important evaluation is ultimately what they think of themselves" (p. 14). Learner feedback seemed to be very positive and they appeared to work harder for these kinds of tests than the more traditional ones. I believe this points to one of the six qualities of test usefulness: impact or washback, e.g., how does the test affect processes of learning and instruction? This idea is echoed in Shohamy's (1990) statement about language testing priorities for this decade, namely a "more

expanded view of language testing so as to create a positive washback effect through tests, and improve foreign language learning.”

### *Washback*

According to Bailey (1996), “washback is generally defined as the influence of testing on teaching and learning” (p. 259). Further, she states, “A test will yield positive washback to the learner and to the program to the extent that it utilizes authentic tasks and authentic texts.” (p. 276). Bailey concludes that “a test will promote beneficial washback to programs to the extent that it measures what programs intend to teach.” If we intend our foreign language teaching to reflect the promotion of learner awareness, autonomy and authenticity, would alternative assessment be a way to facilitate positive washback? When Murphy’s (1995) learners worked harder for the peer-assessed tests than the more traditional ones, might he have been talking about evidence of beneficial washback?

Hughes (1989) notes that before we decide that we cannot afford to test in a way that will promote beneficial washback, we have to ask ourselves a question, “What will be the cost of *not* achieving beneficial washback?” Hughes writes that to promote beneficial washback one should “base achievement tests on objectives rather than on detailed teaching and textbook content and they will provide a truer picture of what has actually been achieved. He emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the test is known and understood by learners and teachers. Potential for washback may not be realized if learners and teachers do not understand what the test demands of them.” Again, with alternative assessment, the type of interaction involved between teacher and learners will leave no questions about what the test demands of them.

Hamp-Lyons (1997) sees the need for further studies: “We must conduct studies of the impact of alternative assessment, on the same basis that we apply to traditional forms of assessment. We cannot assume that because alternative assessments start from humanistic concerns they produce outcomes that do only good and no harm ...” However, it has been argued that the use of self-assessment mechanisms will promote positive washback.

Messick (1996) talks about a broader concept of washback, the need to look at test properties like authenticity and directness and the implications for test validity, and “then cast the issues in the broader context of a comprehensive view of construct validity.” As stated before, simply using a test does not make it useful, which brings us to

concerns about alternative assessment which are related to Bachman and Palmer's six qualities of test usefulness.

### **Concerns About Alternative Assessment**

Huerta-Macias (1995) addressed objections regarding validity, reliability and objectivity of alternative assessment. Proponents of alternative assessment, according to Huerta-Macias, do not want to overlook the criteria of validity, reliability, and objectivity, but address concerns through terms used in qualitative research. "An instrument is deemed trustworthy if it has credibility (i.e., truth value) and auditability (i.e., consistency)." The following suggestions are made to ensure reliability in alternative assessments: design multiple tasks that lead to the same outcome, use trained judges working with clear criteria, form specific anchor pairs or performance behaviors, and monitor periodically to ensure that raters use criteria and standards in a consistent manner. As mentioned in this article, reliability is often ensured by triangulation. As applied to alternative assessment it refers to a collection of data/information from three different sources/perspectives.

Another concern often raised with regard to alternative assessment is the lack of objectivity. Huerta-Macias notes that even though standardized tests are described as objective, a "standardized test merely represents agreement among a number of people on scoring procedures, format and/or content for that specific test." One might argue that quantitative data, as from standardized tests, can be more subjective because numbers or statistics can be manipulated to reflect certain biases on the part of the researcher. Therefore, Huerta-Macias sees no reason to consider alternative assessment less objective than traditional testing.

In reference to psychometrics, Gottlieb (1995) argued "psychometric properties are defining criteria of portfolios that serve as a form of assessment. The heart of alternative assessment is anchored in rubrics that are aligned with specific tasks. These performance indicators, which may take the form of a checklist, a rating scale, or a matrix, serve as the yardstick for measurement." It seems to me from the literature I reviewed, that consistent efforts are being made to account for reliability, validity, and objectivity in alternative assessment. How about another quality of test usefulness, namely authenticity? What does it mean?

The issue of authenticity has always been an important part of any discussion on language testing. There is an argument that only "real language use" should be counted when assessing language ability. When

we think of “authenticity” in language testing, Cohen (1994) quotes Bachman (1991) as identifying three alternate approaches to authenticity in language testing:

1. To stipulate by definition that the language tests are measuring language ability directly.
2. To consider language tests to be assessing language use similar to that in real life.
3. To consider language tests as authentic on the basis of face validity or face appeal.

Doye (1991) states that the postulation of authenticity has its limits and a complete congruence of a test situation and real-life situation is impossible. He views a language test a social event that has—as one of its characteristics—the intention to examine the competence of language learners. According to Doye, the purpose is to find out whether the learner is capable of performing a language task, which distinguishes it from the performance of this task outside of the test situation.

Does the issue of authenticity change somehow in reference to alternative assessment? Messick (1996) might have the answer in his argument for authenticity, “. . . in the case of language testing, the assessment should include authentic and direct samples of communicative behaviors of listening, speaking, reading and writing of the language being learnt. Ideally, the move from learning exercises to test exercises should be seamless.” The last statement is a reiteration of what is documented in the literature elsewhere, that there ought to be hardly any difference between the type of exercises regularly done in the classroom and the type of test tasks. Messick also addresses what “authenticity” means in validity terms, and cautions for a threat to validity known as construct under-representation which can affect a test’s authenticity (when the assessment is deficient, the test too narrow, failing to include important dimensions or facets of focal constructs).

Van Lier (1991) sheds more light on what happens inside the classroom and discusses the notion of the meaning of authenticity in general, and identifies five types of authenticity: (1) authenticity of origin (production or creation, like “Is this painting authentic?”), (2) authenticity of context (language to fit its context), (3) authenticity of purpose (of representation or reproduction, when the presenter is not the creator, e.g., the teacher is not the creator of a newspaper report; together the second and third types can be called pragmatic authenticity), (4) pedagogic authenticity (not denying that it is pedagogically authentic, e.g., this is a lesson and you are the students), and (5) existential

authenticity.

Existential authenticity is considered by Van Lier to be the most important of all: “it is the question of intellectual interest in, moral commitment to and emotional involvement in the work at hand.” He concludes in light of existential authenticity that “language made up for the occasion and activities invented for the classroom, can be authentic in far more valid and meaningful ways than some article clipped from the newspaper, a videotaped conversation, or a learner-learner exchange about “what I did last weekend.” The issue of “meaningful” rather than “authentic,” tying into practicality of testing is addressed here. Even though a newspaper supposedly features authentic language, the usability of some articles is nonexistent, but maintained to be “authentic” by some people, and often applied “prescriptively” as an “authentic” text/test item which as such might be useless. Thus, we need to keep in mind the overall usefulness (meaningful rather than authentic) of alternative assessments, as it is applied to traditional tests as well.

Regarding test practicality we think of feasibility or usability of a test. Haggstrom (1994) states, regarding oral classroom testing, “From the perspective of the classroom teacher, we are also concerned that our tests allow us to measure students’ progress and mastery of specific course material, and in the interest of fairness we want tests that we can score with accuracy and that are also feasible in terms of the amount of time they take to administer and grade.” Practicality and feasibility appear relevant to alternative assessment as well as to standardized tests.

To keep the balance, we need to take into consideration the last of the six test qualities: Interactiveness. This quality refers to the relationship between input and expected responses; topical knowledge; affective schemata; and metacognitive strategies, all leading to what I have coined the “unicycle” image for foreign language teachers and learners with reference to alternative assessment.

### **Unicycle of Alternative Assessment**

Keeping the reality of the classroom in mind, Van Patten (1997) states that learners and teachers can be bombarded with a wealth of information from multifaceted sources. He questions: “What impact do standardized tests have on what teachers do?” It might be appropriate to ask now: “What impact does alternative assessment have on what teachers and learners do?”

With traditional tests and quizzes, teachers impose the means of assessment and retain control of the criteria. In the alternative

assessment classroom, the means and criteria are often a collaborative effort and a more complete picture of the learners' ability, effort and, through it, progress can be obtained. Since alternative assessment provides assessment from various sources which are included in the process rather than any single method of assessment, learners can show what they can integrate and produce in the target language rather than what they can recall and reproduce. The learners can demonstrate how and why some learning experiences are important. Naturally this involves an additional type of commitment from the teachers other than preparing learners for end of course standardized tests. Teachers and learners involved in programs of intensive foreign language studies thus face multifaceted tasks.

As an example, at the DLIFLC, classes have a maximum of 10 learners and receive between six and seven hours of foreign language instruction five days a week. A language instruction team consists of six teachers, and one military linguist responsible for teaching 30 learners. All learners are adults, most of them serving in the different branches of the armed forces. A foreign language program ranges from 25 weeks (category 1 language, such as French or Spanish) to 63 weeks (category 4 language, such as Arabic or Chinese) in duration.

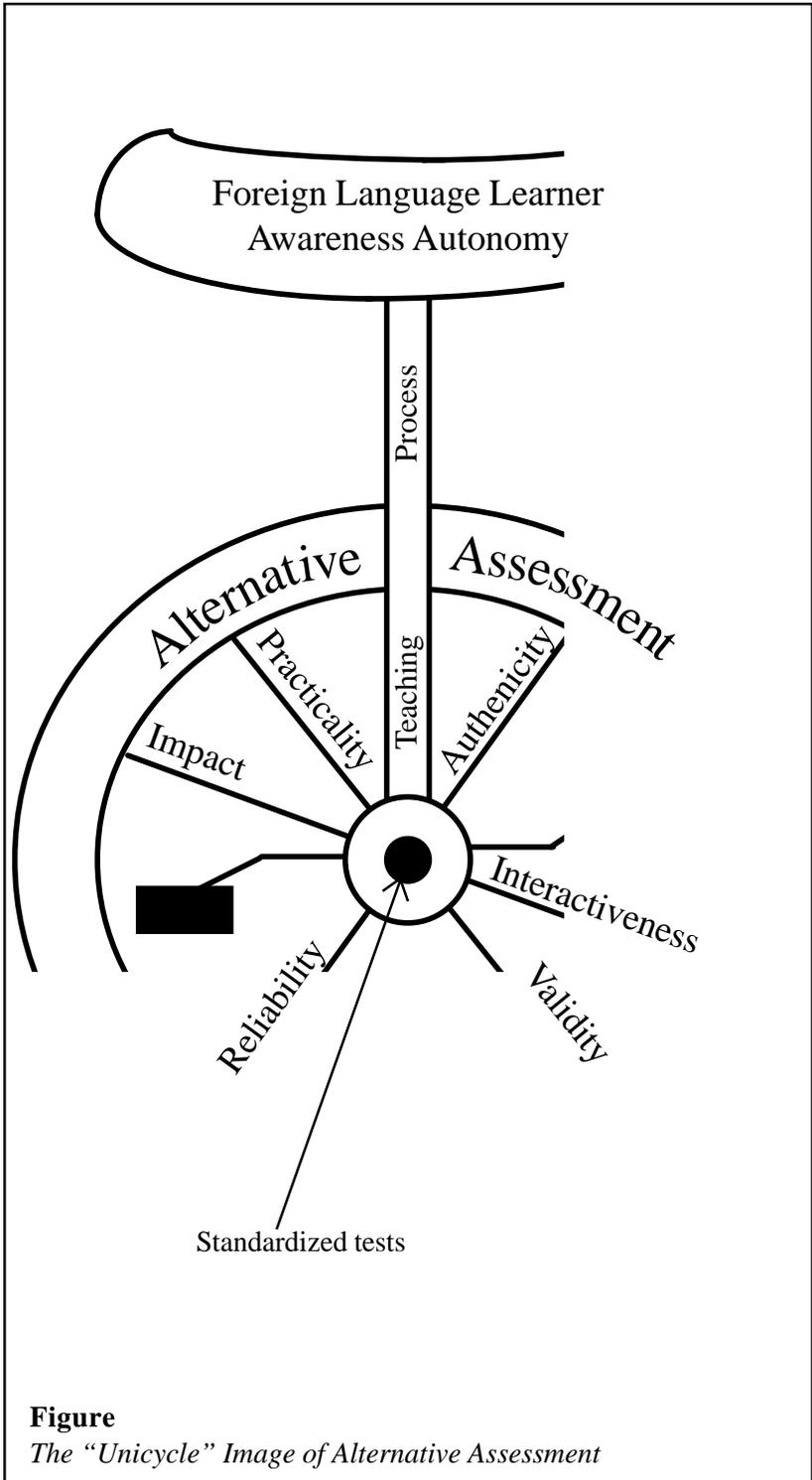
Teachers have a large number of tests for learners: homework, quizzes, interim exams, preparation for the end of program Final Learning Objectives proficiency test battery (the Defense Language Proficiency Test IV (DLPT IV) Reading and Listening (multiple choice tests) and Oral Proficiency Interview) as well as Final Learning Objectives performance test battery (job-task, production type tests). Apart from the interim classroom tests, the final test batteries are administered at the end of the training program and add up to about 15 hours of test time over several weeks.

In light of this kind of language learning and teaching situation, how can we conceptualize the complementation of standardized tests with alternative measures, benefiting both learners and teachers so "they are partners in developing shared knowledge" (Van Lier, 1997)? For starters, a helpful tool extended to learners at the beginning of their foreign language study at the DLIFLC is training in learning styles (the way individuals acquire, retain, and retrieve information) and learning strategies (a cognitive, meta-cognitive, social, and affective action plan used by a learner to learn). Considering the various test taker characteristics (age, foreign language aptitude, socio-psychological factors, personality, cognitive style, ethnolinguistic factors, and multilingual ability), learners need to be reflective about their language learning processes. In other words, a consciousness-raising needs to take place.

The importance of reflective processes is reported in Nunan (1996) in his findings about learning strategy training in the classroom in which he states that systematic provision of opportunities for learners to reflect on the learning process did lead to greater sensitivity to the learning process over time. Learners who engaged in tasks focusing on learning processes as well as language content developed skills for identifying what they wanted to learn and how they wanted to learn. Nunan's study supported the idea that language classrooms should have a dual focus, not only on teaching language content but also on developing learning processes as well. It is my belief that applications of some forms of alternative assessment would automatically incorporate the dual focus of classrooms as mentioned by Nunan.

Thinking about this concept and what "vehicle" would correspond to alternative assessment, test usefulness, and learner autonomy, I came up with the analogy of a bicycle. However, rather than picture a bicycle which can carry two people (with one doing all the work and the other riding along!) visualize a "unicycle" of alternative assessment and the autonomous foreign language learner. Webster's definition of a unicycle is "a vehicle that has a single wheel and is propelled usually by pedals or applied draft." The operator is called a unicyclist.

The figure below shows the components and connections, as well as the teacher's supporting role, as important as nuts and bolts which hold the framework together. Since the learner is the operator in the "driver's seat," balance is the ultimate goal, and continuous progress is documented by the "tire" of alternative assessment, leaving imprints along the way. The pedals propel the learner into foreign language (the interaction) to make the wheel turn, supported by the six spokes of the qualities of test usefulness. Hypothetically, if some of the spokes are missing, the result would be an "out of balance cyclist." Unless the learner is aware, autonomous and balanced, he/she won't get anywhere on the "alternative unicycle." Progress can be documented by the learner himself, or peers might volunteer their observations, and based on objectives, the learner finds out what he/she knows or can do. According to the process shown in the Figure, there is an exchange of shared knowledge. Even though the learner is sitting in the "driver's seat," the teacher him/herself is approaching and guiding each individual in a different manner. The totality of the vehicle is still "driven" by standardized tests which will ultimately indicate how well the learner is able to circumlocute obstacles put in his/her way, avoid "potholes" and demonstrate mastery of foreign language skills. Since not all "unicyclists" are alike, the question then is: what kind of materials would be useful to assess the "free-wheeling" progress?



**Figure**  
*The “Unicycle” Image of Alternative Assessment*

*Materials*

At this point we might remember the question posed earlier: “How useful is the information provided by the test for its intended purpose?” The information coming from alternative assessment is going to provide us with progress measures, compiled collaboratively by teachers and learners, having instructional relevance, promoting learner motivation and contributing to classroom change. With the concept of alternative assessment to be the “tire” of the “unicycle” the question could be: How do we know what the various “tread” marks mean? Out of many possibilities (as documented in the previous pages) and to try and keep it simple, I think two particular imprints would provide teachers and learners with the opportunity to determine the meaning of the “treads” left on the road to mastering foreign language skills: self-assessment and portfolio assessment.

What are some choices for self-directed evaluation in the foreign language classroom? Adapting Oscarson, I would find the following materials useful:

1. Progress cards and other record keeping devices. A series of short-term functional goals is defined and grouped together in graded blocks at various difficulty levels. Learner and teacher, in each of their columns, tick off the activity when the learner is sure he/she can perform it/has mastered it.

2. Questionnaires, checklists, and rating scales. The learner can circle or tick off descriptive rating scales which are aimed at overall assessment of perceived ability levels. There is a definite place for self-assessment in general proficiency testing.

3. Diaries. Even though the term diaries is most frequently used, I found out my learners would have preferred it to be called “a language learning notebook,” to do away with the connotation of confidentiality associated with the word “diary.” These language diary/notebooks can be used to aid teachers monitor progress, as well as provide the learner with the opportunity to ask for clarifications about structures after reflecting on, or experiencing difficulties with the target language. The teacher and learners would decide how to make use of a diary/notebook. The purpose of guidelines for any new assessment in the classroom needs to be made clear by the teacher prior to implementation.

4. Informal self-assessment. This can amount to having a distinct feeling of not quite having understood the teaching point explained by the teacher, to being reduced to a state of frustration when

communication is breaking down. Awareness of these feelings creates informal self-assessments.

5. Video and Audio Cassettes. Learners are video-recorded, doing short role-plays at regular intervals and can view their scenes and assess their progress over a period of time. Audio cassettes can supply learners with conversational practice in pairs, and compare recordings with earlier ones and make estimates of their progress. These techniques are extremely useful, but, unfortunately not always put into practice for self-assessment benefits. (The Appendix shows Oscarson's illustration of a self-assessment questionnaire.)

Triangulation of data described by Huerta-Macias (1995) also might be applied to alternative assessment in foreign language learning. A possibility could be the combination of input by the learner, his/her primary teacher and a team leader. A portfolio of the learner's written work samples could be put together, like quizzes, letters, goal cards, an audio tape of the learner engaged in a conversation, or self-evaluation sheets. The teacher could add his/her own observations documented in a *teacher's journal*, as well as events demonstrating classroom target language proficiency.

Adapted from McNamara (1995) the following three self-assessment activities promise additional benefits for use in the foreign language classroom:

- **Keeping a daily language learning log.** This serves as a record of what the learner did, how he/she did it, what worked and what did not work. The log would provide a clear idea of how the learner spends his/her time. Difficulties encountered with language features could be recorded, successes (or failures) of particular learning strategies and class interactions. For each entry the date would be recorded, the activity, the amount of time engaged in the use of the target language and a description and an analysis of the target language use.
- **Writing letters to the teacher.** For foreign language learning this would fall into the diary/notebook category. In ESL, it is practiced at the beginning and end of the semester. Learners determine their needs, set priorities

and write this to the teacher. It accomplishes the shift of responsibility of learning from teacher to learner. As a writing sample it is a diagnostic tool as well. For foreign language classrooms it could be adapted to the target language situation.

- **Preparing a target language portfolio.** How does this work, what does it mean?

Bailey (1998) describes Maricel Santos' implementation of portfolio assessment in her English classes for undergraduate learners at a Japanese university. I like Maricel Santos' description of portfolio use in. It seems to me that the setup she uses would work well in the context of other foreign language learning situations. Santos has the portfolio divided into four sections:

1. An introductory section with an overview of the contents as well as a reflective essay.
2. An academic section to demonstrate the learner's improvement or achievement in the major skill areas (listening, reading, speaking and writing).
3. A personal section which includes the learner's journals, quizzes, score reports, photographs, anything related to individual interests and achievements in the target language.
4. An assessment section which includes self-evaluations, peer evaluations and teacher assessment.

Santos stresses the importance of laying groundwork when trying to implement an innovation in assessment. Her learners had to be prepared for learning how to be reflective. Bailey (1998) quotes Santos: "If I could improve one area in my portfolio approach, I would focus more on getting the learners to engage in reflective activities as part of a weekly practice of class activities." Assuming this reflective practice is conducted, I anticipate the overall portfolio work to provide both foreign language learners and teachers with various benefits.

### *Benefits of Portfolios in Alternative Assessment*

If you are a learner, alternative assessment provides the following benefits for you.

## *Test Usefulness in Alternative Assessment*

- Documents your own language development, weaknesses and strengths.
- Clarifies, confirms, and checks comprehension of language structures in a nonthreatening way.
- Gives you a chance to apply target language structures on topics of *your choice*.
- Gives you an opportunity to influence how and what you learn and influence the assessment process.
- Records your progress and thus increases your self-confidence in learning the target language.
- Reflects process and product.
- Allows you to determine personal goals and interests and offers a concrete way to value your own work and yourself as a learner.

If you are a teacher, alternative assessment provides the following benefits for you:

- Promotes learner-instructor interaction and increases mutual understanding.
- Enables you to get an insight in affective and personal factors that influence interaction in the language learning process.
- Shows you what motivates the learner.
- Allows you to become aware of multiple meanings in the target language.
- Provides you with a longitudinal opportunity for awareness of and consideration for the learner's language development, weaknesses and strengths, allowing for pertinent feedback.
- Helps you see your role in a learner-centered classroom and how it affects your decision-making process.
- Develops your perceptual knowledge and gives you practical wisdom.
- Provides you with feedback about your own teaching and more directly connect your actions in the classroom to learners' learning.

Regarding the two “treads” of self-assessment and portfolio assessment on the “tire of the unicycle” of alternative assessment, it seems obvious that they would provide useful information. I will reiterate this point by looking at the six qualities of test usefulness again, the “spokes” which provide the pertinent structure in the frame.

**Reliability** (accuracy of a test in measuring consistently what it is supposed to measure). In short, the measurement is not reliable if the “tread marks” become out of control “skid marks.” In other words, reliability can be assured when multiple tasks are designed that lead to the same outcome; when specific anchor pairs or performance behaviors are formed; and when raters are monitored periodically to ensure that criteria and standards are used in a consistent manner (Huarta-Macia, 1995).

**Validity** (degree to which a test measures what it is designed to measure). When the alternative assessment “works” for teacher and learner, then it is valid.

**Authenticity** (characteristics of test task). It is an assessment of the language ability directly. Contrary to some other forms of assessment, the learner is not asked to suddenly use the “unicycle” as a “mountain bike” to receive a certain score, but rather demonstrate his/her “real life” practice of balancing the wheel on his/her road to the finish line. Therefore, it seems that alternative assessment has face appeal as well.

**Interactiveness** (topical knowledge, affective schemata and metacognitive strategies, the relationship between input and expected responses). With alternative assessment, the learner engages framework of knowledge and skills, continuously assessing his/her thinking and doing. There is a definite interaction between tire “skid marks” and foreign language learning experiences or “tread marks” and self-evaluative or teacher feedback.

**Impact** (how the test affects processes of learning and instruction, e.g., washback). It seems that the possibility for beneficial washback is relatively high, as there would be “no seam” (Messick) between classroom activities and alternative assessment.

**Practicality** (feasibility or usability of a test in a situation for which it is intended). I believe this quality of test usefulness regarding alternative assessment speaks for itself.

We are talking about an autonomous “foreign language learner unicyclist” who has a goal, a finish line to be reached. Each individual progresses at his or her own pace, achieves balance and ultimately cycles through the foreign language assessment finish line. How this is done depends on the individual, his/her learning styles and strategies,

and the interactions with the teacher. Alternative assessment allows for these differences: some learners “sail through” with upright back, perfect form, while balancing the wheel; others are hunched over in a tremendous effort to stay balanced, and yes, a little wobbly, but they too achieve their goal. The practice of this new skill will ultimately become internalized and the learner will be able to demonstrate further down the road that the process has become “automatic,” reminding us of the well-known “Look ma, no hands!” (i.e., acquisition).

### *Considerations*

On the road to proficiency building, alternative assessment would provide excellent documentation of progress in the foreign language over time. In addition, the insights derived from reflecting on foreign language learning might indirectly benefit the end of program standardized tests, thus it would be hard to deny the overall usefulness of alternative assessment.

A note of caution: this article is not intended to be viewed as a specific alternative assessment teacher manual. One size doesn't fit all in this case. How each teacher sets up the self-assessment and portfolio work would depend on the foreign language, the nature of the needs of the learners, and the personality of the teacher. It is considered a collaborative effort, but achieved on an individual basis. To give an example, languages with different orthography might dedicate a larger portion of the portfolio to the difficulty of the writing system involved; on the other hand, foreign languages that do not have this component might be able to include more of another skill.

Regarding the scoring or qualitative evaluation of portfolios, I agree with Gottlieb (1995) that it is extremely important that teachers have extensive professional development to read acceptable levels of reliability for portfolio assessment. Furthermore, scoring procedures would require the setup of particular protocols or rating scales. Hamp-Lyons's (1997) findings from her framework for writing portfolios covering claims for portfolios, teacher strategies, writer strategies, and rater strategies, might aid others to compile similar components for different skills.

Last, but not least, in reference to Shohamy's (1995) *Psychometric Properties of Alternative Assessment*, I would concur that there is a need for on-going research on psychometric features of alternative assessment as part of the development of alternative assessment procedures.

## **Summary**

In this article I have explored the usefulness of alternative assessment, as well as the sub-topics of self-assessment, portfolios and diaries, video and peer observations/assessment, washback, and concerns about alternative assessment. I came up with the image of a “Unicycle” to depict the interactions involved in the alternative assessment process. How the “unicycling” is done would depend on the academic environment and the foreign language. By taking a closer look at the use of self-assessment and portfolios, I have tried to show their relevance to the six qualities of test usefulness and the value and benefits of incorporating some measures of alternative assessment in the foreign language classroom. Alternative assessment would contribute to classroom change, as teachers and learners would work collaboratively and use different criteria for judging merit.

In short, using these complementary assessment measures, we get a more complete picture of our learners’ abilities, progress and effort, which, in a learner-centered classroom, is what we are after, isn’t it? Therefore, it is my hope that teachers realize extra efforts on their part and on the part of the learners pay off when they apply the “art of unicycling.”

At the 20th Language Testing Research Colloquium, Ray T. Clifford (1998) in his plenary speech, addressed the fact that there are pressures on language teaching and testing because of market and budgetary forces. Among others, he identified the need for tests that require real world use of language and the need to validate the skills of individuals with high levels of language competence; reductions in testing time and a push for “just in time” assessment.

Regarding Clifford’s address for the need for tests that require real world use of the language, I hope this article will be an inspiration for all who stood by the roadside watching “unicyclists” go by, to join in and “hop on the wheel of alternative assessment to cycle into the real world and use that road for its intended purpose.” In other words, instead of reinventing the wheel, let’s consider the “usefulness” of a “tire change”: implementation of alternative assessment in foreign language learning and teaching.

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**Appendix**

*Self-Assessment Questionnaire*

Source: Oscarson

1. In the last few lessons (days, weeks) we/I have studied/practiced/ worked on:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a. | b. |
| c. | d. |
| e. | f. |

Fill in the empty spaces with topics and areas of study that are relevant in your case, for example:

- pronunciation of words
- how to greet people
- questions with present tense

2. How well do you master the above topics in your own estimate?

Not at all—to some extent—fairly well—very well

- 
- 
- 

3. I judge my weak points to be the following:

Follow-up

Discuss your assessment and your points of view with a fellow student or in a small group, or with your teacher. Try to find out whether others think you tend to overestimate or underestimate your ability and acquired skills and then decide whether you ought to reconsider and readjust your “yardstick.” Compare your subjective impressions with other criteria such as test scores, your teacher’s evaluation, and estimates by your fellow students.

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## **Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages**

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*This article discusses theoretical and practical issues connected with implicit and explicit learning of languages. Although it is not exhaustive, it does provide enough information and references to be a starting point for those who wish to inquire further into this subject. The article defines explicit knowledge as that which can be expressed in the form of rules or definitions, while implicit knowledge is that which can be inferred to exist because of observed performance, but cannot clearly be described. The article also sorts through the views of many authors who define their terms differently from each other and from the definitions given above. It then offers a hypothesis as to why explicit learning can lead to implicit knowledge. Finally, it offers a few suggestions on how to apply some of the theories discussed within the context of DLIFLC's mission. While the paper essentially supports explicit learning, it recognizes that no mental process can be incontrovertibly proven to be wholly explicit or implicit.*

### **Introduction and Definitions**

The implicit versus explicit dichotomy has become a matter of interest and controversy in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in recent years and underlies some of the more visible controversies in this field (Bialystok, 1994). One of the major problems in discussing the dichotomy is sorting through the definitions. As Spada (1997, p. 73) aptly stated: "The difficulty is that in some instances different terms have been used to express the same meaning and in others, the same term has been used to express different meanings." Many authors feel that explicit, conscious, and controlled are synonymous and likewise their opposites implicit, unconscious, and automatic are

synonymous. Bialystok (1994) along with Bental and Dickens (1994) separate these concepts and hold that explicit refers to something that is clearly expressed. (See Appendix for other definitions of some authors who have delved into this subject.)

For our purposes, we define explicit knowledge of language as knowledge that can be expressed in the form of rules or definitions, while implicit knowledge of language as knowledge that can be inferred because of observed performance but cannot be clearly described. With these definitions there is no real argument that these two types of knowledge exist; however, if we were to adopt the definitions used by Winter and Reber (1994), Berry (1994), McLaren, Green, & Mackintosh (1994), and apparently followed by Krashen (1994) in which implicit, unconscious, and automatic are taken to mean the same thing, not only would there be controversy, but also a good measure of confusion.

In addition to the implicit/explicit knowledge dichotomy, the distinction between implicit and explicit learning are important. Once again, many authors consider implicit learning to be unconscious learning. This article will argue that learning is implicit only in the sense that after a learner has learned something, he may not remember or be able to state how he learned it, but learning is implied because he has the knowledge or ability in question. Admittedly this definition assumes that we have learned what we know. Nativists like Chomsky would not accept this assumption; yet, just as geometry starts with axioms, we are starting with this assumption. Regrettably, it is much harder to obtain agreement on the assumptions in the field of SLA than in geometry. If the above definition of implicit learning were accepted, no one would deny the existence of this construct. However, since many claim that implicit learning is unconscious learning the issue becomes controversial. Of course, defining implicit and explicit, so as to remove controversy from these terms, does not end the controversy in SLA; it simply shifts it over to the conscious/unconscious poles.

### **Consciousness and Unconsciousness In Learning**

Arthur S. Reber (Winter & Reber, 1994) claimed that learning can take place unconsciously and has long been establishing this claim through Miniature Artificial Grammar studies. These studies use a series of letters in patterns following an elaborate system of rules. After exposure to correct patterns without explicit instruction, subjects are then exposed to a mixture of correct and incorrect patterns, and are able to identify correct and incorrect patterns at a better than chance percentage. Many scholars including Richard Schmidt (1994) have

questioned their conclusions and Reber and Winter themselves admit "...there is no methodology that can conclusively and unambiguously demonstrate that a particular percept or mental event is either wholly conscious or wholly unconscious" (1994 p. 130). Though the learning demonstrated by Reber's experiments may demonstrate a lack of intentionality, it certainly does not demonstrate a lack of attention. The participants definitely had to pay attention to the prompts in order for any learning to take place. Winter and Reber themselves also point this out: "...it is not assumed [to be] totally in an incidental manner; the process is conceived as being a by-product of the application of attention to relevant rule-governed structures in the environment..." (1994, p. 117).

Others like Berry (1994) used another line of research for evidence of unconscious learning involving problem solving that subjects successfully performed without being able to explicitly state procedures. Once again, Reber's admission, stated above, applies. It could be that Berry was comparing estimation to calculation rather than unconscious to conscious learning. Perhaps a better explanation for what appears to some to be unconscious learning is a human ability to make inferences based on what they explicitly or implicitly know. Problem solving that appears to be the result of unconscious learning could simply be rapid inferring from implicit or explicit knowledge. These inferences (intuition perhaps?) could be made at such high speed that they appear to come from unconscious learning or knowledge.

Some scholars have looked to animal learning as a way to validate unconscious learning in humans. The line of reasoning is that animals learn unconsciously and therefore humans also must have this avenue of learning open to them, in addition to conscious learning. Although animals do not have metacognitive abilities, they certainly do attend to what they learn.

Using parallels to animal learning to support humans unconsciously learning language is seriously flawed. In this regard, consider that animal researchers McLaren, Green, & Mackintosh (1994) and Bentall and Dickens (1994) agree that animals have a single system of learning and that their system parallels what is called implicit learning in humans. If that is the case, then those who believe that the explicit system is useless for language learning need to explain why animals do not communicate in a more sophisticated way than humans do. Some of the animal communication systems like bees, whales, and crows are quite remarkable, yet they are obviously very primitive compared to human language. Even if animals learn to communicate without metacognitive skills, they do not learn without attentiveness. This

previous statement would be hard to prove with regard to bees and whales, but it has been demonstrated with birds: those that are removed from their species and are allowed to listen to other bird songs will imitate the other songs. This phenomenon in birds indicates that attention is a factor in their learning along with the inherited traits that enable them to sing.

Additionally, McLaren, Green and Mackintosh (1994) and Bentall and Dickens (1994) say that to call explicit learning conscious and implicit subconscious is an oversimplification. These researchers mention that animals show dissociations which have been used by cognitive scientists, when occurring in humans, to substantiate two systems of learning. As mentioned above, there is a consensus that animals have only one system of learning. Therefore, if the assumption that animals have only one system of learning is true, and animals show dissociations, then dissociations in humans do not prove two systems of learning.

Of course, of more interest and relevance to this paper is the role of implicit/explicit systems in the learning of human languages. Krashen continues to claim that languages are learned implicitly. His Acquisition-Learning hypothesis (1994) states:

We have two independent means of developing another language: language acquisition is a subconscious process that results in linguistic knowledge that is subconsciously stored in the brain (tacit knowledge). Language learning is a conscious process that results in “knowing about” language. Language acquisition is “incidental” (as contrasted with intentional) and “implicit” (as contrasted with explicit learning), while language learning is intentional and explicit. (p. 45)

Krashen supports his hypothesis by citing Chomsky’s (1975) view that the system is too complex to be consciously learned. He also says that there are far too many words to learn one at a time. He estimates that educated native speakers know as many as 110,000 words and says that even a figure of 39,000 words, estimated by Lorge and Chall (1963), would be far too great a number to learn one at a time. Of course no would claim that an L1 learner has made 39,000 trips to the dictionary, but this does not necessarily mean that all these words were learned unconsciously. It is possible that these words were learned by attending to contextual clues. Current research methods are inadequate to give us a definitive answer on the role of consciousness in L1

learning.

Though research does not give us definitive answers, we could hypothesize that there was a certain measure of intentionality, and that the process of adding words became so routine that it was not memorable. Many of us remember when we learned to ride a bike because it was a major and unique achievement. Understanding and eventually speaking our first word was probably just as much a major achievement, but it was not unique and it occurred before our earliest recollections. And, although it was a major achievement, we eventually started learning several words a day. This process of learning became so routine that even though requiring effort (Kirsner, 1994, calculated that we may use high frequency words up to as much as a million times by the time we reach adulthood) it certainly would not be memorable simply because of the routine nature of the task. We can call this implicit learning in the sense that we can't explain or state how we learned because we do not remember.

Parallel to the number of vocabulary items to be learned is the complexity of the grammatical system. Here, too, we cannot prove conscious or unconscious learning, but even if we were to assume that L1 is unconsciously acquired, we can not assume the L2 is learned in the same way.

Research methodology in SLA does not lend itself to final incontrovertible conclusions. After a study is completed, someone else is always able to say, "yes, but...". That said, many studies seem to favor explicit learning. Nina Spada (1997) reviewed 30 studies investigating the benefits of different types of language instruction. (It must be noted that none of the studies cited by Krashen (1994, pp. 54-55) in support of his hypotheses made it into Spada's review.) Spada's conclusions in general favor explicit forms of intervention or combinations of explicit and implicit instruction. Two studies which are too recent to be covered in Spada's review favor some form of explicit teaching (Watanabe, 1997, and Zimmerman, 1997). This doesn't mean that implicit instruction (see below for definitions of explicit and implicit teaching) should be ignored. As N. Ellis (1995, p. 136) pointed out "...implicit and explicit modes of operation interact in interesting ways ... [and] demonstrate that a blend of explicit instruction and implicit learning can be superior to either just explicit instruction and implicit learning alone" (Spada, 1997, p. 82). At this point it would be appropriate to provide definitions for implicit and explicit teaching.

## **Explicit and Implicit Teaching**

Once again our definition of implicit learning, as learning that the learner is unable to express or remember how he learned, does not match how all the referenced authors view it. Implicit teaching, on the other hand, can probably be defined in a way that would be acceptable to all. Implicit teaching is not or at least should not be the opposite of implicit learning. The teacher should know what he is doing and why, and he should remember what he did so that he can either repeat or avoid it the next time. Implicit teaching is simply providing opportunities for language use without any attention to form. Explicit teaching which includes error correction is teaching that overtly points out some feature of the language. Probably no teaching is purely implicit or explicit and, as N. Ellis pointed out, a mixture of the two is probably the most profitable. Furthermore, we should not assume that implicit teaching brings about implicit learning. O'Malley and Chamot (1994) discovered that good language learners have a high level of metacognitive ability, meaning that they are more skilled than poorer learners at picking learning strategies that are appropriate to the task or stage of instruction. They also pointed out that good learners pay attention to form. So even if we are teaching in an implicit way, our better learners are learning in an explicit manner.

### **“Interface” Between Implicit and Explicit Systems**

Krashen (1994) claims there is no transfer between the two systems. R. Ellis (1994) and others allow for some transfer from explicit to implicit knowledge and Bialystok (1994) holds that transfer from implicit to explicit knowledge is important for growth.

In order to progress with the discussion of the interface, some additional terms need to be defined. We have for the most part kept the terms implicit, unconscious, automatic, and procedural separate although some mixing of the concepts was unavoidable when discussing the views of those who hold them to be synonymous. For this part of the discussion we will briefly set aside implicit (unexpressed) knowledge and unconscious knowledge and think in terms of controlled versus automatic and declarative versus procedural knowledge. The controlled/automatic distinction in language follows the opaque/transparent analogy. When the interlocutor is purposefully attending to language features, the language is opaque and he is using controlled processing. When the interlocutor is focused on the meaning, and is not hindered by any deficiencies in his L1, the language is transparent and he is using automatic

processing. Declarative knowledge is “knowledge about” while procedural knowledge is ability to perform.

Contrary to folk wisdom, explicit knowledge does not have to be only controlled and declarative. It can also work in the automatic and procedural realm (R. Ellis, 1994, p 86). Now that some definitions have been given, we return to the interface between the two systems.

Whatever our view of the issues discussed, all should agree that procedural knowledge and automatic processing are congruent with the goals of communicative language teaching. Declarative knowledge and controlled processing do not necessarily hinder these.

A brief hypothesis of how we arrive at procedural knowledge and automatic processing on the road to acquisition along with a possible reason for shifts from explicit to implicit knowledge will now be provided. The hypothesis will be stated in a linear fashion which at the outset makes it inadequate as a complete description of the process, since any linear description of a complex interplay of factors will be an oversimplification. Yet, removing a small part of the puzzle and looking at it in simplified form can be helpful, assuming we realize it will eventually have to find its way back into the more complex system. The hypothesis, which is somewhat comparable to Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988, p. 35) description of the four stages of moving through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), is as follows:

1. Incomprehensible input or output (R. Ellis, 1994). For learning to take place, something must occur to make the learner aware he needs knowledge. This could either be in the form of language in the environment he does not understand or in the form of an inability to communicate.

2. The learner gains the needed knowledge. This is the best case scenario; it should occur if step one occurred within the ZPD and if scaffolding is available (van Lier, 1996; Lantolf, 1994, for discussion). If step two does not work, then go back to step one with a different feature. The knowledge in question could be declarative or procedural or both.

3. If the knowledge gained in step one was declarative knowledge, if applicable, it may become procedural knowledge through practice.

4. Repeated practice makes procedural knowledge more and more automatic.

5. If there is sufficient practice after the knowledge is automated, it becomes permanently acquired (Pienemann & Hakansson, 1996).

6. Once acquired, knowledge can become routine to the extent it becomes transparent and the learner forgets he learned it or how he learned it. At this stage the knowledge would be called implicit.

Perhaps this “interface” is not really an interface at all between two separate systems, but rather a single unified system of knowledge that at times is explicit through various degrees of awareness and at other times through routinization becomes implicit. Implicit knowledge can, with a relatively small amount of effort, be made explicit. If the above hypothesis is true, it will take a lot of practice before explicit knowledge moves into the implicit realm.

As stated, this is an oversimplification and only traces one bit of knowledge through a possible sequence in a very complicated system of learning in which particular bits of information could be moving forward in the chain or backsliding. Many discreet points can be, therefore, moving simultaneously backward or forward at different points along the continuum described in the hypothesis. It is further complicated by an ever changing linguistic environment in which these processes take place.

The evidence provided for the insubstantiality of the claim of unconscious learning certainly will not end the controversy. Because as Reber and Winter (1994) admit, while we cannot wholly prove unconscious learning, neither can we wholly disprove it. Yet enough has been mentioned to support the role of explicit teaching and learning to make it obvious that a teacher should be cautious about trying to eliminate explicitness from the learning environment.

### **Suggestions for the DLIFLC Mission**

One may be tempted to comment after reading all of the above, “What does this mean for the teacher in the classroom at DLIFLC?” What follows is an attempt to answer this question.

First of all, the teacher should not feel he has betrayed the Communicative Approach when he explains grammar. He should, however, ensure that the explanation is aimed at improved communication. The question to be asked is: “Will this explanation make the student more competent or simply more knowledgeable?” The grammar explanations should also be kept short and should answer a felt need on the student’s part. Of course, it should not be assumed that the grammatical point was learned simply because it was explained. Explanations should be followed by activities that call for the use of the grammatical feature. Perhaps “one part explanation to ten parts practice”

would be a good formula.

There is some evidence that it is actually better to precede the explicit instruction with opportunities to use the language feature using the garden path technique (Tomasello & Heron, 1988 & 1989, cited in Spada, 1997) to enable the students to realize their need for the explicit information. In some cases, it is wiser to refer students to the appropriate pages of a clearly written grammar book than to use class time for an extended grammar discussion.

Second, it is okay to drill. Funke (1997) has discussed how the perception of the language learning drill has changed over the years. The main consideration is that language used for drilling should, for the most part, be such that it could be used in a communicative context. However, this writer even encourages his students to run through the conjugation of new verbs when they learn them (I studied, you studied, we studied, he studied, etc.). There is no way this could be considered a communicative task. However, it could be likened to a pianist starting the day playing his scales and arpeggios before playing a sonata. A student who is just learning conjugations would do well to do his warm ups regularly in preparation for performing his communicative masterpieces.

How much drilling should take place in the classroom? That is the teacher's call. Be aware that too little can leave the student ill equipped for communicative tasks, and too much can kill motivation for learning. It is best to sprinkle the drills throughout the program of instruction rather having a specified drill hour. Drills should not be viewed as the "be all and end all" of language teaching. However, this writer does encourage the use of drills as appropriate to prepare students for communication.

Third, in addition to drilling there is a wide range of exercises that can be used for explicit learning of a particular language feature. R. Ellis (1998) provides a couple of examples, the first of which controls the student response, and the second provides the student with an opportunity to use the target feature in a more creative way.

#### A. Text manipulation

Fill in the blanks in these sentences.

1. Mr. Short was born \_\_\_\_\_ 1944 \_\_\_\_\_ a Tuesday  
\_\_\_\_\_ May \_\_\_\_\_ two o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ the morning.
2. Mr. Long was born \_\_\_\_\_ 1955 \_\_\_\_\_ a Saturday  
\_\_\_\_\_ November \_\_\_\_\_ five o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ the afternoon. [etc.]

B. Text creation

1. Find three people who know
  - the year they were born
  - the day they were born
  - the time of day they were born

2. Complete this table about the three people.

Name	Year	Day	Time
a.			
b.			
c.			

3. Now tell the class about the three people you talked to.  
(R. Ellis, 1998. p. 50).

Fourth, it is okay to correct student errors, though the teacher should use judgment and tact when doing so. He should also know his individual students, since some students are more receptive to error correction than others. One technique that avoids embarrassment is to transcribe selected student utterances on the board while they are doing speaking practice in groups or pairs. After the group session is over, let the students analyze the utterances on the board and make suggestions for more accurate communication. Most will not know who made the errors and even the student himself may not realize his utterances are on the board. Since too much error correction can be frustrating for both the student and instructor and since there is some evidence that correcting utterances with only a single error seems to yield the best results (Long, 1996), it would be best to pick language samples that are almost right for error correction.

Certain aspects of the DLIFLC's mission lend themselves very well to error correction and subsequent explicit instruction and learning. Performance Final Learning Objectives (FLOs) related to transcription and translation call for explicit knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Student errors while performing these activities provide opportunities for the teacher to point out how a specific grammar rule can help the student accomplish a more accurate transcript or translation.

Fifth, reading and listening tasks can lend themselves to explicit learning. Texts can be selected (authentic texts are preferable, but contrived ones may be necessary at the beginning of a program) to illustrate particular features of the language. Here, explicit instruction can be blended with listening or reading to gain information. The task can parallel the Performance FLO tasks of listening and summarizing

or answering questions or it can be more communicative as in listening as an interlocutor or listening/reading to gain information in preparation for an upcoming discussion. The explicit instruction in connection with the listening/reading task can be anticipated in the pre-listening/reading orientation. “You will hear a few discussions between parents and their children. In addition to answering the questions found on your worksheet, note the different ways conditional clauses are formed.” It can also take place during listening or reading activities. The tape can be stopped when it is perceived that a lack of knowledge of a particular feature is preventing an accurate understanding of the text. A brief explanation and even a short drill can be inserted before returning to the text. Once the reading/listening is over, students can be asked to analyze particular language features. Focus on ones that will be useful to their future needs.

All of the above suggestions can be blended together in a communicative classroom. For the most part a block or period of instruction should not focus on one skill only. Listening, reading, speaking, writing, error correction, explicit explanations and drilling should—and can—be blended together to fulfill the instructional goals. Moving quickly from one aspect of the lesson to the next with smooth transitions can help keep the student focused and avoid daydreaming and boredom.

Explicitness also applies to other aspects of language learning. Often sociolinguistic and cultural differences need to be overtly pointed out to the students. Also with regard to vocabulary, there is no substitute for learning words. Bialystok and Hakuta (1994) eloquently state, “No matter what universal is posited in the human mind as the facilitating organ of language acquisition, there is no shortcut for learning words. They need to be studied, memorized, encountered, and reflected upon.” (p. 210).

One final consideration; we should not assume the student’s learning is going to follow our lesson plan. We often take a step by step building block approach to grammar. Most syllabi, even the more functional ones, have some sort of grammatical sequence. Yet according to Nunan (1998), the acquisition of features could be more like a garden with a variety flowers in different stages of growth than like building a wall one brick at a time. Control of grammatical features generally occurs over time and often not according to our plans, so teachers should be flexible and prepared to have their explicit moments of instruction come at times when the students demonstrate readiness for them.

## Summary

This article briefly discussed some of the issues involved in implicit/explicit knowledge, learning, and teaching. It defined and redefined some of the terms involved in the discussion. It claimed that learning is generally explicit, although it can be implicit in the sense that we can not always remember or describe how we learned something. It further gave a hypothesis briefly describing how explicit knowledge might become implicit. Finally, it provided a few ideas on how and when to use explicit instruction in the DLIFLC classroom.

While theoretical and practical considerations provided here are by no means intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive, they do provide some thoughts that may be useful to promote *a Dialog on Language Instruction*.

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## **Appendix**

*Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages*

Definitions

<b>Implicit</b>	<b>Explicit</b>
Webster's (1984) 1. Implied or understood without being directly expressed 2. Contained in the nature of someone or something although not readily apparent	1. Expressed without vagueness or ambiguity 2. Clearly formulated or designed "a more conscious operation where the individual makes and tests hypothesis"
N. Ellis (1994, p. 1) "learning ... [that] takes place naturally, simply and without conscious operations."	
R. Ellis (1994, p.84-85) "...intuitive in the sense that the learner is unlikely to be aware of having learnt it and is probably unaware of its existence."	"...knowledge that is analyzed (in the sense that it exists independently of the actual instances of its use), abstract (in the sense that it takes the form of some underlying generalization of actual linguistic behavior), and explanatory (in that the logical base of the knowledge is understood independently of its application)... it is available to the learner as a conscious representation."
Winter and Reber (1994, p. 117) "learning... in an unconscious, non-reflective way... However, it is not assumed [to be] totally in an incidental manner; the	

<b>Implicit</b>	<b>Explicit</b>
<p>process is conceived as being a by-product of the application of attention to relevant rule-governed structures in the environment;... inductive process that derives information... and represents these relationships in an abstract tacit form.”</p>	
<p>Berry (1994, p. 148) “... is less accessible to consciousness and cannot be easily communicated or demonstrated...”</p>	<p>“...knowledge is accessible to consciousness and can be communicated or demonstrated on demand... Learning itself may be explicit when deliberate strategies...are used”</p>
<p>McLaren, Green, &amp; Mackintosh (1994, p. 314) “... it proceeds without our conscious awareness of what is being learnt.”</p>	<p>“...we are conscious of what we are learning.”</p>
<p>Bentall and Dickens (1994, p. 333) This type of learning takes place “when the learner apparently acquires abstract knowledge of the stimulus environment in the absence of the ability to articulate some kind of rule or description.”</p>	<p>“...the learner is able to articulate some kind of rule or description of the stimulus environment.”</p>

<b>Implicit</b>	<b>Explicit</b>
<p>Paradis (1994, p.394) “implicit competence refers to the knowledge inferred from individuals' performance, even though the individuals themselves are not aware of</p>	
<p>the nature of this knowledge (Lewandowsky, Dunn, &amp; Kirsner, 1989). It is implicit in the sense that it is not overt.”  Bialystok (1994, pp. 565, 566)</p>	<p>“...means that something has been stated exactly, leaving nothing to interpretation or implication. Explicit knowledge is knowledge that includes precise boundaries and is organized in known systems. Explicit knowledge may be conscious or not, and it may be accessed automatically or not. It is different from implicit knowledge in the clarity with which it is represented.”</p>

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## **Instructional Value of Voice in Elementary French**

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*This article proposes teaching three ways to suppress the agent: indefinite subject pronoun, pronominal verbs and the passive voice. Instead of showing beginning students how to avoid the passive, it recommends that they learn how to stress activity at the expense of agent. Nearly 40 contemporary or recent beginning and intermediate textbooks are evaluated for their approach to voice. Approaches to alerting beginners to the function of voice are proposed, dealing with message equivalence between voices, functions of auxiliaries and participles, tense and activity indicators, and message density of verbs. The recommendation is to include the passive voice fully and a major justification is enhanced mastery of être and avoir in all appropriate tenses and the past participles of all appropriate verbs.*

An early assumption of mine, that the French make serious efforts to avoid the subjunctive mood and the passive voice, was not the result of my contact with Francophonia, but rather was the idea of fellow anglophone instructors and colleagues. The corollary assumption that the *passé simple* is dead survives more or less because some contemporary writers, Marguerite Duras being an important example, are inclined to create less formal texts. Even this merits only partial credit in view of the editing of fairy tales for French children with this “dead” tense. While it is a fact that the students will see no subjunctive mood, passive voice, or simple past tense after they complete their language requirement and give away or sell their French texts, the few who choose to continue their French studies deserve to know that French has not been simplified to the point of adopting spoken and written styles that are all indicative mood, all active voice, and all *passé composé* in the past. As a result of doubts about the validity of these assumptions, I have become increasingly careful to present these structures by

at least recognizing their importance and vitality. Nor do I concede that the subjunctive of the imperfect is an archeological adventure.

Of the three structures—tense, mood, and voice—it is voice that arises as a problem earliest and is probably the most easily addressed. The need for an awareness of voice becomes clear enough for students who are learning the *passé composé*, about midway through the first year, because of deceptive structural similarities that will be discussed below.

Under the influence of the textbooks from which I taught, I continued to assume that the major instructional problem was whether to teach or to ignore the passive voice. Eventually this issue proved secondary to something more useful and productive: teaching the three ways that the French can suppress the agent, or real subject. These are, of course, by reflexive verbs, by using *on* as the subject pronoun, and by the passive voice. This approach resolves certain instructional problems by omitting opinions about contemporary developments in French expression, by drawing learners' attention to the useful concept of "agent," and by facilitating mastery of the first verb, *être*, in all appropriate tenses. In illustrating the use of the passive voice at the intermediate level of SCOLA broadcasts, Camille Kennedy Vande Berg proposes as a sample question for the students to answer: "Par quelle concurrente la compagnie Pan Am a-t-elle été absorbée?" The passive here is irresistible. We do indeed ask intermediate students, and beginners as well, to recognize and even use the passive. Without our having applied pertinent approaches to this structure, some of our students who are neither dull nor lazy may respond: \*"La compagnie Pan Am a absorbé par Northwest Orient" (note: all incorrect structures used as examples will be identified by "\*" ) and remain far from appreciating the nonsense of their answer. Even alert students frequently do not grasp the semantic thrust of such an utterance.

In the first year, we teach *on* ..., numerous reflexives, the *passé composé*, and participial predicate adjectives. These structures put the beginner in the position of unwittingly offering active structures despite their passive intent, as I have just illustrated. Except for the predicate adjectives, these structures are not simple equivalents for the English structures; they cause problems. On the other hand, French and English share the same structure for voice which renders a much gentler absorption than the other three mentioned above. Promoting mastery of voice at earlier stages in the instructional sequence is not intended to interfere with mastery of the other, and often more readily used, patterns for suppressing the agent. Indeed, the proper objective is not to teach beginning students how to avoid the passive, but rather to

teach them the three ways to suppress the agent. If the locale of the production of champagne, for example, is to be affirmed, we may use any of three statements:

1. *On produit le champagne en Champagne.*  
—indefinite subject pronoun
2. *Le champagne se produit en Champagne.*  
—pronominal verb
3. *Le champagne est produit en Champagne.*  
—passive voice

Thus, the passive is never used to “avoid” the pronominal or the indefinite subject pronoun any more than the latter two are used reciprocally to replace the passive voice. The current tendency is to hold voice for the intermediate level while introducing *on* and pronominal verbs early in the first year. The function of “suppressing the agent” is rarely acknowledged, and probably never taught. Indeed, the currency that “avoiding the passive” enjoys almost necessarily suppresses the more comprehensive objective. My proposal to authors of future beginning French textbooks as well as to instructors is to stress “agent suppression” through three structures, namely the two that we routinely teach during the first several lessons and the passive voice.

Rare is the textbook in beginning French that emphasizes voice. Many consider it an ambitious concept for the beginner and suppose that it takes a long time to present; the objective of such a lesson may seem insignificant. Several textbooks observe a frequency contrast between the passive in French as opposed to English usage, the latter assumed to be more prone to use the passive. A census of this tendency might affirm a difference. It simply does not matter, however, and the space used to point it out—even if accurate—is wasted. Both the annoying passive voice and the troublesome subjunctive mood, for all of that, are robust and neglecting them in beginning French courses is no favor to any learner. In response to possible concerns about “elitist” instruction that might be raised against my proposal, I contend that there is no proof or even persuasive demonstration that complete instruction caters to elitism. Nonetheless, I have heard colleagues express anxiety about uneven success among students, a situation that excites the fear of generating an elite in the United States. If that fear were justifiable, equal ignorance would seem to stand as our most legitimate objective.

In proposing “guided instruction,” an approach for presenting grammar, Carol Herron and Michael Tomasello choose no fewer than ten target structures for their demonstration without including the

passive voice. Lest I seem to fault their list under the pretext that they prefer some minor problem to a major one, I acknowledge that the list is withal excellent and the ten structures are indeed those that my classes wrestle with, not always successfully. Rather, I suspect that the problem of voice, if indeed only eleventh in importance, indicates that the list of ten target structures is too short by one.

Of the 41 texts (listed under Works Cited) that I have consulted, ten of which are intermediate, there are 23 that do not treat the passive at all, including three of the intermediate texts. Of the other 18, six discuss the passive briefly (coded † in the Works cited) and give hints on “avoiding the passive” as though otherwise the learners’ style might not adequately develop. Eight texts include exercises in conversion of one voice to the other (coded + in the Works Cited) and eight discuss voice as a grammatical structure (coded # in the Works Cited). Of the two older texts consulted, one discusses voice in its various structures and has conversion exercises. The other traditional textbook merely alludes to the passive. My reason for assessing the interest in this structure that our current materials bear is not to suggest that we have so many cases of omission, but rather that something different might be done and what results we might expect. And all of this is entirely exploratory, conceding in advance that prudence could be on the part of leaving voice unnoticed. Doubts are, I trust, yet allowed.

Thomas Cox deals with difficulties in teaching aspect to learners whose native language is not aspectual: English, for example. We do, however, teach aspect in beginning French courses, expecting the learners to *begin* to make correct choices between the *passé composé* and the imperfect. In dealing with voice, which we tend to neglect, we have a structure that is almost identical to the English equivalent. This neglect is not easily understood nor entirely acceptable, particularly if based on the assumption of difficulty. What can work in the learner’s favor is the reverse value of the “Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis” (LCDH) which asserts that native language difficulties are a possible cause of foreign language acquisition difficulties (Sparks 289). The processes of the passive are already well anchored in the learner’s mind. This happy reality is at odds with another, discussed below, which affirms that such advantages are not always productive.

The fairly diligent student who may write in a composition that \*... ma maison a construit en 1980 ...” merits attention because such an anomaly betrays several difficulties and recommends the search for solutions. Chances are that this same student, who has little difficulty in producing a construction such as “Nous avons construit” or “Nous avons fait construire,” can utter without effort “Our house was built ...” And

no, it is not altogether understandable that the unfamiliarity of French and the familiarity of English explains this curiosity. Altering the example, we must suppose that a reasonably competent student would construe “Nous avons vu” either as “We saw” or “We were seen” indifferently. Could it be that “Nous avons été vus” would simply confound the entire class while, curiously enough, that class is absorbing other structures of greater complexity? Correct exposure tends not to function quite profitably enough, as Carol Herron points out (1991, p. 966). In proposing more vigorous efforts with voice, I am aware of the impossibility of doing it all in a couple of semesters. Impediments to proficiency tend to hold fast until their psychologically propitious moment to give way arrives.

There is a critical objective in presenting the concept of voice and insisting on mastery of *être* and *avoir* in all tenses that have been presented and of the past participles of all verbs that have been presented. Observation persuades me that these functions bring the verbal system into focus. Students who recognize, understand, use, and convert one voice to the other enjoy a dexterity that leaves them with little to add to their effectiveness. The French clause revolves about a verbal nucleus, making of the verbal system the portal through which learners must pass to obtain the proficiency that we hold as a worthy objective. Marva Barnett observes that our efforts to stimulate improvement by correcting compositions do not produce the results that we seek (1989, p.31).

This problem may be partially explained by the continuum upon which the grader must function. At one extreme the student's errors are identified and the student is asked to make corrections. At the other, the student's errors are helpfully corrected and such help merely stands in the way of teaching or reteaching the resisting structure. Errors in voice are, despite the advantage of cognate structure, among the most difficult for students to rectify. The instructor might indicate that the written statement \**“L'accident a vu par ...”* needs an adjustment, without seriously hoping that the average student will ferret out the nature of the error from among the possibilities of simple agreement, auxiliary, tense, mood, or spelling.

Are we not sometimes left wishing that they knew what they have done right? French active equivalents for the English passive are not under consideration here, except to recall that the normal English equivalent of the indefinite subject pronoun *on* is frequently the passive voice. Certain problems in application result from neglecting voice. I resist the use of translation in the classroom. When I do deem English equivalents expedient, it is typically for such French active expressions.

For example, “On nous a dit que ...” can be rendered as the passive “We were told that ...” Exploring this passive/active equivalence, as a means of suppressing the agent, can be an excellent point of departure for both demonstrating voice and illustrating the properties of the French indefinite subject pronoun.

The uses of *on* and pronominal forms constitute a different instructional problem. An occasional reference to the English passive when these French structures appear is appropriate for introducing voice. We all agree that the human mind is an incredibly marvelous piece of equipment, if not an extremely talented servant. And yet, we often detect a strain of sloth in its discharge of duty and, who knows, perhaps the nadir of its assiduity converges with foreign language study. Then, the teacher’s kit may simply not be good enough. The mystery could be removed by making learners aware of the analogy between the passive of French and English. Such a demonstration provides a short cut and a useful pattern. The learners must realize that, as well as saying that “Un mauvais mécanicien a réparé ma voiture,” they can express the same message in the passive, using the English model “My car was repaired by a bad mechanic,” by “Ma voiture a été réparée par un mauvais mécanicien.”

Because this structure is rational, such is the process that ought to obtain it. With all due respect for the agenda of our students’ minds, as well as of our own minds, both the teaching and the learning processes, particularly the latter, are seldom confined to rational results. I make this parenthetical observation because the several exact structural parallels between the English and the French passive voice make, rationally, learning that structure a “piece of cake” for the beginner of either language. I suspect that the problem arises mainly from the learner’s being unaware of what is being done in the native language, even while doing it perfectly. What might be misunderstood is that the agent is suppressed because the speaker intends to emphasize an activity, perhaps with its object. Although we ask a good first-year student, “A quelle heure déjeune-t-on?” and often hear: “Je ....” (which probably flows from youthful egocentrism as much as from vocabulary deficiency), we tend to accept such a slightly incorrect response as proficiently adequate. More to the point, however, the same student may respond, \* “Bill Clinton a élu président” if asked “Qui a été élu président?” And the teacher could well have asked, “Qui a gagné l’élection?” For my part, I want to promote mastery of *être*. Avoiding the passive voice would frustrate that objective.

The passive may be introduced after having presented the future and the passé composé. The propitious occurrence of several

passive structures in reading and the erroneous use of active structures where passive ones are clearly intended would be the most dependable signals that instruction in the passive voice is needed. Uncommon ingenuity may be required if the methodology rejects any translation. With a more relaxed format, modeling the English passive should produce desirable results.

The ground work consists of several concepts: first, that the message is not altered in any way by change of voice; second, that real subjects and real objects may be expressed as grammatical subjects and grammatical objects; third, that the auxiliary *be/être* is used to express the tense without reference to the meaning-charged passive participle; fourth, that the meaning-charged passive participle has no other function than to express the activity involved; fifth, that, in contrast, the entire active verbal construction indicates tense; and sixth, that both activity and tense are expressed in the single form of simple tenses in the active. Students who can identify the agent of a sentence are on the verge of mastering voice. One of the greatest, if most ironic, achievements of our profession is enabling students to describe what they can do perfectly.

### **Demonstrating Identity of Active and Passive Messages**

Using an unfortunate offering, such as \**“Ma voiture a réparé ...”* lifted from a composition as a good faith effort at using the passive, is probably the best point of departure since the instructor can demonstrate the semantic, and comic, alteration. Thus, to lighten a heavy lesson, a short list of unlikely active voice statements could be distributed:

*Ce film a vu ...      Le vin a bu ...      L'entreprise gérait ...  
Son histoire n'a pas cru ...      Beaucoup d'argent a donné...  
Ce cours haïssait ... .      Le football ne joue pas ... .  
Tous les jours, Le Figaro lit ... .*

Certainly some of these constructions could somehow be valid as they are, but the instructor can see that the intended values are obtained. A small benefit of this exercise is the reinforcement of the construction and interpretation, or application, of the active forms of all tenses that have already been presented. Simple examples in English remind learners that voice provides a stylistic variation for almost any expression. The dramatic statement “Mary shot John” is contrasted with its passive equivalent “John was shot by Mary” to demonstrate that both expressions affirm the same players doing the same thing at

the same moment and hence bear exactly the same message. Not every learner, however, is quite sophisticated enough to realize that “shot” is not the same word (form) in each sentence. The integrity of English passive participles is somewhat obscured by regular verbs. Therefore, examples with strong verbs should be included, such as “Ralph did the work” and “The work was done by Ralph” so the active simple tense uses a different form from that of the passive participle.

An exercise that sharpens awareness of voice is the composition of sentences with prompts of subject, object, verb, and tense. For example, a sentence with *Monsieur Filâtre* for the subject, *un roman historique* for the object, *écrire* for the verb, and the future for the tense might be suggested. Without insisting, almost anybody would write “Monsieur Filâtre écrira un roman historique” although giving the elements in a different order could induce the passive. Asking the class to compose a sentence in the *passé composé* with *le malfaiteur* for the object, *voir* for the verb, and *l’inspecteur* for the subject could lead someone to use the passive. Even if the best effort is only \**“Le malfaiteur a vu (par) l’inspecteur”* despite the nature of the prompts, useful observations are in order. The class should appreciate the difference between semantic intent and semantic value. Recalling the question about the fate of Pan Am Airlines, the finesse involved in answering in the passive is the first goal. Next is understanding that the same question can be asked with: “Quelle concurrente a absorbé la compagnie Pan am?” Achieving this makes the learner more comfortable earlier with the French verb system.

### **Demonstration of the Syntactical Variability of Substantives**

Whether noun or pronoun, the substantive may function in four situations with respect to voice: as a subject, as a direct object, as an indirect object, and as a prepositional object. In two of these, subject and prepositional object, it names the agent or the actor. One of the barriers to possessing the passive is the concept of a “real subject/grammatical object” construction that can be the role of the prepositional object. Different tasks are given to a construction such as “by the president” in utterances such as, (1) “She walked by the president” and (2) “She was fired by the president” with respect to action unless, of course, she was terminated by the foreman as she stood next to the president.

Long before the first lesson on voice, the instructor may use questions both in oral exercises and on written exams that are introduced by *Par qui ... ?* and perhaps paralleled by identical questions in

the active voice: *Qui (fait) ... ?* Students who have learned to appropriate elements from questions for forming their answers will benefit from this kind of questioning. By way of example, here is a short list of questions that serve this purpose:

- Par qui est-ce que les malades sont soignés?*  
(*Qui soigne les malades?*)
- Par qui sera dirigé le gouvernement après l'élection?*  
(*Qui dirigera le gouvernement après l'élection?*)
- Par qui est-ce que le radium a été découvert?*  
(*Qui a découvert le radium?*)

Likewise, the concept of “real object/grammatical subject” needs to be strengthened and that, again, somewhat in advance of presenting the passive. This is enhanced by a similar method, using *Qu'est-ce qui ...* as the interrogative grammatical subject. For example:

- Qu'est-ce qui a été découvert par Christophe Colomb?*  
(*Qu'est-ce que Christophe Colomb a découvert?*)
- Qu'est-ce qui est surveillé par les agents de police?*  
(*Qu'est-ce que les agents de police surveillent?*)
- Qu'est-ce qui sera débattu par le Sénat demain?*  
(*Qu'est-ce que le Sénat débattrà demain?*)

What can result from this and similar exercises is an awareness that the entire verbal structure expresses the tense in the active voice whereas only the auxiliary *être* can do this in the passive voice. Hence, the value of mastering this verb, along with its crucial partner *avoir*, in all tenses becomes obvious.

### **Function of the Passive Auxiliary**

One of the several questions a reader or listener expects to have answered by the interlocutor or author is “When?” Such is one of the major functions of the verb by virtue of its capacity to express tense or time. While some learners participate in this operation both passively and actively in English and to an extent in French also, not all realize quite what they are doing to make the process work. It is no help to students of modest talent that French offers constructions such as “*Mon père est fâché*” which they understand as an utterance with present tense force but they may not be able to distinguish it from that of the *passé composé* of *être* verbs, “*Mon père est parti*” which must be learned

as an active voice structure.

There are several ways to present the conjugation of *être* in every tense. However, judging from the typical interests of our beginning textbooks, those similar structures (*être* + participle) in different voices are presented without anticipating the confusion of voice. Unaddressed, however, the confusion might not dissipate. Ability to recognize and construct specific tenses is a challenge for students, considering that such pairs exist as:

*Elle est oubliée. / Elle est arrivée.*

*Elle sera oubliée. / Elle sera arrivée.*

The structural similarity renders the different tenses difficult to appreciate. The nature of the verb represented by the passive participle determines whether the auxiliary is the tense itself or merely an element of the tense. It is likely that many teachers refuse to introduce still another concept, however helpful, namely that of valency. Learners may not understand that the tense of *être* with a transitive participle is the tense of the entire construction. The affective awareness of these passive constructions can be stimulated by using each tense that the learners already know. At the end of the first year, students often deal with the present, passé composé, imperfect and future. Therefore, learners at this point should be able to handle utterances such as:

*Pourquoi es-tu déçu?*

*—Je suis déçu parce qu'il pleut.*

*Pourquoi a-t-elle été déçue?*

*—Elle a été déçue parce que son ami ne lui a pas téléphoné.*

*Quel président était le plus aimé?*

*—C'est Kennedy qui était le plus aimé.*

*Qui sera déçu si nous partons?*

*—Mais, tout le monde sera déçu si vous partez.*

*Quand est-ce que ta voiture sera lavée?*

*—Elle sera lavée demain.*

These kinds of questions are not those that students routinely handle well, but such should be the target-level of first-year achievement. It is less compelling however, that this level of articulation may be missed by some students than, for want of mastery of *être*, that the majority of the class should find itself checked at an unacceptable level.

### **Function of the Past or Passive Participle**

to spare students the frustration of grammar, one supposes, most textbooks of beginning French identify participles as *past* and *present* without reference to the *passive* and *active* functions, or they deal with the *past/passive* form as the participle and leave the *present/active* to a higher level. Some introduce the *passé composé* without considering its composition. Indeed, one significant instructional achievement is persuading students that a past participle is not, all alone, the *passé composé*. In the passive voice, this form is a true passive participle and tells only activity. We must feel some sympathy for learners while they struggle to appreciate that those “past” participles help tell tense as well as activity in the active, but activity only in the passive. There is often a period of confusion since *être* as auxiliary is part of the tense in two situations: pronominal and intransitive motion verbs. We will look at this problem in the section Active Voice Tense Indication.

By the end of the first semester, about 40 contact hours, almost all programs introduce the *passé composé*. The learners have been exposed to passive participles and may even understand their adjectival use. Oral exercises requiring a change of passive participle should facilitate this function:

*Sont-ils haïs?*

—*Mais non, ils sont aimés.*

*Était-il perdu?*

—*Oui, mais il a été trouvé.*

*A-t-elle été emmenée?*

—*Non, il a fallu qu'elle soit abandonnée.*

### **Active Voice Tense Indication**

A basic difference between active and passive voices is the structural indication of tense. Although the passive looms as the more complicated structure, it should in fact ultimately be appreciated as the more accessible simply because students can see the “seam” between auxiliary and participle as the line that separates tense from activity: one element tells when, the other what. The active, however, uses the entire verbal structure to express tense. This is obvious in simple tenses:

*Elle court.*

—present

... *qu'elle coure.*

—future/present subjunctive

*Elle courra.*

—future

*Elle courait.*

—imperfect

*Elle courut.*

—simple past

... *qu'elle courût.*

—imperfect subjunctive

The involvement of the entire verb in tense formation becomes understandable for composed tenses also once learners no longer treat the *plus-que-parfait* as the *passé composé*, a lingering temptation.

*Elle a couru.*

—*passé composé*

... *qu'elle ait couru.*

—past subjunctive

*Elle avait couru.*

—*plus-que-parfait*

*Elle aura couru.*

—future perfect

*Elle aurait couru.*

—conditional perfect

Observing and analyzing other composed tenses, such as the future perfect and the conditional perfect, in real texts merely for contrast, complete the demonstration of active voice tense indication.

The learner sees that activity is expressed only by the passive participle in compound tenses of both voices. This is the similarity that leads to confusion both in interpretation and construction. The intransitives of motion aside, the learner who possesses the forms and applications of *être* is ready to distinguish between active compounds and passives.

### Message Density of Active Verbs in Simple Tenses

The English simple past and the French future have a remarkable capacity for relaying messages. For example, *saw* as the simple past of *see* indicates activity, time, and attitude. The French *verra* adds

person and attitude. In a proficiency atmosphere, this consideration is addressed in some fashion and to some degree. Without an analytical dimension to instruction, however, the learner misses out on understanding the capacity of the verb to carry more than one message as a feature that distinguishes it from all other parts of speech, except the pronoun which carries both person and role (*je, moi*).

This privileged capacity of the verb in the preliminary demonstration of voice is the most readily assimilated lesson. The critical elements are the *quoi* and *quand* because these are the concerns of the passive, *quoi* being the domain of the passive participle and *quand* that of the auxiliary. A useful exercise in draining the value of verbs is an analysis of the content of certain forms. Letting a finite form represent an *énoncé*, proposing that the learners identify the various messages (person, activity, time, ambiance) can drive home the critical concept of verbal capacity. This can also refine the listener's and reader's reactions to various verb forms. The following is a proposed format that allows students to construct sentences that will address the several specific issues of what, who, where, when, and how:

<u>énoncé</u>	<u>qui?</u>	<u>quoi?</u>	<u>quand?</u>	<u>comment?</u>
<i>irai</i>	<i>moi</i>	<i>aller</i>	<i>plus tard</i>	<i>réellement</i>
<i>aies</i>	<i>toi</i>	<i>avoir</i>	<i>maintenant, plus tard</i>	<i>virtuellement</i>
<i>finit</i>	<i>lui, elle, on</i>	<i>finir</i>	<i>maintenant, auparavant</i>	<i>réellement</i>
<i>prîmes</i>	<i>nous</i>	<i>prendre</i>	<i>auparavant</i>	<i>réellement</i>
<i>mangiez</i>	<i>vous</i>	<i>manger</i>	<i>auparavant</i>	<i>réellement,</i> <i>habituellement</i>
<i>feraient</i>	<i>eux, elles</i>	<i>faire</i>	<i>maintenant</i>	<i>virtuellement</i>
<i>a plu</i>	<i>il, elle, on</i>	<i>plaire, pleuvoir</i>	<i>auparavant</i>	<i>réellement</i>

### Conclusion

Thus, there seems to be a certain progression that leads to mastery of the French verb system, and this progression is allied to the message capacity of the verb which is unique among parts of speech because of that capacity. While adjectives do convey quality, number, and gender (*laid, belle, grands, charmantes*) and most pronouns express role, number and gender (*il, elle, ils, elles*), other parts of speech are limited to a single message (*et, gouvernement, tard, sous*). First in the progression of awareness is the complexity of simple active tenses. Next come the compound active tenses in which both elements are necessary to indicate tense although only the participle expresses activity. After that, there are pronominal and *être* verbs, active voice forms, which also express tense through both elements but activity only with

the past participle. Finally, the passive voice expresses tense only by the auxiliary, always *être*, and the activity is expressed only with the past participle.

As beginning French class after beginning French class passed before me, as their understandable misuse of the verbal system became increasingly defined, I suspected that ignorance of voice could remain a serious hurdle between ineffectual written or spoken expression and communication. At the same time, French voice structure has such comfortable similarities with English that the beginning student can absorb it much earlier than has been assumed. The approach of several texts, listed in the Works Cited, could be self-defeating because the passive is introduced as an undesirable structure that the French avoid along with the imperfect subjunctive. Not only that, in itself dubious, some texts take pains to teach how to avoid it when, indeed, there is no reason to do so: no reason to avoid the passive nor any reason to teach its avoidance.

Many teachers teach only in French from the very first day. Many others are also devoted to a communication-based approach yet find it expedient at times to use English. There are some strong opinions about which style is more effective. Using textbooks in which grammar explanations are given in English can be sufficient comfort for the beginner, assuming, of course, that students devote some serious time to such a resource. When dealing with voice, however, the value of equivalent English structures is clear even though many students are hesitant to apply other close patterns, the near future for example. I confess that if the English near future, *we are going to leave*, is slow to lead the beginner fairly close to *nous allons partir*, and such is frequently the case, the advantage in reminding such learners of the English passive voice is rather slim. This learning barrier must result from the secondary experience. The majority of my freshman students are unaware of language as a topic of conversation. While I resist teaching them how to talk about language in general, it often reminds me of those tasks that are “dirty jobs, but somebody’s got to do it.”

This problem may revive the use of translation now unfairly discredited despite being a valuable tool when used with discretion. Recalling flawed attempts of my students to use the passive (such as: *\*le criminel a soupçonné d’autres crimes aussi*), I abandon all rigors of methodology that prove fruitless. Such “nearly correct” expressions beg the correction of translation. When American students read a sentence such as: “Les réussites de nos parents seront oubliées par nos enfants,” they want to know the *meaning*. They may not detect easily who will forget what or whom. Most learners will digest linguistically

such a statement once they can interpret the verbal structure as “will be forgotten” and understand how that can be so.

For students who grasp and apply the suppression of agent, a final demonstration is in order: demonstrating that not all identical sets of elements carry exactly the same message. One of several exceptions to the rule deals with military morbidity. This expression stands also as a lesser plea for the passive voice, since it is not disposed of so easily here. Consider:

*Le soldat a été blessé.* (Purple Heart!)

*On a blessé le soldat.* (Purple Heart?)

*Le soldat s'est blessé.* (Court martial!)

Thus, the passive is never used to “avoid” the pronominal verb or the indefinite subject pronoun any more than the latter two are used reciprocally to replace the passive voice.

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## Appendix 1

### *A Teaching/Testing Module For Illustrating Suppression of Agent in French and Verifying the Results*

#### I. Goals

- A. To solidify the concept of the **agent** in the French verb system that students have acquired through textbook explanations and workbook exercises.
- B. To intensify the students' awareness that **suppressing the agent** carries no semantic consequences.
- C. To assess in a communicative framework the students' grasp of **suppressing the agent** in all appropriate tenses and moods.

#### II. Materials

- A. Overhead projector
- B. Handouts (to accompany textbooks deficient in appropriate exercises)

#### III. Procedures

##### A. In lessons

##### 1. Presentation

Voice is a structure that can be introduced with some subtlety, saving explanations and demonstrations until either the students have a nascent communicative grasp or the instructor deems that direct presentation is imperative. When the students feel the advantage of being able to express activity without agent, or to stress the activity, along the line of *happening to* rather than *doing*, the use of the passive voice can be broached. Thus, it may be more rational for the reason of sequence to present the passive with object before presenting the passive with object and agent.

The answers given in this module are frequently mere suggestions and, in several cases, some creativity by the student is necessary.

##### 2. Oral exercises

After the class becomes relatively comfortable with question/answer exercises and can provide simple complete sentences in response to questions pertinent to vocabulary/functions at hand, passive voice questions may be interspersed. Active voice answers are acceptable, although some effort is advisable to elicit answers that acknowledge the voice expressed in the question.

Of course, in an oral setting, the student has satisfied the objective of communicative instruction by answering correctly in either voice.

##### 3. Written exercises

Several available textbooks offer exercises in converting voice. Frequently the objective is to simply reframe a sentence in the other voice. Students can be encouraged to justify choice of tense and

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identification of subject/object. If the prompts are projected on a screen, the explanations may be done orally for immediate assimilation.

### B. For testing

#### 1. Importance of *être*

Assuming that all instructors test for tense identification, comprehension, and construction, the strongest recommendation is to include *être* on every verb exercise and test. The emphasis on this verb entails an equal emphasis on *avoir* simply because there must be no confusion in any tense between these two.

#### 2. Past participles

They may be tested as adjectives before introducing the *passé composé*. After the class moves beyond the present tense, past participles merit the same stress as does the verb *être*. By that it is meant that, without knowing the participles for virtually all verbs as well as all forms of *être*, a student remains far from attaining rudimentary proficiency.

#### 3. Conversion demonstrations

The exercises proposed in this module invite the students to demonstrate rationally their grasp of structure, sentence components, tense, and **voice**.

4. As part of an hour exam, possibly covering one unit, the portion accorded to **voice** may be ten per cent of the total exam.

### Test 1: Present tense

A. Formez des phrases en rassemblant les éléments donnés et en ajoutant des objets, des articles et des adverbes au besoin:

<u>verbe</u>	<u>sujet</u>	<u>voix</u>	<u>objet</u>
1. manger	—	passive	pommes
2. ouvrir	inspecteur	passive	porte
3. ruiner	—	passive	snob
4. porter	hommes	active	chapeaux
5. vendre	fillette	active	fleurs
6. acheter	—	active	livres

### [ Réponses ]

[ 1. Les pommes sont mangées avec le fromage. ]

[ 2. La porte est ouverte par l'inspecteur. ]

[ 3. Enfin, le snob est ruiné. ]

[ 4. Certains hommes portent des chapeaux. ]

[ 5. La fillette y vend ses fleurs. ]

[ 6. On y achète des livres. ]

B. Donnez les éléments demandés des phrases suivantes :

1. Le café n'est pas bu froid.

voix : passive

verbe : boire

agent : 0

objet réel : café

2. Les enfants craignent mon chien.

voix : active

verbe : craindre

agent : enfants

objet réel : chien

3. C'est bien fait.

voix : passive

verbe : faire

agent : 0

objet réel : ce

4. Anne est très aimée de ses amies.

voix : passive

verbe : aimer

agent : amies

objet réel : Anne

5. On y prend beaucoup de photos.

voix : active

verbe : prendre

agent : 0

objet réel : photos

6. Ce journal est lu par beaucoup de gens.

voix : passive

verbe : lire

agent : gens

objet réel : journal

7. Nous rions beaucoup ensemble.

voix : active

verbe : rire

agent : nous

objet réel : 0

Test 2: Passé composé, imperfect, and future tenses

A. Composez des phrases en vous servant des éléments suivants:

<u>verbe</u>	<u>agent</u>	<u>temps</u>	<u>objet direct</u>	<u>voix</u>
1. craindre	hommes	imparfait	loups	passive
2. connaître	police	futur	leur fils	passive
3. vendre	—	passé composé	cette maison	passive
4. voir	Suisses	imparfait	guerre	active
5. recevoir	ma tante	passé composé	le colis	active
6. peindre	Manet	imparfait	tableaux	active
7. envoyer	nous	futur	l'armée	active

[ **Réponses** ]

[ 1. Dans le temps, les loups étaient craints par les hommes. ]

[ 2. Leur fils sera connu par la police. ]

[ 3. Cette maison a été vendue à un professeur. ]

[ 4. Les Suisses voyaient mal la guerre. ]



6. perdre	—	subjonctif	ce temps	passive
(Il ne faut pas que ... )				
7. savoir	qui	conditionnel	la réponse	active
8. décevoir	—	conditionnel	enfants	passive

[ **Réponses** ]

- [ 1. Le professeur avait déjà connu mes parents. ]
- [ 2. Son côté gauche avait été paralysé. ]
- [ 3. Je fus obligé de porter ce chandail par ma mère. ]
- [ 4. Sherlock posa le mouchoir sur la table. ]
- [ 5. Je voudrais que le patron nous reçoive bientôt. ]
- [ 6. Il ne faut pas que ce temps soit perdu. ]
- [ 7. Qui saurait la réponse? ]
- [ 8. Les enfants seraient bien déçus. ]

B. Constatez les éléments demandés dans les phrases suivantes :

1. Monsieur Lebon avait été vu par la police avant d'être arrêté.  
voix : passive                      verbe : voir  
agent : police                      objet réel : Lebon  
temps : plus-que-parfait
2. (Je crains que) ton frère n'y soit tué.  
voix : passive                      verbe : tuer  
agent : 0                              objet réel : frère  
temps : subjonctif du futur
3. Peu de gens feraient cela.  
voix : active                        verbe : faire  
agent : gens                        objet réel : cela  
temps : conditionnel
4. Béatrice ne crut pas son mari.  
voix : active                        verbe : croire  
agent : Béatrice                    objet réel : mari  
temps : passé simple
5. Le patron n'avait pas donné d'augmentations à ses employés.  
voix : active                        verbe : donner  
agent : patron                      objet réel : augmentations  
temps : plus-que-parfait
6. (Je doute que) Robert en sache la vérité.  
voix : active                        verbe : savoir  
agent : Robert                      objet réel : vérité  
temps : subjonctif du présent
7. (On savait que) tout votre argent serait perdu.  
voix : passive                      verbe : perdre

## Instructional Value of Voice in Elementary French

agent : 0                      objet réel : argent

temps : conditionnel

8. *L'entreprise fut mal gérée par votre mari.*

voix : passive                      verbe : gérer

agent : mari                      objet réel : entreprise

temps : passé simple

The proposed tests are on three levels. The tense that is tested on level one, the present, should also appear in the tests at the two higher levels. The passé composé, imperfect, and future, the tenses of the second level, should also be integrated into the test for highest level, where the new tenses and moods to be tested are the conditional, simple past, subjunctive, and *plus-que-parfait*. Few programs have sufficient time for the other perfect tenses and subjunctive moods. We know that the neglected forms will be met later by students spending any time with the French language. It is a reasonable hope that, having acquired the sense of voice, they will deal with all tenses and moods effectively and constructively.

### Appendix 2

#### Exercise 1

##### A. Oral exercise

1. *Es-tu surpris(e) qu'il neige (à Chicago)?*

(a) *Non, je ne suis pas surpris(e) qu'il y neige.*

2. *Es-tu surpris(e) que je t'enseigne quelque chose?*

(a) *Oui, je suis surpris(e) que tu m'enseignes quelque chose.*

2a. *Est-ce que le temps te surprend ici parfois?*

(a) *Oui, il me surprend souvent.*

3. *Es-tu surpris(e) que je t'offre de l'argent?*

(a) *Oui, je suis surpris(e) que tu m'en offres.*

4. *Quel professeur est le plus aimé des étudiants?*

(a) *C'est Monsieur Untel qui est le plus aimé.*

4a. *Est-ce que tes parents t'aiment beaucoup?*

(a) *Oui, ils m'aiment beaucoup.*

5. *Est-ce que tu es aimé(e) de tous tes voisins?*

(a) *Non, je ne suis pas aimé(e) de tous mes voisins.*

6. *Est-ce que je suis aimé(e) le jour d'un examen?*

(a) *Non, tu n'es pas aimé(e) ce jour-là.*

6a. *Aimes-tu le français?*

(a) *Oui, je l'aime beaucoup.*

7. *Est-ce que les Américains sont aimés partout?*

(a) *Non, ils ne sont pas aimés partout.*

8. *Est-ce que ce pupitre est occupé?*  
(a) *Oui, il est occupé.*
- 8a. *Qui occupe ce pupitre-là?*  
(a) *C'est Paul qui l'occupe.*
9. *Est-ce que cette chaise est occupée?*  
(a) *Non, elle n'est pas occupée.*
10. *Es-tu bien occupé(e) cette semaine?*  
(a) *Oui, je suis bien occupé(e) cette semaine.*
- 10a. *Est-ce que tu apprécies la bonne musique?*  
(a) *Oui, je l'apprécie.*
11. *Es-tu apprécié(e) dans ta famille?*  
(a) *Non, je ne suis pas apprécié(e) dans ma famille.*
12. *Quel cours est le plus apprécié par les étudiants?*  
(a) *C'est l'informatique qui est la plus appréciée.*
13. *Quelles leçons sont appréciées par les étudiants?*  
(a) *Ce sont les leçons faciles qui sont appréciées par eux.*

B. Written exercise

1. *Changez les phrases suivantes au passif :*
  - a. *Beaucoup de gens lisent ce journal.*  
*Ce journal est lu par beaucoup de gens.*
  - b. *On omet ce chapitre dans la nouvelle édition.*  
*Ce chapitre est omis dans la nouvelle édition.*
  - c. *Certains Anglais prennent le thé à trois heures.*  
*Le thé est pris à trois heures par certains Anglais.*
  - d. *On oublie facilement les devoirs.*  
*Les devoirs sont facilement oubliés.*
  - e. *Le soir, un loup rompt le silence.*  
*Le soir, le silence est rompu par un loup.*
  - f. *Un vieil âne tire sa charette.*  
*Sa charette est tirée par un vieil âne.*
  - g. *Au Mexique, on boit le vin français.*  
*Le vin français est bu au Mexique.*
  - h. *En Floride, on craint les tempêtes.*  
*Les tempêtes sont craintes en Floride.*
  - i. *On retient les meilleurs travailleurs.*  
*Les meilleurs travailleurs sont retenus.*
  - j. *D'abord on sert les dames.*  
*D'abord les dames sont servies.*
  - k. *On ne peint jamais cette maison.*  
*Cette maison n'est jamais peinte.*
2. *Changez les phrases suivantes à l'actif :*

## Instructional Value of Voice in Elementary French

- a. *Madame Untel est adorée de ses élèves.*  
*Les élèves de Madame Untel l'adorent.*
- b. *Les couleurs sont baissées aujourd'hui.*  
*On baisse les couleurs aujourd'hui.*
- c. *Les meilleures bières sont brassées en Alsace.*  
*En Alsace, on brasse les meilleures bières.*
- d. *Est-ce que «La Marseillaise» est chantée au Québec?*  
*On chante «La Marseillaise» au Québec?*
- e. *Les incendies sont toujours éteints par les pompiers.*  
*Les pompiers éteignent toujours les incendies.*
- f. *En principe, les flèches sont faites de bois.*  
*En principe, on fait les flèches de bois.*
- g. *Cette entreprise est gérée par une dame.*  
*Une dame gère cette entreprise.*
- h. *Les Russes ne sont pas haïs par les Chinois.*  
*Les Chinois ne haïssent pas les Russes.*
- i. *Le football est joué partout en Europe.*  
*On joue au football partout en Europe.*
- j. *Les ordures sont jetées dans la poubelle.*  
*On jette les ordures dans la poubelle.*
- k. *L'armée nous logent dans un petit hôtel.*  
*Nous sommes logés dans un petit hôtel par l'armée.*

### Exercice 2

#### A. Oral exercise

1. *Quand est-ce que ta maison sera construite?*  
*(a) Elle sera construite l'année prochaine.*
2. *Quand est-ce que la Maison Blanche a été construite?*  
*(a) Elle a été construite au dix-huitième siècle.*
- 2a. *Où a-t-on construit le nouveau lycée?*  
*(a) On l'a construit près du bureau de poste.*
3. *Par qui ton testament sera-t-il écrit?*  
*(a) Il sera écrit par mon notaire.*
4. *Est-ce que toutes les ordonnances étaient écrites en latin?*  
*(a) Oui, elles étaient toutes écrites en latin.*
- 4a. *Qui a écrit «La Marseillaise»?*  
*(a) C'est Claude Rouget de Lisle qui l'a écrite.*
5. *Par qui la «Déclaration de l'Indépendance» a-t-elle été écrite?*  
*(a) Elle a été écrite par Thomas Jefferson.*
6. *Quand tu es arrivé(e) en classe, est-ce que les fenêtres étaient ouvertes?*  
*(a) Non, elles étaient fermées.*

- 6a. *Pourquoi as-tu ouvert ton livre?*  
(a) *Je l'ai ouvert pour lire.*
7. *En quel mois est-ce que la chasse au daim sera ouvert?*  
(a) *Elle sera ouverte en octobre.*
8. *Est-ce que tous mes conseils seront suivis par cette classe?*  
(a) *Non, ils ne seront pas tous suivis.*
- 8a. *As-tu suivi un cours de musique l'année dernière?*  
(a) *Non, je n'en ai pas suivi.*
9. *A ton lycée, quel cours était suivi par la plupart des étudiants?*  
(a) *C'est la biologie qui était suivie par la plupart des étudiants.*
10. *En rentrant hier, as-tu été suivi(e) par quelqu'un?*  
(a) *Non, je n'ai pas été suivi(e).*

B. Written exercises

1. *Changez les phrases suivantes au passif :*

- a. *On a servi un très bon vin.*

*Un très bon vin a été servi.*

- b. *Le patron vous recevra bientôt.*

*Vous serez reçu bientôt par le patron.*

- c. *Ils ont pris des mesures pour résoudre le problème.*

*Des mesures pour résoudre le problème ont été prises par eux.*

- d. *Il mettait son argent de poche à la caisse d'épargne.*

*Son argent de poche était mis à la caisse d'épargne.*

- e. *Tout le monde lira son dernier roman.*

*Son dernier roman sera lu par tout le monde.*

- f. *Je ne faisais pas de miracles.*

*Des miracles n'étaient pas faits par moi.*

- g. *On lui enverra l'argent dans une semaine.*

*L'argent lui sera envoyé dans une semaine.*

- h. *Balzac a écrit le meilleur roman de son siècle.*

*Le meilleur roman du siècle a été écrit par Balzac.*

- i. *On dira certainement cela.*

*Cela sera certainement dit.*

- j. *Ils n'ont pas cru ton histoire.*

*Ton histoire n'a pas été crue par eux.*

## Instructional Value of Voice in Elementary French

### Exercice 3

#### A. Oral exercises

1. *Serais-tu surpris(e) si les Clinton se divorçaient?*  
(a) *Oui, je serais bien surpris(e).*
2. *Crois-tu que je sois surpris(e) de te voir aujourd'hui?*  
(a) *Non, je ne crois pas que tu en sois surpris(e).*
- 2a. *Serais-tu venu(e) si je t'avais invité(e) chez moi?*  
(a) *Oui, j'y serais venu(e) si tu m'avais invité(e).*
3. *Si tu donnais une soirée, qui serait invité?*  
(a) *Tous mes amis seraient invités.*
4. *Qui veux-tu que nous invitions ce soir?*  
(a) *Je veux que vous invitiez les Lebeau.*
- 4a. *Avais-tu appris tous les verbes avant de suivre ce cours?*  
(a) *Non, je ne les avais pas appris tous.*
5. *Doute-t-on que le français soit bien appris par cette classe?*  
(a) *Non, on ne doute pas qu'il soit bien appris par nous.*
6. *Est-ce que cette leçon serait mieux comprise avec plus d'exemples?*  
(a) *Oui, avec plus d'exemples, elle serait mieux comprise.*
- 6a. *Sens-tu que ton père ne te comprenne pas?*  
(a) *Parfois je sens qu'il ne me comprenne pas.*
7. *Quand tu es arrivé(e) à l'université, avais-tu compris toutes les obligations?*  
(a) *Oui, je les avais comprises toutes.*
8. *Si un Chinois te parlait dans sa langue, serait-il compris?*  
(a) *Non, il ne serait pas compris.*
- 8a. *Comprendrait-on le français mieux si on montait plus de films?*  
(a) *Oui, on le comprendrait mieux.*
9. *Est-ce qu'il se peut que ce cours soit annulé?*  
(a) *Oui, il se peut qu'il soit annulé.*
10. *Si toute la leçon t'avait été expliquée, aurais-tu réussi au dernier examen?*  
(a) *Oui, j'y aurais réussi si elle m'avait été toute expliquée.*
- 10a. *Est-ce qu'on peut expliquer ce phénomène?*  
(a) *Non, on ne peut pas l'expliquer.*

#### B. Written exercises (including the simple past)

1. *Changez les phrases suivantes au passif :*
  - a. *On ouvrirait les fenêtres s'il ne pleuvait pas.*  
*Les fenêtres seraient ouvertes s'il ne pleuvait pas.*
  - b. *Il semble qu'on ne lise pas ce journal.*  
*Il semble que ce journal ne soit pas lu.*

c. *L'Allemagne avait déjà battu la France en 1871.*

*La France avait déjà été battue par l'Allemagne en 1871.*

d. *Avec tout le monde autour d'elle, Nathalie composa le numéro.*

*Le numéro fut composé par Nathalie avec tout le monde autour d'elle.*

e. *On avait invité le jeune homme au dîner.*

*Le jeune homme avait été invité au dîner.*

f. *Ces parents ne laisseraient jamais leurs enfants seuls sur la plage.*

*Ces enfants ne seraient jamais laissés seuls sur la plage par leurs parents.*

g. *Mustapha empoigna l'appareil.*

*L'appareil fut empoigné par Mustapha.*

2. *Changez les phrases suivantes à l'actif :*

a. *Le dé clic d'un cadenas (qu'il verrouillait) fut entendu.*

*On entendit le dé clic d'un cadenas qu'il verrouillait.*

b. *Le lieutenant serait tenu au courant par le capitaine.*

*Le capitaine tiendrait le lieutenant au courant.*

c. *Le projet m'avait été proposé par mon cousin.*

*Mon cousin m'avait proposé le projet.*

d. *(Il ordonne que) la voiture soit réparée sur-le-champ.*

*Il ordonne qu'on répare la voiture sur-le-champ.*

e. *La clef fut introduite dans la serrure par Hubert.*

*Hubert introduisit la clef dans la serrure.*

f. *(On nous dit que) nous serions interrogés sur les verbes par Monsieur Hamel.*

*On nous dit que Monsieur Hamel nous interrogerait sur les verbes.*

g. *(Je doute que) ce tapage soit fait toute la nuit.*

*Je doute qu'on fasse ce tapage toute la nuit.*

h. *(Elle dit que) jamais une seule mouche n'avait été vue.*

*Elle dit qu'on n'avait jamais vu une seule mouche.*

<sup>1</sup>Every third question is expressed in the active voice to facilitate moving more freely between voices. The proposed answers are merely suggestions.

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## Faculty Exchange

*Dialog on Language Instruction*  
1999, Vol. 13, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 73-78

### **Instilling Passion for Language Strategies and Techniques**

**Kenneth L. Sampson**

*Curriculum and Faculty Development Directorate*

*We had with us again as interpreter Peter Afanasenko...a scholar of the Russian soul as well as the language.*

Colin Powell (1995, p. 468)

*“It is impossible to teach language without the cultural context. There has to be a background for language instruction.” Most would agree with these words voiced by DLIFLC Russian faculty member Ms. Ella Bekker. Beginning students come to our classes expecting to be surrounded and immersed in the culture of their target language. Often they end up disappointed.*

*Pressures on students to succeed on their end of training tests too often focus classroom attention on grammar, vocabulary, audiotapes, speaking and drills, drills, drills. Dated texts relate cultural events from eras when many DLIFLC learners were preschoolers. Some students possess little initiative or enterprise. The result can be barren, abstract, deprived classroom atmospheres. Life, spirit and enthusiasm—so evident the first few weeks of class—become quickly replaced with emptiness, dullness, and rigid routine.*

*This article points out the military and linguistic necessity of including culture as part of language instruction. It maintains that addressing the cultural based Content (regional studies) Final Learning Objectives (FLOs) within the DLIFLC classroom provides an invaluable, necessary foundation for enabling students to develop passion for the language they study. Three practical*

*Kenneth L. Sampson*

*methodologies, none of which take much time from target language classroom instruction, are then considered.*

## **Importance of the Cultural Dimension**

### *The Military Imperative*

*Population distribution, ethnic backgrounds, languages, religious beliefs, and political loyalties of civilian personnel all emerge as significant components of successful intelligence collection.*

Army Field Manual 100-23 (1994, p. 46)

Culture is a difficult, slippery, often hard-to-define concept. It is “considered one of the most complex in the English language” and is “involved in one of the oldest terminological wrangles in anthropology” (Ryan, 1996, p. 573).

Fortunately for DLIFLC linguist students, we can steer clear of this exhaustive debate. Our mandate is clear. Guidance from the Defense Foreign Language Program as described by the National Security Agency (NSA) and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) outlines areas of cultural study to be treated in our FLOs. Holidays and observances, customs, religious groups, ethnic/racial groups, gender issues and conflicts all come under the cultural umbrella. In addition to language proficiency competencies, our students must demonstrate cultural familiarity.

In addition to NSA and DIA guidance, the broader intelligence mission of our Armed Forces demands recognition of the cultural dimension. In the post Cold War world of support and stability operations, cultural awareness is essential. Addressing a recent Command and General Staff Officer Class at Ft. Leavenworth, a Marine Corps general stated, “You have to understand the culture you’re getting involved in. We never do a good job of cultural intelligence, of understanding what makes people tick, what their structure is, where authority lies, what is different about their values and their way of doing business.” (Scalard, 1997, p. 7)

Working with United Nations allies also calls for increased cultural sensitivity. Seemingly minor differences can become causes of great friction.

The services’ military occupational specialties flexibility in our new world order likewise calls for linguists who alternately serve as transcribers, interpreters, or cultural advisors to their commands.

*The Linguistic Necessity*

*In every sentence you speak, culture is there.*

—DLIFLC Arabic Associate Professor Mohsen Fahmy

“To study a language involves studying cultural aspects tied to language; culture and language are inseparable” (Ryan, 1996, p. 573). Some DLIFLC faculty teach language often without a coherent, integrated cultural context. To stimulate learning, they may wish to provide students with a broad, cohesive framework of the world wherein their target language exists. To understand nuances of thought and expression requires this cultural dimension.

In addition, in some target languages, the religious dimension is interwoven within almost every linguistic expression. “Religion embraces the whole of life... [it possesses an] all encompassing quality... [It is the] very sap of the tree of life, not a part or activity along with art, thought, political discourse... and all.” (Nasr, 1995, p. 438).

**Strategies and Techniques**

*Concomitant Learning*

*Soldiers... must notice small differences and pick up nuances, developing the sensitivity to see key indicators.*

— LTC Mark Corda, Commander, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Learning which accompanies or spontaneously arises from prepared lesson plans often leaves great impact. The human dimension, wherein genuine enthusiasm and passion naturally flows from a discussion or exercise at hand, affects all for the better. By taking advantage of occasions which naturally arise in the course of a day’s instruction, our actions and anecdotes infuse a needed cultural dimension into the classroom.

I’m not advocating free wheeling, distracting talk sessions which cancel set lesson plans and schedules. Rather, in brief animated moments of sharing ourselves, cultural enlightenment—which leads to increased language acquisition—can occur.

*Adjunct Instruction*

*You catch somebody's interest and you have them for life.*  
— Mike Stogner, DLIFLC Russian Chairperson

We usually do a great job acquainting students with foods, songs, dance, and tourist highlights of our target language culture. On the other hand, we often do not provide sufficient opportunities for developing student familiarity with military history, literature, novels, film classics, or artistic triumphs of the land whose language we teach.

One effective way to dispense such understanding is through adjunct instruction. Adjunct instruction seeks to carve out opportunities for brief, less-than-three-minute introductions to cultural highlights. For instance, Chinese faculty could bring to class one of the following novels: Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*, John Hersey's *A Single Pebble*, Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* or Alan Burgess' *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*. A brief introduction to the work, designed to whet the intellectual appetite of students, may prompt the reading of such works.

A Vietnamese faculty member may present Bernard Fall's *Hell is a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu* or Harold Moore's *We Were Soldiers Once and Young*. Familiarizing students with map locations of these battles links military, geographic and linguistic interests. An anecdote of personal experience associated with the conflict or site deepens the learning experience.

A prayer book of the Russian Orthodox Church or texts such as Steve Raymer's *St. Petersburg*, Nicholas Riasanovsky's *History of Russia* or Hedrick Smith's *The New Russians* may kindle new zeal within Russian language students. Copies of *Aramco World*, a novel such as Nahid Rachlin's *Married to a Stranger*, or the autobiographical accounts in *Desert Warrior* by Khaled Bin Sultan or Wilfred Thesiger's *The Last Nomad* would well serve Middle East students.

*Headstart/Smartstart Training*

*The new military needs soldiers [sailors, airmen, marines] who can deal with a diversity of peoples and cultures, who can tolerate ambiguity, take initiative, and ask questions.*

— Toffler (1993) p. 74

An often overlooked opportunity to provide a broad cultural orientation for incoming students is through Headstart/ Smartstart programs. Newly arrived students at DLIFLC often have between two weeks to three months before DLIFLC class work begins. Systematized instruction for these eager learners varies among our services.

Two new resources are readily available to meet this instructional need. Volume One of *Culture of the Arab World: Selected Aspects of Middle East Religion/Culture* addresses culture Content FLOs in a systematic, cohesive manner. Volume Two overviews 27 different Middle East countries. Volume Three, drawn from Special Forces and Department of Defense materials, specifically treats Arab manners and customs.

The *Culture of East Asia* series offers similar treatment of China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia. Volume One gives the big historical and religious picture. Volumes Two and Three give a more specific survey, treating 17 countries.

Within the volumes, each chapter contains a short overview of the unit, the chapter narrative itself, a vocabulary list, questions for review, and bibliography. The design incorporates clip art and wide margins for a “user friendly” feeling.

*Culture of the Arab World* and *Culture of the East Asian World* are available in a number of venues. LingNet contains all volumes. DLIFLC’s Middle East Schools have the Arab World series, in interactive format, loaded in the computer labs. A new CD-ROM *Culture of Arab/East Asian World* (XX0001), is available through Operations, Plans, and Programs (OPP) directorate channels. A few hard copies of each volume (AD 0232S, 0233S, XX0033S, XX0034S and XX0035S) are in the DLIFLC textbook warehouse.

*Cultural World of Central/South Central Europe (Bosnia)*, currently at the editors, became available January 1999. *Culture of the Russian Federation* came out in March 1999.

Faculty members, department chairs, and school administrators can “push” their Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force chains of command counterparts to ensure these materials are available in company, detachment, and squadron learning centers. Students are the real beneficiaries when Headstart/Smartstart programs incorporate these resources.

## **Conclusion**

“How does it all fit?” asked SPC Derrell LeBaron after one of my first culture Content FLO classes here at DLIFLC. The question, referring to the religious dimensions of culture within the Middle East, disturbed me for months. It inspired work for the *Culture of the Arab World* series.

DLIFLC faculty, course developers and staff, who recognize the military and linguistic importance of the cultural dimension, and who implement learning techniques such as adjunct instruction and concomitant learning while pushing for adequate Headstart and Smartstart training, enable students to see “how it all fits.” In the process, passion for language is kindled. Lifelong skills develop. And, enthusiasm for our

*Kenneth L. Sampson*

shared DLIFLC mission escalates.

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## **The Role of Culture in Language Teaching**

**Irene Krasner**  
*European School II*

*Teaching culture in a foreign language (FL) classroom is often a controversial and always a difficult task. Yet, this issue can no longer be ignored, since the major shift in the practice of FL teaching has been made toward proficiency teaching. According to Galloway (1984):*

*One may define proficiency as the ability to sustain accurate performance of certain global functions within the variety of social and professional language-use contexts. Such real world performance requires students to display flexibility, resourcefulness, spontaneity, in contexts which confront them with the unpredictable as well as predictable, the unfamiliar as well as familiar.*

*When approaching this topic the following questions immediately arise:*

- 1. Why teach culture in the FL classroom?*
- 2. What elements of culture should be taught in a FL course?*
- 3. How could culture be incorporated in a FL curriculum?*
- 4. What are the techniques and methods of teaching culture in the FL classroom?*

*This article attempts to answer these complex questions.*

## Why Teach Culture in the FL Classroom?

### *Rich Points and Linguaculture*

I will answer this question using my personal experience and examples from the excellent book *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation* (1994) by Michael Agar. In his book, he quotes Ron and Suzanne Scollon who stated:

Recently we have begun to see that the main problem in interethnic communication is not caused by grammar. Although languages use grammar as the system of expressing ideas, it is the discourse system which produces the greatest difficulty ...The grammatical system sends the message while the discourse system tells how to interpret the message. (p. 164)

Agar gives a very interesting example of miscommunication between Anglos and Atabaskan Indians. Most of these incidents of miscommunication, "rich points," as he calls them, evolve from speech acts, not from the language "inside the circle."

First, things that seem "obvious" or "natural" are not. Who talks first, who talks next; who opens and who closes conversations and how they do it—these sound like rich points that could wipe enthusiasm out of a lottery winner. (p. 166)

In the communication between Anglos and Atabaskans problems start right at the beginning. Atabaskans think it is important to sense the social relationship before they talk to someone. So, Anglos almost always speak first. The person who speaks first obviously introduces the topic. Consequently, Anglos control the topics of any discussion. The next problem comes when another person is about to take a turn. Atabaskans allow longer pauses than Anglos do. As a result, an Atabaskan will wait patiently for the speaker to continue while an Anglo has already decided that the speaker has finished. Anglos close off the conversation and set up future conversations by expressing pleasure at what has happened. Atabaskans do not like to make predictions about the future.

The Scollons, ethnographers who conducted this research, tell us that the differences they have described show up regardless of the language the speakers are using (English, Atabaskan, or Village English). The cause of the miscommunication is not the language itself, but a larger social cultural and psycholinguistic structure which is often defined as *linguaculture*.

From this example, we can see the importance of the awareness of other cultures. Anglos and Atabaskans do not meet the expectations of each other. They cannot use their cultural frames—e.g., patterns of behavior, which started growing in the unconscious in childhood. The interpretation one has of the other is that the conversation is not working, and that is the other's fault, since he or she does not fit in the boundaries of the appropriate expected behavior. Turn-taking and the choice of the topic are two major features which signal the distribution of power in a group. In the above example, the Anglo always controls the situation due to the difference in the socio-linguistic rules of communication in the two cultures. Breakdowns in communication arise not from the linguistic, but from the socio-linguistic differences. In other words, linguistic competence is not sufficient for successful communication. Culture is integrated in any communicative activity.

### *Survival and Cultural Proficiency*

Cultural proficiency in many cases could be vital for survival. Thus, for many immigrants a job interview often represents a major culture shock. A job interview is a highly structured socio-linguistic event which entails many culture-specific conventions.

I am still very grateful to my ESL teacher who taught us the basic communicative non-linguistic conventions of passing the job interview. He was teaching a *language* class, but he knew that in the interview game not only the language but also cultural skills count. He insisted that we shake hands firmly, smile, keep eye contact, and be extremely positive about ourselves. All these conventions seemed weird and irrelevant to me at that time. I appreciate the awareness of these conventions now, since they have helped me to survive in this country.

Why was it so difficult for me to accept this social role-play? From the perspective of a recent Russian immigrant (I had just come from Russia at that time), the situation of a job interview can be decoded in the following way: During the job interview you are supposed to brag about yourself (be positive), be indiscrete (keep eye contact), be phony (smile all the time), and impolite (not offering a handshake), since in Russia, initiating a handshake is up to the woman in any social

encounter.

I was evaluating the situation using my old socio-linguistic frames. I hadn't built the new frames yet. It took me some time to realize and to accept that language proficiency and communicative proficiency are two different things.

These examples show "the problem of speech acts and their cultural significance is not a purely academic one. It is a problem of immense practical significance." (Wierzbicka, 1990, p. 64)

### *Background Knowledge*

Cultural awareness is important not only for real-life communication purposes. As a matter of fact, all foreign language skills require some background cultural knowledge. Some units of this knowledge have been described by psychologists and some by anthropologists. When talking about psychological dimensions of cultural studies, the *schema* theory could be useful. Schema is often defined as data structure representing the generic concepts in memory, it contains, as part of its specifications, the network of interrelations that constitute the concept in question."

Cole, who combined work in psychology and anthropology, pointed out that children internalize schemata of human knowledge from recurrent events in a particular sociocultural context. The sociocultural context can be described as the "social space," the niche in which the child lives at a given point of time. As the child grows, his or her social space expands and with it, his or her knowledge. The psychological process of acculturation can thus be linked to the analysis of cultural meanings in the adult world through the notion of schemata.

Thus students might not understand a given FL text not because of the language deficiency, but because of a missing link in their cultural schemata. This missing link might be a well-known target language nursery rhyme, historical event, or just a geographical name. Which leads us to the second question:

### **What Elements of Culture Should be Taught and How Might They Be Incorporated in the FL Curriculum?**

#### *Defining Culture*

The first really contemporary effort to define culture was exerted by anthropologists. "Culture, they reasoned, was what their science was all about." (Seelye, 1981, p. 11)

In 1954, two well-known anthropologists, Kroeber and Kluckhohn, examined approximately 300 definitions of the term in a study entitled *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. An exact common denominator was not found. Instead, culture, presented in many definitions, has emerged as a very broad concept embracing all aspects of the life of man.

Brooks (1965), who has been very influential in causing language teachers to recognize the importance of culture and its link with language, has identified five different types of culture: biological growth, personal refinement, literature and fine arts, patterns of living, and the sum total of the way of life. Very often this classification serves as a foundation for the list of topics that should be taught in a FL course. Although this classification might be useful and definitely should be taken into consideration, it gives a rather simplistic approach to the relationship between language and culture.

The language-culture relationship is interesting and unique. On one hand, language represents one of the constituents of the culture. On the other hand, each structure of the language contains bits of cultural information.

### *The Goals of Teaching Culture*

To define what cultural aspects should be taught, it is important to determine the goals of teaching culture in the language course. Michael Agar talks about a three-step process of internalizing culture:

Step one is a mistake. Something goes wrong. Step two is awareness of frame and possible alternatives. Step three is repair, tinkering with old frames, now brought to consciousness, and building new ones, until the gaps between you and them are filled. Mistake, Awareness, and Repair. The initials spell MAR, the Spanish word for the ocean. It's the appropriate acronym, because culture makes you aware of the ocean in which you have been swimming.

As teachers, we should be aware of this process and try to help our students raise their awareness about culture inside and outside the linguistic circle.

The goal, in my opinion, is to help students understand there are different cultural frames. Awareness of this fact should lead to a non-judgmental evaluation, and finally to the acceptance of the norms of

the target language culture. Agar (1994, p. 243) writes:

The way those “other people” do things has its own coherence, a different coherence from yours. As you repair your frames, your mind and heart and soul become more complicated, you have new ways of seeing and doing.

Thus, the objective of incorporating culture in the language course is to lead the student by raising his or her awareness through intellectual analysis from the level of a tourist to the level of a person who has been immersed in the new culture. In other words, applying Michael Agar's MAR model, we should raise students' awareness about possible cross-cultural mistakes and help them to build new cultural frames. Mistake, as a stage of cultural development, might be avoided if appropriate training is provided.

#### *Conventions and Social Amenities*

According to V. Galloway's model (1984), the most obvious cultural aspects incorporated in the FL course would be cultural conventions—information about how people behave both linguistically and extra-linguistically in common everyday and crisis situations. Below is a list of the Convention Clusters according to Galloway's model:

Street greeting, excusing self, leave taking, forms of address, greeting according to hours of day, asking or giving direction, expressing respect, thanking, politely inquiring, well wishing, giving or receiving compliments.

Galloway also points out that appropriate para-linguistic behavior might be discussed, such as gestures, touching, or eye contact as well as such social amenities as offering, making reservations, accepting/declining, praising, refusing, ordering, complaining, or requesting. Finally, such an extra-linguistic feature as etiquette should be matched to the conversation clusters.

#### *Connotation*

One more area of cultural awareness should not be forgotten, *connotation*. This dimension of learning deals with the point at which language and culture come together to form meaning. As Anna

Wierzbicka (1991, p. 6) states:

To compare meanings one should be able to state them (p. 6). In natural language, meaning consists of human interpretation of the world. It is subjective, anthropocentric, it reflects predominant cultural concerns and culture-specific modes of social interaction as much as any objective features of the world as such. (p. 16)

The cultural differences have innumerable lexical reflexes. The word “privacy,” for example, is very common in English and clearly reflects one of the central values of Anglo-Saxon culture. The cultural assumption embodied in this concept is very characteristic: It assumes that every individual would want to have a little wall around him or her, at least part of the time, and that this is perfectly natural and very important. This word has no exact equivalent in Russian. Although, in the new Russian society, the notion of privacy is emerging as a social reality, the concept still needs to be explained and clarified when dealing with Russian students learning English.

Attention should be paid to the cultural connotation of a word within a context. The French word, “petit,” for example, normally stands for “small.” However, it often connotes endearment in certain contexts; such as *ma petite amie* which stands for “my girlfriend.”

### *Incorporating Culture in a FL Curriculum*

Cultural information is integrated, explicitly or implicitly, in any language-related activity. Information about cultural conventions can be easily integrated in any communicative activity from the very beginning of the course. Simple dialogs and exchanges could be enriched by cultural linguistic and extra-linguistic information.

As much as possible, contexts for language practice should be devised from culturally authentic sources. When preparing a lesson, teachers have to examine what cultural features might create difficulties and misunderstanding. It is an ongoing process, since culture is naturally integrated in a course.

The previous statement doesn't mean that culture cannot be approached in a planned and purposeful way. Area studies, as a part of a FL course, might be determined by the thematic areas identified by the curriculum, proficiency level of students, and their individual needs.

## What Techniques and Methods of Teaching Culture Are Most Useful in the FL Classroom?

A key goal of teaching culture is to raise students' awareness about cultural features of the target language. Teaching toward that goal may be accomplished by simple observation. By observing the way people are taking turns, greeting each other, or using the phone, the students may extract a lot of cultural information. As most students, unfortunately, do not have the opportunity to experience the target language directly in the country in which it is used, teachers should bring the culture to the students by using authentic films, news broadcasts, maps, or menus.

Everyday TV news is an excellent source of cultural information. It can be used at different proficiency levels of students. All sorts of cultural linguistic, cross-linguistic, and extra-linguistic information can be ascertained from the news. Beginners might observe simple exchanges, greeting patterns, or appropriate distances, while more advanced students can comprehend more complicated cultural information and conduct cross-cultural analysis. TV news provides up-to-date information about a broad spectrum of topics: geography, economy, way of life, international and domestic politics, and sports. One cannot overestimate the importance of this information for understanding culture. TV news might be used as a basis for a discussion, a questions-and-answers exercise, or a lecture by students.

Another simple and enjoyable way to teach culture is to have students visit ethnic sections/restaurants of cities. Other well-known techniques include Mini-Drama, Culture Capsule, and Role-Play.

- The Mini-Drama* presents an example of miscommunication in the form of dramatization. Students must discover the cause of the miscommunication.
- Culture Capsules* provide brief explanations of foreign customs. The culture capsule need not be limited to oral presentation; it can also be interpreted with the teaching of reading and writing, or by means of visual aids and realia.
- The Role-Play* demonstrates and rehearses appropriate cultural behavior.

One can find some more useful techniques in the *Intercultural*

*Sourcebook* (Hoops & Ventura, 1980) and in *Teaching Culture* (Seelye, 1981).

An excellent source of authentic materials, which might be used for area and cultural studies, is the Internet. It provides rich cultural up-to-date information and can be easily adapted for various levels of proficiency.

### **Conclusion**

Teaching culture in a FL classroom is complex. The concept of culture is difficult to define, but it is clear that in a FL course both linguistic and extra-linguistic cultural features should be taught. Failure to teach some aspects of culture could result in miscommunication, misinterpretation, and a major culture shock on the part of the students.

A critical goal of teaching culture in a FL classroom is raising students' awareness about the new culture. Acceptance, understanding, and empathy lead to real cultural and linguistic proficiency.

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## **Reflections on Culture**

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*This article examines some aspects of cross-cultural studies within the scope of my experience, knowledge, and readings. First, I will delineate a concept of culture; although this definition is continuously challenged by the potential of change. I will then explore the interplay of culture and commerce. Finally, I will examine the interplay of culture and ethics. I will analyze the shifting cultural and economic values as issues that either the economists or the humanists are bound to deal with under the banner of the future global village.*

### **Defining Culture**

A myriad of definitions are attributed to the word culture. It is commonly accepted that culture is a complex system of references and symbols that are historically transmitted within a group, tribe, nation across trans-national boundaries, or geographical areas.

In some ethnic groups, the cultural heritage is transmitted orally, like among the Celtic *gaeltacht*, the Australian aborigines or the Native Americans. In others, the written tradition facilitates the predominance of that culture in terms of official recognition because of the power of written documents that are paramount to, let us say, the oral heritage of legendary texts or saga; in short, the oral literature. The study of culture can lead to very steep abstract type of studies once we attempt to place events in a historical perspective. It is the work of epistemologists to help discern the validity of methods used in historical research about cultures.

The study of the way a culture views itself is of particular interest. For example, the concept of France's "*rayonnement culturel*" which is the dissemination of French culture throughout the world, might appear as a pointless statement considering the number of French magazines that are removed from the shelves of language schools or the fruitless, counter-productive efforts of French government-based policies to help a culture become influential abroad. Americans, on one

hand, view themselves as enjoying a high degree of informality. When I trained my American clients to acquire travelling skills in French, I was struck by the fact they so often insisted on learning greetings in French as being the first and foremost element of training. The French, on the other hand, only reduce greetings to their simplest expression, eager as they are to develop social bonds in any other way, through rational discussion or casual talk. Yet, the greeting term “Bonjour!” is connected with so many social connotations that one would have to study French culture first, via the language, to perceive what is beyond its pure formal aspect.

Culture is relative and changeable in space and time: itinerant teachers of the Middle Ages knew it as they travelled and taught, as they went from one belief system or *weltanschauung* to a different set of values (Latin, the language of knowledge was at the time a unifying factor). From the sixteenth century on, the colonizer countries were able to expand their zones of influence, in part, because of their powerful navies and absolute monarchies. However, those days are long gone and what might have been labeled “eurocentrism” for centuries by some modern philosophers of culture could be replaced now by the emerging countries’ own commercial ideologies and “universalism.”

### **Culture and Commerce**

With the use of wide-scale global telecommunications, it is hard to avoid being exposed to new cultures whether this takes the form of on-line chatting or cyber-economics. Because we cannot dissociate language from sociolinguistic concerns, we need to include cross-cultural studies into the language curriculum: (a) the new variables imposed by the net, (b) participate in the making of the global village (M. McLuhan, 1969) be it myth or reality, and (c) view the formation of economic blocs. On a political level, the value of creating economic supranational blocs is twofold. First, it transcends any difference by setting unified goals. Second, the prosperity it generates helps ensure peaceful relations.

There is a need for cross-cultural trainers in business to teach the way to hold a business card in Japan or how to be successful when negotiating with Indian or German teams. As it happens, the French, the Mexicans, or the Japanese use different paths of logic before they can come to an agreement or sign a contract (Fisher, 1980; Mole, 1990). There is no reason why foreign language teaching should not evolve alongside economic growth through an examination of these contrasts in behavior and style. New economic settings involving contact

between different ethnic groups can generate “languages” like cyberspeak or other phenomena similar in nature to pidgin English, an improvised business jargon stemming from shipping needs of nineteenth century Chinese ports. Typically, these “languages” are spontaneously created to fulfill urgent economic needs.

Two cultures in close contact can make linguistic accommodations to suit their interests. However, sometimes these accommodations are not made. A case in point is the dispute between France and the U.S. in 1993 over the Gatt Treaty allowing the free flow of goods including film productions. At that point, France invoked “*l’exception culturelle*” as a protectionist barrier, claiming a movie should not be compared to a can of soup. France was, in fact, denouncing the inundation of its media by low-cost American productions. Ultimately, on a conciliatory basis, a trade-off was agreed upon since all countries have valuable cinematographic productions to offer. The lesson is that there will most likely always be, as a result of a well-targeted commercialization process, a receptive public to endorse foreign artistic production just as international moviegoers will continue to be appreciative of the technical perfection of American classic films.

When dealing with both sides of the Atlantic and while doing some research on cultural perceptions, I have seen a pattern: understanding the complexity of European politics is as arduous a task for Americans as it is for the French to grasp the full meaning of economic factors in American culture. While attending seminars on American Civilization at the University of Montpellier, France, I realized how much America, my country of self-imposed exile and residency, is still perceived as a utopia and not as the economic rule-setting and exports-oriented giant. In short, I feel the French are remiss in forgetting to make references to the role of economics. Likewise, many Europeans fail to understand that America is a country where self-growth is made possible in a society where information circulates without obstruction and opportunities arise in a climate of economic freedom.

### **Culture Ethics**

Every culture contains an implicit and explicit code of behavior that determines one's rapport with others, our institutions, and the environment. Cross-cultural researchers examine and analyze the way each culture views emotions, socializing, individualism, money, authority, dying, elderly care, medical care, women's work, semiotics, or humor. The list of topics or social patterns is long because they encompass the scope of human experience itself.

The way the self is viewed in relation to society is heavily dependent on the tacit approval of the respective culture. A transgression might result in social ostracism varying in degree with the existing level of political or religious tolerance. But one has to be aware of the fact that the rules of culture themselves are shifting with time, space, and socio-politics. For example, America was, to a degree, a slave-owning society before slavery came to an end under the Thirteenth Amendment. Anthropologists do know that what is a taboo in one culture might not be one in another. The term *tabu* (Captain Cook, 1771) is a Polynesian word referring to what is contrary to the established standards of that particular group.

If we did a cross-cultural study of the concept of ethics, we would come up with interesting facts. For example, in one part of Scandinavia, one is allowed to deduct the amount of bribes on tax forms, or, in another country, prostitutes are protected under the social security system which lets them have access to healthcare. Another consideration is that a given culture can reach a high level of sophistication in the arts or technology, but is bound to collapse if lacking in moral values. From the past, Germany or Rome are examples of what cultural refinement could become, before Machiavellian forces took over and enlightenment declined. Each culture has its share of wars, crusades, genocides, invasions etc., but there is a tendency for any given culture to glorify its own history.

In western-based democracies, there is a strong belief that truthfulness and accountability are virtues that should be held high and that good things are normally derived from prosperity. However precarious a democracy may appear, establishing more separateness between political interests and the judicial system is worth the trouble and so is the adoption of conciliatory measures in the event of many of the intercultural conflicts that let each party reflect on its proper conduct in the future.

What hinders true cultural communication is, in addition to the lack of cultural exchange, the harm done by value judgments made without the full knowledge of all aspects of a given culture. For example, among the numerous pre-conceived ideas that exist on both sides of the Atlantic, there is a tendency in America to contend that the French dislike America; but this is in opposition to the overwhelming fascination with the United States as indicated by the sociological reality of France today. A common stereotype is the belief the French are uninhibited about sexual matters which they more than often combine with humor and aesthetics in the media; but little is known, in the general public, about the stern and austere movement of Port-Royal or the

Alpine religious dissent of the Vaudois that have definitely left a puritanical mark on the French character.

### Conclusion

In short, I have presented a brief overview of some aspects of cross-cultural issues. While doing my research, I realized how precarious this field is. Ironically, the paradox is that by identifying some distinct cultural traits we may not be protected against the dreaded pitfalls of myth and stereotyping. I have attempted to demonstrate there is a need to develop relativism to tolerate differing values, knowing the impact of cultural norms on the individual are enormous and those values, patterns or references are inexorably condemned to change.

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## Appendix

### *Research Application*

Based on my research about societal norms across cultures, I designed an activity around a single cultural event: I selected the non-verbal interaction of a group of friends in a French café as seen on a video segment. The purpose of this activity was to obtain data about views of appropriateness from a class of students and use the input as a ground for discussion.

### *Materials*

*French in Action* is a semi-authentic coproduction of Yale University and the WGBH Education Foundation in association with Wellesley College. It has been used across the United States including at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey; it provides video support for students of a 25-week long French Basic Program. A particular scene from lesson 39 was the subject of the experiment. A video segment depicting a scene at the Fouquet's, a café on the Champs was selected for its high level of kinesics and proxemics: while a group of friends were talking about theater, friends and acquaintances "joined in." One of them was known to the group, the other had not been formally introduced. The protagonists in that lesson were already familiar to the students.

### *Participants*

A class of eight students at the twenty-first week of the twenty-five week long intensive French Basic Program. Students had already overcome a phase of plateau, which usually takes place between the fifteenth and eighteenth week and which is characterized by fatigue. Student ages ranged from 18 to 36. Their backgrounds were diverse, but the class profile and dynamics allowed for a high degree of academic achievement.

### *Procedure*

1. Students were given a series of multiple-choice statements about the possible interpretation of the visual, non communicative aspects of the café scene. These statements were meant to:
  - a. describe the French group in their handling of personal space
  - b. provide the basis for cultural interpretation of body motion
  - c. encourage reflection on what is universally acceptable/  
inacceptable in terms of behavior
  - d. determine what is specific to French culture
  
2. Students were given some time "alone" since the teacher's momentary absence could help protect the students' genuine objectives and allow them

to negotiate independently.

3. Students were encouraged to “freeze” the screen at strategic moments during the running of the video series, and analyze the tacit yet meaningful behavior of protagonists.

The activity contained an open-ended question allowing to elicit students’ opinions about non-verbal aspects of that social gathering.

### *Findings*

#### Limits of the experiment

1. The fact that *French in Action* is semi-authentic is a handicap: It is uncertain as to whether Pierre Capretz or Barry Lydgate did or did not attenuate certain forms of French lifestyle in order to make them culturally assimilable to Americans. The lack of authenticity restricts the relevancy of cross-cultural experiments.

2. Moralizing is a factor leading to cultural myopia: The character of Jean Pierre became the focus of the discussion; the excess of familiarity he has shown dealing with his “friends” bred contempt among viewers. Is Jean Pierre’s maleficence a projection of ethnocentric viewers? Is excessive familiarity a component of French social life? The age, status, and idiosyncracies of characters also came into play, making cultural aspects less discernible.

#### Benefits of the experiment

The activity encourages a reflective role on behalf of the students actively engaged in their own learning process by mimicking teachers’ methodologies. Students becoming their own teacher is the key to a higher degree of conceptualization. Also, the fact that students deal mostly with nonverbal communication provides some stress relief since the activity is seen as a non routine challenge. Students can reflect on:

- a. their own culturally conditioned responses
- b. American perceptions of France
- c. French social life

Students learn to:

- a. make a non-judgmental assesment of interrelational behavior
- b. observe neutrality in the description of similarities and differences.
- c. develop cultural flexibility

### *Further Implications*

When using culture-rich documents in the classroom, we can say that among the numerous features that contribute to cultural identity, some are self-explanatory and need not be the object of minute analysis. For example, the numerous kisses French youth exchange upon meeting or parting; or a visual detail like the shape of the sugar lumps being served on the terrace of a café. Those that need to be under scrutiny contain a potential source of misunderstanding for non-native speakers: gestures, attitudes and the whole psycho-social make-up of the target culture which manifest itself in its omnipresent situational specificity.

Documents that are laden with culture should be the groundwork for classroom practice only. One cannot contemplate studying culture as a separate domain or for testing purposes because culture eludes any testing protocol: Its open, speculative components can only be assessed in a continuum.

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. While in the target country, what was the indication you were beginning to accept the new target culture?
2. At what stage did this happen and after how long?
3. Provided that time and money were not an issue, which culture would you like to adjust to and why?
4. How long do you think it takes for anyone to get thoroughly immersed, intellectually and emotionally in your own native culture?
- 5 According to you, what aspects of a new culture are most difficult to adapt to?
  - a. economics
  - b. political issues
  - c. humor
  - d. dating/mariage
  - e. community concerns
  - f. work-related matters
  - g. leisure time/ holiday practices
  - h. survival/ practical living
  - i. religious concerns
  - j. legal affairs

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**A Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding**  
**The Case of the Arabic Expression *Inshallah*, “If God Wills”**

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*When persons of dissimilar cultures interact, the possibilities of communication difficulties occurring are often great. Among the major barriers to intercultural communication are political and nationalistic ethnocentricities. Religion can sometimes be an even stronger source of ethnocentrism.*

*There exists a strong unconscious tendency to draw conclusions about another culture based on one's cultural frame of reference. The individual's cultural frame of reference serves as a standard against which other cultures are compared and evaluated. This, in turn, may lead to misunderstanding about the other culture (Klopf & Park, 1982; Galloway, 1984). Furthermore, what a word denotes to one person may not carry the same denotative quality for another. In intercultural communication, the connotative meaning of words takes on special significance, and in some cases, the meaning of a word or expression might be different in different cultures, and thus, the use of expressions cross-culturally is problematic. It is, therefore, useful to differentiate between the semantic or the utterance meaning on one hand and the functional meaning or the speaker's communicative intent on the other (Searle, 1973; Cooley, 1983; Barnlund, 1988).*

This study attempts to illustrate the aforementioned notion by taking, for example, the Arabic expression *inshallah*, a term widely employed in everyday interaction throughout the Arab world. It also tries to explore the reasons for misunderstanding the term *inshallah* by many Americans and other Westerners. Likewise, this study demonstrates the employment of *inshallah* in religious and secular contexts and

*situations. The examples of inshallah in this study are collected from published materials and confirmed by myself (native of Baghdad) and three other natives of Arabic speaking countries. The Koranic quotations are based on M. M. Pickthall's The Glorious Koran (1976).*

### **The Source of Misunderstanding the Expression *Inshallah***

The expression *inshallah* means “If God wills, as God pleases.” Some Americans and other Westerners often interpret it literally and pejoratively, thinking the Arabs abuse the expression to justify missing an appointment, or evading a practical undertaking, and avoiding a responsibility. They believe this reliance on the inscrutable will of God has a profound influence on the mentality of the Arabs and is perhaps one of the key barriers the Arabs must overcome in their outlook on life. They maintain that such reliance on God may deter the desire of the Arabs to lead, destroy their appreciation of the need for planning, impede their spirit of inquiry, perpetuate an unbalanced attention to the spirit of other worldliness, and obstruct their appreciation of the value of time (Langenderfer, 1965).

A faculty member at the University of Alexandria in Egypt related that when she was working in Morocco, a British employee of the British Consulate loaned her some printed materials which the faculty member wished to duplicate. The faculty member said in English to the British employee, “I will return this document to you in half an hour, *inshallah*. The British employee said, “What do you mean by *inshallah*.” The faculty member said it meant, “If God wills.” The Consulate employee said, “No, I need this document today!” The faculty member answered, “You will get it today, *inshallah*.” She returned it in ten minutes to the employee, and the employee said, “We should use this expression as well, it’s a good one” (Gregory & Wehba, 1996). It frequently happens that an employee when told by his supervisor to do a certain job will say *inshallah* as a statement of future intention, not of disrespect. In fact, when obeying an order, or performing someone’s wish in the United Arab Emirates, one says *inshallah* (Hawley, 1965). Many Americans and other Westerners might find such responses using *inshallah* too tentative, because they carry with them a sense of who they are, what they should be, and what they want what they want to do. Their behavior is largely determined by their self-perception. They are interested in their self-concept, self-image and self-

reliance (Yousef, 1974; Fieg & Blair, 1980), and they stress individuality (Barnlund, 1974), and hence they are bewildered when they hear “if God wills.” In addition, such a response in American tradition is understood as twofold because American society has adopted the Aristotelian “Law of the excluded middle,” (i.e., there is no middle ground in verbal interactions—either it is or is not). For individuals of Islamic tradition, however, a strictly binary response may be equally difficult to comprehend and may appear hypocritical because in their experience an individual cannot tell definitely where he will be or what he will be doing at any particular time. Most Americans know this as well, but may not openly admit it in their speech—at least not through an established mechanism like *inshallah*. Such expression is generally unacceptable in their own culture; therefore, when the Arabs use this expression in their daily speech, they are misunderstood as insincere (Keddie, 1963) and fatalists (Lustig, 1988).

### **The Employment of *Inshallah* in the Arab World**

Before demonstrating the myriad situations where this expression is employed, it is worth mentioning that the use of *inshallah* is conditioned in the Arab world very early in childhood. When speaking of the future, a powerful incumbency from deep in the psyche is called upon which forces the Arabs to use this expression. The use of this expression is a mechanism of social interaction. It is neither a simple means of shirking responsibilities nor a belief in fatalism. Like any norm, the Arab child acquires the appropriate use of *inshallah* largely unconsciously at his early stage of socialization.

One of the means of acquiring this norm is through folklore and anecdotes. The Arab child is told the stories of Juha, a fictional character appearing in many didactic tales, to instruct him on the use of the expression. In one tale, Juha plans to buy a donkey, and in the course of planning he tells his comrades of his intent, but does not say *inshallah*. His comrades implore him to say, “I will buy a donkey, *inshallah*,” but he disregards their appeals and continues on with his pursuit. As the story goes, Juha’s goal is not satisfied because his money gets stolen (or, in another version, he loses his money). Another popular tale in the same vein tells of a physician called in to aid a boy who is critically ill. The physician completes his treatments and says the boy will recover, but he is admonished by the others for not having said *inshallah*. Consequently, the physician dies and the boy recovers. The moral of these

tales and others is that the use of the expression *inshallah* can assist the speaker in having his future wishes come true (Gregory & Wehba, 1996).

### ***Inshallah* in the Muslim Tradition and the Koran**

*Inshallah* is employed in many contexts and is only rarely used within a religious framework. In its strict canonical form, *inshallah* is used only with reference to God's will and the future. In everyday speech the canonical use of *inshallah* is not the only use, for it is used frequently in many secular contexts and situations as well. When used as such, it aims at expressing a wish and a hope that a certain action will take place in the future. Prior to mentioning these situations, it is necessary to trace the origin of this expression in the Koran and Muslim oral tradition (Hadith). The expression *in sha'â-llâhu* in Classical Arabic or *inshallah* in the spoken Arabic dialects, is usually called *istithnâ*, 'formula of exception,' or 'of conditional.' It means 'if God wills, if it pleases God.' This conditional clause is a fossilized utterance in most, if not all, Arabic dialects. The Classical Arabic verb *sha'â*, 'to will' is never inflected in the dialects, and its only subject, though sometimes implicit, is Allah as it is attested in the Koran (Gardet, 1974).

The expression *in sha'â-llâhu* in Classical Arabic occurs many times mainly in the later chapters of the Koran. Examples follow: "Come into Egypt, if God wills, in security" (12:99); "if God wills, we shall then be guided" (2:69); "thou shalt assuredly find me, if God wills, one of the righteous" (28:26); "say not of anything, except if God wills, and remember thy Lord" (18:23-24); and "you shall enter the Mosque if God wills in security" (48:26); "they will abide there so long as the heavens and the earth endure save for that which thy Lord willeth. Lo! Thy Lord is Doer of what He wills" (11:106)—a constant call to leave matters to God who directs and rules all men according to His decree.

The religious duty of the Muslim to consider the will of God prerequisite signifies that one cannot conceive the fulfillment of an action, the occurrence of an event, the execution of a thought or a plan except if God wills it. Nor is exemption possible for the judicial acts, contracts and witnesses, and even more, a statement of the state of salvation of the believer. There is certainly a risk that the classical formula *in sha'â-llâhu* may provide a cover for some leniency, but the Muslim believer finds in it a new incentive to strengthen his good intention and this active abandonment of himself to the will of the Eternal God (Gardet, 1974).

According to the Koran one should always add the expression *in sha'â-llâhu* to one's promise even when promising not to forget (87:5). If, however, one forgets, one should remember the Lord (18:24). The Koran relates how God criticized a party of men who forgot to say "if God wills" (18:17-20). Resting on this, the Muslim should add the formula of *inshallah* even when referring to an event which will undoubtedly occur in the future.

The Muslim oral tradition related that the prophet was confronted by a group of unbelievers who, to test his faith and veracity, asked him to answer three questions dealing with such difficult subjects as the nature of man's soul and the time of birth and death. According to the teller, for the prophet Muhammad, an uneducated man, this presented a formidable task. Muhammad was told he would be considered a liar if he would not answer. Muhammad left and returned the next day without the answers, but he returned again on the third day after having spoken with the Angel Gabriel, and in accordance with Gabriel's counsel from God said he would have the answer *in sha'â-llâhu*. Another tradition relates that the Prophet used to teach people going to the graves and reciting the Holy Koran, to say "Peace be with you . . . and we, if it pleases Allah, will join you" (Nawawî, 1988; Wensinck, 1936-39).

The Muslim jurists in the Middle ages maintained there was a risk that the use of *inshallah* might become a "ruse" to escape from engagements undertaken, or even an abdication from all responsibilities, especially in business transactions. Some of them tried to restrain any abuse of the expression by conditions linking the contracting parties in case of the non-execution of an agreement.

### **The Secular Use of *Inshallah* in Everyday Interaction**

Although the canonical use of the expression *inshallah* in Arabic dialects is primarily religious, the recourse "if it pleases God" on the part of the believer conveys a wish that God Himself should come to his aid and remit the debt which he contracts without having the wherewithal to pay it.

Let us now enumerate the situations where the expression *inshallah* is employed in everyday Arab speech. For brevity, I will mention only the English equivalents of the phrases and occasions in which *inshallah* is used. Since these phrases bear striking similarities, it will suffice to mention a few current phrases which reflect Arab and Middle Eastern values and beliefs.

Following are the main interactions between semantics of words and their semantics in contexts of effective communication. These interactions display variations in both meanings and behaviors from context to context. When the words in context are untranslatable in a one-to-one relationship, I refer to the functional meaning of the sentence or phrase.

*Life-Cycle Occasions*

Birth (Piamenta, 1970,1979,1983)

- A pregnant woman is wished an easy birth:
  - a. *inshallah* you deliver safely.
  - b. *inshallah* a safe birthgiving.
- Wishing a woman in labor:
  - c. I invoke God's name on you (i.e., bless you), *inshallah* it's a boy.
  - b. *inshallah* He grants you a son!
- Congratulating a woman who has given birth:
  - Thank God for your safety! *inshallah* He protects him (the baby)!; *inshallah* He delivers his father (from troubles!)
- Congratulating the parents of a newborn son:
  - a. *inshallah* you see goodness.
  - b. I look forward to be present on his wedding, *inshallah*.
  - c. *inshallah* we come on his circumcision!
  - d. *inshallah* you rejoice his wedding!
  - e. *inshallah* he will be raised with your honor.
  - f. *inshallah* we congratulate you in the happy occasion (wedding) of the rest of your children.
  - g. *inshallah* he will be a support to his brothers.
- Wishing a woman who has given birth to a daughter:
  - a. *inshallah*, we come on her wedding.
  - b. *inshallah* you raise her with honor.
  - c. *inshallah* God releases her father of all troubles, may He preserve him!
  - d. *inshallah*, she will be followed by sons.

On Betrothal and Marriage (Canaan, 1927; Piamenta, 1983)

- Wishing to the betrothed couple to go through and celebrate the wedding:
  - inshallah* you complete the rest, i.e., get married.

- To a fiancée on the occasion of his betrothal:
  - inshallah* you furnish your future wife with ornaments.
- To the bride:
  - a. *inshallah* He gives you good luck.
  - b. *inshallah* God makes you happy in your marriage.
- To the couple after the wedding ceremony:
  - a. *inshallah* we come on happy occasions and happiness.
  - b. *inshallah* one thousand times may you be blessed.
  - c. *inshallah* you have happiness, wealth, and male offspring.
  - d. *inshallah* you have prosperity and sons.
- Blessing an unmarried girl present at the wedding of a relative or a friend:
  - a. *inshallah* the day comes soon when He takes you into account (as a bride!).
  - b. *inshallah* He fulfills your wish.
  - c. *inshallah* God destines for you good luck! (i.e., husband) and may it (i.e. your marriage) turn out to be good.
- Blessing a bachelor:
  - inshallah* God let you have good luck and a good and well-bred girl.
- Congratulating the parents of a newlywed:
  - a. *inshallah* I always meet you in happy occasions and may you live for the weddings of the rest of the children.
  - b. Be it blessed! hope (*inshallah*) for the wedding day of the rest of your children, may God not send your husband away! (i.e., may He preserve him!) to see the wedding celebrations of all. May God not bereave you.
  - c. An unmarried girl in Bahra in congratulating the parents of the bridegroom:
    - A: Blessed be the marriage.
    - B: *inshallah* He preserves your candle (i.e., 'may God preserve your youth!).
- Wishing to marry off the son of a friend, the following discourse goes between two women:
  - Umm Nihad: Umm Ya'goob when will you marry off your son Ya'goob? We want to rejoice in his happy occasion (i.e., wedding).
  - Umm Ya'goob: . . . I wish, Umm Nihad, I see the day of Ya'goob's wedding come true . . . *inshallah* you see in your lifetime Nihad's wedding.

- Congratulating a father:
  - a. *inshallah* we will see his wedding.
  - b. Blessed be the circumcision, *inshallah* we celebrate the occasion of his going to school.
  - c. *inshallah* you live to see him hold the school certificate.
  - d. *inshallah* we will be present at his wedding.

Condolence (Feghali, 1935; Abribat, 1906; Taymur, 1952)

One is condoled with blessings of compensation for the deceased. Bereaved parents who are still fruitful are wished another child.

- To the bereaved parent(s) who have children:
  - inshallah* the rest [of your children] compensate you.
- Wishing the bereaved not to be shown adversity anymore:
  - a. *inshallah* God does not show you more difficult times.
  - b. *inshallah* God intercedes for you! The life that has not remained with him (the deceased), may it remain with you! (i.e., I wish you a long life!)
  - c. *inshallah* no one sits on the floor for you (i.e., mourn you).
  - d. *inshallah* the deceased be your ransom.
  - e. *inshallah* what he (the deceased) had missed in age, be added to yours.
  - f. *inshallah* this is your last grief.
  - g. *inshallah* calamity be severed from you.
  - h. *inshallah* the deceased leaves behind longevity for you.

On a New Year (McCarthy & Raffouli, 1965; Piamenta, 1983)

- a. A: Happy New Year!  
B: To all, *inshallah*.
- b. *inshallah* you live for more good new years.

*The Use of Inshallah on Occasions Other  
Than Those Concerning the Life Cycle*

In addition to life-cycle occasions, the expression *inshallah* is employed in everyday social contacts expressing courtesies, wishes, congratulations, hopes (sarcastic or ironic), apprehensions, warnings, wishes relating to religious rituals, visits and departures, meals, buying or wearing a new dress, moving to a new home, undertaking new enterprises, going away, consoling, encouraging, and resigning oneself to

misfortune and nonchalant occasions. Following are a few examples for each occasion.

Congratulations on Moving to a New Residence (Frayha, 1957; Piamenta, 1983)

- a. Blessed be the house! good luck!, *inshallah* its threshold brings you goodness.
- b. May God make it blessed, *inshallah* you see goodness in it.
- c. *inshallah* you live in it with goodness/blessing/joyful occasions.
- d. *inshallah* the new house be blessed to you.
- e. *inshallah* you enjoy living in the house, may it be a good omen (to a newlywed couple after moving to their marital residence).

Wishing a Person Who Has Worn or Bought New Clothes or Footwear (McCathy & Raffouli, 1964; Taymur, 1952)

- a. Congratulations, *inshallah* you wear it in good occasions.
- b. *inshallah* you buy one hundred dresses.
- c. *inshallah* you wear/tear it in good health.
- d. *inshallah* you tear out a hundred like it!
- e. *inshallah* you wear its threads and may you enjoy it.

Congratulations and Wishes Relating to One's Livelihood, Business, or a Specific Enterprise (Frayha, 1957; Piamenta, 1979, 1983)

- To a person who has opened a tradestore:
  - a. *inshallah* you will succeed in it.
  - b. *inshallah* God promotes your affairs!
  - c. *inshallah* God makes this store a store of wealth and blessing.
  - d. *inshallah* you gain (concluding a deal).
- To one who comes back from finalizing a deal or a business:  
-*inshallah* you were successful.
- Having determined to act and get married, one invokes:  
-I will get married, *inshallah*.

If the interlocutor does not believe the statement and wants to express disapproval, he may respond sarcastically:

-When, *inshallah*?

- On a new appointment or a new job:  
    Congratulations! *inshallah* it will be a good beginning!
- Wishing someone who is leaving to do business:  
    -*inshallah* God makes you succeed!
- Wishing well to friends who helped serve the mourners on sad occasions like death:  
    -*inshallah* you help only on happy occasions.
- Wishing success for a student:  
    -Congratulations, *inshallah* you finish and complete all the tests.

Wishing Good Wishes and Health to the Sick (*Hawley, 1965; Barthelemy, 1935-1955; Piamenta, 1983*)

Wishing good health with the help of God for the healthy is a form of courtesy expressed on various occasions such as when greeting, congratulating, condoling, encouraging, admiring, entreating, thanking, etc.

- Visiting the sick:  
    -How are you, *inshallah* you are well.
- Wishing a sick man who has recovered from illness:  
    -*inshallah* you always be in good health.
- Kirkuk woman wishing her neighbor to stay healthy and well:  
    -*inshallah* He will not let you fall off three of your needs! (i.e., May your eyes, hands, and legs not be afflicted by a disease!)
- Leaving a sick friend:  
    -*inshallah* He grant you good health.
- Referring to household regarding the sick:
  - a. *inshallah*, there is nothing bad in him.
  - b. *inshallah* you don't see sickness again.
  - c. *inshallah* the illness will come to an end and may I come again in your immediate recovery.
- Referring to someone seriously ill, one may use the following phrase:  
    -*inshallah kher*, I hope it will end well. (lit. "God willing let it be well.")

- Wishing good health for oneself and for one's relatives whether in good health or in sickness:
  - inshallah* God grant you good health! May He not make you need anyone's to inquire about your health!
- Lighting candles on the Sabbath eve, an Iraqi-Jewish woman invokes:
  - Grant us good health! Be our Intercessor! O God! grant health to all! (Thy people) Israel! Release (Thy people) Israel, O King, O Messiah of blessed memory! *inshallah* you save the live ones from suffering and the dead from dust.
- When hearing about someone's serious illness, disaster, misfortune, or death:
  - inshallah* the Lord of the world be Merciful!

Wishing a Person Setting out for a Journey ('Abd el-wahhab, n.d.; Hawley, 1965)

- On setting out on a journey:
  - inshallah* you go and return safely.
- Wishing a person setting out on a pilgrimage:
  - inshallah* you perform your ablutions by the water of Zamzam (i.e., May you make the pilgrimage to Mecca).
  - inshallah* may you be a pilgrim next year.
  - inshallah* next year you will be on Mt. Arafat. (One says it on the Feast of Sacrifice, usually to the one who has not made the pilgrimage.)
  - inshallah* your pilgrimage be successful.
  - inshallah* may the visit be accepted; in good health and may your visit be accepted!
  - inshallah* He grants you good health!
  - In good health, *inshallah* your visit be accepted, we prayed for you (congratulating someone who has visited the shrine of a saint).

Entreating (Piamenta, 1979, 1983; Naqqash, 1978, 1980)

- Asking for alms:
  - inshallah* God makes your home prosperous.
  - inshallah* God makes your home prosperous, I can't pay (even) for bread, may I have a few pennies.

Wishing Death in Curses (Naqqash, 1986; Taymur, 1952; Piamenta, 1979)

- Annoyed by her son who gives her a hard time, an angry mother may say:  
-*inshallah* you die.
- When a Baghdad Jew who was called to read Psalms on the soul of the dead in the house of the deceased was not paid to his satisfaction by the bereaved family, he said:  
-*inshallah*, next time, when you call me I won't come. (implying that the family be bereaved again).  
- *inshallah* He doesn't let you enter anyone's house.
- A child is cursed by an angry person:  
-*inshallah* your mother be bereaved of you.
- Cursing someone who insists on going away, in contradiction with one's wish:  
-The hell with him! *inshallah* you go and never come back.
- A mad husband curses his wife:  
-*inshallah* the grave of your father be upside down.
- Being angry because his mother left him alone, the child invokes:  
-*inshallah* she dies.

Encouraging and Consoling (Naqqash, 1980)

- Upon hearing of some disaster or misfortune having occurred to someone, or after overcoming hardship, the person who undergoes a lot of troubles says to his/her interlocutor:  
-*inshallah* no one goes through the troubles of that day I went through.
- Complimenting the grandfather for his storytelling, the grandson says:  
-*inshallah* God not deprives us from your tales grandpa.
- When one is inflicted with disaster, misfortune, or death, one seeks God's benevolence for encouragement:  
-God is bountiful, *inshallah* everything will be okay.
- When reassuring one who has expressed anxiety, one says:  
-*inshallah* God comfort your heart.
- When one is undergoing a financial stress:
  - a. I haven't got money to cover the expenses.

- b. God is generous, *inshallah* He makes it easy on you (and send you money).
- When politely rejecting a request for lending or giving money, or offering help, the person who is turning down the request would say:
    - inshallah* you don't need anything in the future.
  - When a young man asks for a girl's hand in marriage, her father, not wishing to give him an affirmation on the spot says:
    - inshallah* God is bountiful (i.e., time will tell, hope it ends well).
  - When encouraging someone in strained circumstances, he is wished God's generosity:
    - a. A. By God I want to get married but I have no money.  
B. God is generous, *inshallah* He makes you successful; may He make you feel at ease.
    - b. A. By God, I want to marry, but I have no place (home) to live.  
B. *inshallah*, God will be generous to you, and you'll be able to buy a house!

*Greeting a Child in the Morning and when Retiring to Bed*  
(Piamenta, 1979)

- When one opens one's eyes in the morning to receive a new day, one does not know what it hides, hoping it will be a good day. The first thing happens or person one meets in the morning is regarded as portending good or evil.
- When the child gets up in the morning, his mother invokes:
    - inshallah* you got up healthy.
  - Putting the child to bed, the mother wishes the child good sleep:
    - inshallah* you have a sound and healthy sleep.

Meals and Food (Barghuthi, 1924; Hawley, 1965)

- At meals or when referring to meals, the guest says to the host:
  - a. *inshallah* your house exists always to accommodate guests.
  - b. *inshallah* God looks that your table continues to be loaded with food so that you may always be able to entertain your guests.

c. *inshallah* your dining table be unceasing to have dinners at!,  
may we dine on the occasion of your children's wedding!

d. *inshallah* we eat at your table on happy occasions.

- If the host is a father of a son, the guest would say:  
-*inshallah* we eat at the wedding ceremony of your son.
- Having drunk coffee, a guest says:  
-*inshallah* you serve coffee on happy occasions always!

Offered a drink or a cup of coffee by an unmarried girl in the presence of her hosting family, a bachelor jokingly wishes:

-*inshallah* you'll take me for a husband.

#### In Euphemistic Phrases (Piamenta, 1983; consultants)

- Expressing apprehension, relating to past time or future (with a rising-falling intonation):
  - a. *inshallah* you didn't quarrel with him. (i.e., I am afraid you quarreled with him).
  - b. *inshallah* you didn't lose the key. (i.e., I am afraid you lost the key).
- Warning or cautioning:  
-*inshallah* stay here and don't you dare move!

#### Miscellaneous (Piamenta, 83; Naqqash, 78, 80)

- To ward off fear from her son, the mother screams:  
-*inshallah* the shaking and the fear go away from you.
- A neighbor complaining about nasty children:  
-What do they want from us, everyday they smear the threshold with a black paint, *inshallah* a black headband blinds them.
- Avoiding a promise:
  - A. When will we see you (again)?
  - B. *inshallah* when I have time.
  - A. What kind of a talk, *inshallah* is ? Say frankly you will not come.
- The host welcomes her neighbors and tells them that she will offer her only son as a sacrifice for them. Puzzled by her exaggeration, the neighbors reprove her saying:  
-*inshallah* God smite you, how don't you feel compassion for him and say such a thing, we invoke the name of Allah one thousand times.

- Referring to a woman accused of misconduct:
  - inshallah* God guides her on the right path!
  - Whereto, inshallah?* (seeing his wife getting dressed, a man interrogates her anxiously:

The formula *inshallah* may express concession and be rendered as “even if” in a beginning of a clause, or in a complex sentence whose main clause is elliptic, implying nonchalance. It may also be an echoed statement. Examples:

- a. A. This bread is dry, don't eat it!  
B. I am hungry, I do not care, *inshallah* (even) if it is a piece of bone, I will eat it.
- b. A. Leave it, it's your brother's dress!  
B. I couldn't care less (*inshallah*) let it be my father's.
- b. A. Don't curse him, I warn you, his brother is an officer.  
B. So what *inshallah* let him be lieutenant.

The Expression *Kher Inshallah* (Piamenta, 1979; Naqqash, 78)

Often the expression *inshallah* occurs with the word *kher*. The expression *kher inshallah* (literally “Let it be well, God willing”) is a pathetic exclamation uttered in soliloquy, in conversation, or in response to someone's behavior. It is uttered in soliloquy in a situation where one is handling or manipulating something that all of a sudden would not work, or when being disappointed upon arrival at some address and finding the place unexpectedly locked, and so forth.

The expression *kher inshallah* is also exclaimed in surprise and/or anxiousness or indiscreetness when urging one's interlocutor to clarify his or another's odd or unexpected behavior. It is employed also to explain one's odd situation, or infirmity, to suggest one's idea, to release news hinted at expressing the ‘hope’ that by God's will, the odd be even and that all will be well.

Often, one says *kher inshallah*, “be it well, *inshallah*,” one's interlocutor answers: “there is nothing but well.” In an interrogative intonation, *inshallah kher*, differing in word order: It has the same meaning, whereas in a declarative intonation it signifies, “calm down! don't worry! *kher inshallah* is used in response to one's unexpected behavior:

-*kher inshallah?* What is it? What makes you laugh?

- Approached unexpectedly for a kiss from her husband, a wife may react:
  - kher inshallah* what is the matter with you?
- One comes late to a party, the host inquires:
  - kher inshallah*, I hope it is good tidings.
- Urging someone for news:
  - kher inshallah*, Where have you been? No one has seen you for a long time. Hope everything is okay.
- Greeting:
  - A. Peace be with you!
  - B. There's no greeting and no talk between us.
  - A. *kher inshallah*. O yes!
- Finding a friend at home alone:
  - kher inshallah*, gosh, why are you alone?
- Urging someone to suggest an idea:
  - A. I have an idea.
  - B. *kher inshallah*, go on! suggest it!
- Urging someone to tell the news:
  - A. Have you heard the news?
  - B. *kher inshallah* what is it? Hope it's good news.
- Being surprised by an unexpected friend:
  - A. I have come to speak to you about something.
  - A. *kher inshallah*, let it be good.
  
  - A. Excuse me for a minute please, I came to reprove you.
  - B. *kher inshallah*. for what?
- Unexpectedly running into someone in the street:
  - inshallah kher*, where are you going? I hope nothing happened.
- Responding to a telephone call or to someone who comes early in the morning, one reacts to his friend:
  - kher inshallah*! Good tidings, I hope.
- Asking a fortuneteller:
  - kher inshallah*, what is it?
- Unexpectedly called on by someone bringing a message, or when told someone is looking for one:
  - ha, *kher inshallah*, yes, why is it that you have come?
- When unexpectedly called on, one would say:
  - kher inshallah*, yes!
- To a mailman:
  - kher inshallah*, hope it's good news.

- When told that someone has asked about another: “This person asked about you” i.e., he wished to tell you something but could not find you, the other person would answer:  
-*kher inshallah*, “I hope it’s good.”
- To someone who had a dream:  
-*kher inshallah*, hope it’s well. What is your dream?
- Urging someone to explain his odd situation or infirmity:
  - A. The situation is not well.
  - B. *kher inshallah*, you don’t say.

### **Conclusion**

Taking the Arabic expression *inshallah* to illustrate a case of cross-cultural misunderstanding, I have demonstrated the occurrence of this expression in the Muslim oral tradition and the Koran, and enumerated the various secular situations where it occurs in daily speech.

Generally speaking, this expression relates to systems of beliefs, observations and elicited by socio-emotional situations in everyday interaction. It is an exclamation of feelings, emotions and attitudes common to all speakers of Arabic, including illiterates, ignorant speakers of rudimentary Islam, and speakers with non-Muslim affiliation.

To understand the use of this expression and other such expressions in the various languages cross-culturally properly, it is important, among other things, to differentiate between the literal meaning of the expression and the speakers’ communicative intent. This task may prove, in certain circumstances, to be difficult even for the native speaker, let alone to the foreigner. It is safe to say that similar expressions to *inshallah* exist in other cultures, and here the role of the teacher in classroom setting is crucial for providing the necessary background knowledge of such expressions for the learners. In doing so, the teacher should describe and explain such conventional utterances in the Target Language (TL) culture rather than evaluate them. This, in turn, will enhance the learners’ awareness of the TL culture and expose them to a wide range of human experiences when encountering such expression.

It is important that the learners be made to understand that the cultures are organized in different ways than theirs. Equally important students must be taught to avoid quick and easy labeling of values found in the TL culture as “funny” or “dumb,” “backward” or “progressive” and that their reactions to cultural differences should be neutral or non-judgmental. It is the task of the teacher to develop a cultural

understanding of the TL culture for the learners, because when the learners' recognition of the TL culture increases, the learners become more conscious of their own culture and learn to respect other cultures.

The more the learners become conscious of and understand their own value system that govern their behavior, the better they are able to deal with the values they may encounter in other cultures and the greater will be their ability to understand and tolerate values of other cultures without criticizing them.

It is impossible to develop higher levels of communicative proficiency and become fluent in the TL without being aware of the most effective and appropriate means communicating with native speakers in various social settings and circumstances, and without being aware of the value system of the TL. Foreign language teachers must provide multiple exposures with the same expression in different contexts and situations, which, in turn, will ensure extended mappings.

### **Note**

<sup>1</sup>There are dialectal differences among the socio-religious communities of Iraq. The Jews and the Christians of Baghdad speak dialect different from that of the Muslims, and the rural sedentary dialect differs from the urban Muslim dialect of Baghdad and some other cities. There also exists dialectal differences within Baghdad due to Classicization and a continuous flow of a greater number of non-Baghdadi speakers into the city of Baghdad (Blanc, Communal, p. 182, n.2 and Altoma, Problem, p. 6). Such dioglossia exists also in other Arab countries.

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### **Acknowledgment**

I would like to thank the consultants—Dr. Giselle Yonekura, Khalil Ibrahim, and Antun Attallah—from the Middle East Schools I and II for providing valuable remarks and my son Ranon for proofreading the first draft of this article.

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**Officer and Enlisted Personnel Success in  
Foreign Language Learning in DLIFLC's  
25-Week Spanish Basic Program**

**Ayça Dutertre**  
*Middle East School I*

*In the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) of Monterey where the majority of students are military personnel learning foreign languages, most are enlisted personnel (privates to sergeants) and some are officers (lieutenants to colonels). A research study to help predict whether officers would be more successful in foreign language learning than enlisted personnel (or vice versa) would be potentially beneficial in placement procedures and eventually help educators and language trainers learn more about the learning process of learners. In the literature, there is no evidence as to whether the difference in rank has an effect on the end-of-program proficiency of the learners. Hence, the following empirical pilot study was conducted with learners of Spanish who completed the 25-week basic language training in DLIFLC; when the end-of-program listening and reading proficiency abilities (as measured by the Defense Language Proficiency Test) of 10 officers were compared with those of 44 enlisted personnel, the analyses of both the t-test and the ANCOVA (with DLAB aptitude test scores as a covariate) revealed non-significant results. The unequal sample size and the small number of officers may have affected the results; therefore, further research is recommended to investigate this phenomenon in a DLIFLC-wide study.*

## **Background**

“The students in Section B (one class) are doing much better than the students in Section A (the other class that started at the same time); shall we shuffle the students again?” This is a typical question that is asked during a team meeting early in the program among the team of language teachers in the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) language programs that receive about equal number of officer and enlisted personnel. If these language teachers are advocates of cooperative learning, they like to shuffle the students to assure a balanced number of students with diverse predictive learning potentials in each class (Barnes, 1976; Flynn and La Faso, 1972; Gilstrap and Martin, 1975; Kessler, 1992; Mager, 1968; Nunan, 1992). If they are not advocates of cooperative learning, they prefer to keep students with similar predictive learning potentials together. Making such decisions, however, requires a good deal of time and numerous meetings; one discussion follows another before a decision is reached.

At the DLIFLC, where a substantial number of foreign languages are taught (21 in 1998, based on the military and political needs of the U. S. government), the students are military personnel. When a new group of students enrolls in a foreign language program, the respective school must assign the students to different classroom sections which, based on DLIFLC regulations, should not exceed ten students. The coordinator must consider different ways of assigning students to accomplish this. In the case of language programs receiving almost equal number of officer and enlisted personnel as new students, the coordinator often simplifies the task by using only military rank to form sections. Later in the program, however, this distribution is usually changed, depending on the predictive learning potentials and the language performance of these students.

In the military milieu of DLIFLC, a research study to help predict whether officers would be more successful in learning a foreign language than enlisted personnel (or vice versa) would have potential benefit for placement procedures. The research question, therefore, is: “Do officers (lieutenants to colonels) do better than enlisted personnel (privates to sergeants) in a foreign language program?” To answer this question fully requires a DLIFLC-wide investigation. To begin my research at the earliest possible time, however, and to gain more insight into the workings of the research, I conducted a pilot study with students in the 25-week Spanish Basic Program of DLIFLC, comparing listening and reading proficiency test results of officer and enlisted military students.

There is a need for this study. No previous study regarding differences between these criterion groups has been conducted. One of the most recent studies that was done at DLIFLC, although not directly related to this one, was a correlational study concerning the “Relationships of Language Aptitude and Age to DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test) Results among Senior Officer Students in DLIFLC Basic Language Courses” (Lett & Shaw, 1993). In this study, the age and language aptitude (as measured by the Defense Language Aptitude Battery - DLAB) of a pool of basic program students in officer paygrades O-5 and O-6 (lieutenant colonels/commanders and colonels/captains) were correlated with DLPT scores. The results of the study showed that age is not a factor, but that level of language aptitude is significantly related to every measure of language proficiency used in the study: listening, reading, speaking, and attainment of DLIFLC graduation goals. Correlations of DLAB with DLPT measures of listening, reading, and speaking were .39, .34, and .40 (Pearson *r* values), respectively; all reached high levels of statistical significance. Correlations of age (which ranged from 37 to 50 years) with DLPT measures of listening, reading, and speaking were .14, .00, and .05 (Pearson *r* values), respectively. None of these correlations was significant. However, the significant correlation between the DLAB and the DLPT is definitely a relevant finding beneficial to DLIFLC teachers.

In another study concerning Canadian military personnel, “Age and Aural Comprehension Achievement in Francophone Adults Learning English,” Seright (1985) tested for significant differences between younger and older adults (English as a Second Language—ESL learners) in learning rates for aural comprehension. The subjects of this study were members of the Canadian Armed Forces (Quebec francophones). Groups were created on the basis of age, but not of rank in this Criterion Groups Design. A pretest/post-test procedure was used to assess gains made by subjects in listening and to compare groups. The results of a dependent samples t-test were significant at  $p < .0005$  with younger subjects (age range: 17-24) outperforming the older ones (age range: 25-41). A limitation of this study was that Seright analyzed gain scores, which tend to be unreliable. Nevertheless, the study suggests that in adult second language (L2) learners, the rate of achievement in aural comprehension decreases with the increasing age of military personnel. Even though Seright divided a total of 71 subjects on the basis of age, the older group including 21 subjects contained more non-commissioned officers—higher ranking military personnel (16) than privates—lower ranking military personnel (5). The younger group had 50 subjects (48 privates and 2 corporals). The rank difference may have

played a role in the results obtained; however, there were no senior officers in the older group. Therefore, the question of rank difference is still not addressed.

Since there have been no previous studies conducted comparing officer and enlisted personnel (Research Division, DLIFLC, 1998), the formal hypotheses for this pilot study are in the null form:

1. In the 25-Week DLIFLC Spanish Basic Program there will be no statistically significant difference between the end-of-program listening proficiency scores (as measured by the Defense Language Proficiency Test-IV—DLPT-IV) of officers (lieutenants to colonels) and the enlisted personnel (privates to sergeants).
2. In the 25-Week DLIFLC Spanish Basic Program there will be no statistically significant difference between the end-of-program reading proficiency scores (as measured by the DLPT-IV) of officers (lieutenants to colonels) and enlisted personnel (privates to sergeants).

## **Method**

### *Participants*

The study started with a total of 74 U. S. military Spanish language students studying in the DLIFLC Basic Program. This total consisted of 11 officers and 63 enlisted personnel. Following an examination of demographic data collected via questionnaire (see Procedures), 10 officers and 44 enlisted soldiers who were enrolled were selected and served as subjects for this pilot study. These subjects completed the foreign language program and then took the Defense Language Proficiency Test-IV (DLPT-IV) (as is usually done by all DLIFLC Basic Program students).

Given that the number of subjects was so small (especially in the case of officers), I decided to include students from the original pool of 74 with limited previous exposure to Spanish. Limited previous exposure to Spanish was operationally defined as less than three years of formal study or informal contact with the Spanish language prior to the DLIFLC Spanish Program and as Spanish proficiency (prior to the Spanish Program in DLIFLC). Hence, none of the subjects had more than three years of previous exposure to the Spanish language. The percentage of subjects who had less than three years of previous exposure to Spanish was kept equal in both groups. Based on the descriptive data obtained from the questionnaires, one third of the officers had had less than three years of previous exposure to Spanish. To keep the two

groups as similar as possible, one third of the enlisted personnel who had less than three years of similar exposure to Spanish were randomly selected.

### **Materials**

The required test for this study was the most recent version of the government-wide and military-wide Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT-IV). The DLPT-IV was evaluated for reliability using the KR-20 procedure. Items in the test meet a goal reliability coefficient of .90 for item analysis (i.e., no less than .90), and the correlation between the multiple-choice DLPT-IV and the 'Constructed Response Test' (CRT) used to validate it is no less than .85. The CRT is an instrument specifically designed to validate the DLPT-IV. The CRT contains a set of questions per text requiring the test takers to construct their responses in written form; whereas the DLPT-IV has one multiple-choice question per text. For the purposes of this study the assumptions underlying the reliability and validity of this proficiency test are considered to be met.

### **Procedures**

Subjects were asked to fill out a background questionnaire (see Appendix). Questionnaires were administered two days before the students took the proficiency test. Then the subjects were selected based on the questionnaire results. At the end of their training these subjects took the DLPT-IV as usual. Thus, the proficiency test scores were obtained for listening and reading comprehension.

The results of the questionnaire were used to control extraneous variables. Subjects answered questions regarding their educational background, their age, their first language, as well as the number and proficiency level of other foreign languages they might know. The questionnaires were given to the entire population (all students who were graduating from the 25-Week Spanish Basic Program) because the results were used to exclude subjects who might pose potential threats to the validity of the study.

In this pilot study, 10 officers and 44 enlisted personnel were selected based on the following criteria (control variables): (1) All subjects shared American English as their first language. (2) None of the students of the target language had more than three years of previous exposure to Spanish language and its culture. As mentioned earlier, one third of the subjects in each group had had such exposure, but these

subjects described their own proficiency as limited or very poor. (3) None of the subjects had continuous exposure to the foreign language and its culture other than in the Spanish Program at DLIFLC (i.e., none of the subjects had a Spanish speaking person living with him/her throughout the training). (4) Students in both groups had at least a high school education. They were asked about the level of their education in the questionnaire; however, since the subjects of this study consist of two criterion groups, level of education is one of the variables that could not be controlled any further. (5) None of the subjects had studied or worked on any special projects concerning the area background for the target country prior to coming to DLIFLC.

The two groups started the language program at the same time and finished it at the same time (after 25 weeks of study). Both groups had the same curriculum, the same materials, and followed the same schedule of classes. They were taught by the same team of six teachers with the same methods. The subjects were treated the same as all other students. None of the teachers knew about this study; none of the students knew that they were subjects of this study.

### **Analyses**

The scores from the DLPT-IV were collected as interval data: (1) from the listening portion, and (2) from the reading portion of the test. The mean scores were obtained. Data from the speaking portion of the DLPT were not used in this study because the scores are not interval data.

In this study of “Officer and Enlisted Personnel Success in Foreign Language Learning,” the research question asked is whether the officers (as previously described) perform better than the enlisted personnel (as described) in a foreign language program (Spanish Basic Program, in this pilot study). The design of this study is “Criterion Groups” of “Ex Post Facto Class.” The independent variable is “military rank” with two levels: (1) officers and (2) enlisted personnel. The dependent variables are DLPT-IV scores (for listening and for reading). A t-test (Case II) for Independent Samples was used as the statistical test to determine the significance of any differences in these two criterion groups in their performance on the DLPT-IV. The alpha level was set at .05.

In examining the data it appeared appropriate to conduct another analysis using DLAB scores. The Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) is an aptitude test all DLIFLC students must take prior to their language training. DLAB scores are used to predict

students' success in learning a language and their performances throughout the language programs. Since the subjects' aptitude scores as measured by the DLAB were also available, it was appropriate to use one way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) as a stronger statistical test than the t-test in order to adjust for the effects of aptitude in case the groups differed significantly in aptitude. The one-way analysis of covariance using DLAB test scores as a covariate was used with a computer software program. The program was run in the Research Division of the institute, once for listening and once for reading.

## **Results**

Table 1  
*Descriptive Data for Listening Scores*

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Officers	10	44.7000	4.373	13
Enlisted	44	44.4773	6.301	29

Table 2  
*Descriptive Data for Reading Scores*

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Officers	10	51.2000	3.736	13
Enlisted	44	49.8636	4.935	19

Table 3  
*Descriptive Data for DLAB Scores*

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Officers	10	101.2000	9.875	36
Enlisted	44	101.7955	10.038	42

These data show that officers scored only slightly better in listening and in reading. The observed statistic compared with the critical statistic (the calculated observed value of  $t$  compared with the critical value of  $t$ ) for listening and reading yielded the results to accept the null hypotheses. The results were obtained with a computer software program for t-test (Case II) for Independent Samples once for listening and once for reading.

The computer calculated value of  $t$  for the listening proficiency was 0.11 which was non-significant ( $p > .05$ ); for reading proficiency it was 0.80 which was also non-significant. The t-test on listening and reading scores confirmed the expectation that the differences between the average scores of the officers and enlisted personnel (Tables 1 & 2) were too small to be statistically significant.

As mentioned earlier, the underlying purpose in using one-way analysis of covariance was to control for the effects of another variable that might influence learning; DLAB scores were used as a covariant. However, before this test, a t-test for DLAB scores was run in the computer. The results of the t-test for DLAB scores (Table 3 for descriptive data) showed no significant differences between the two groups either (observed value of  $t$  was  $-.17$ ,  $p > .05$ ), indicating the officers and the enlisted personnel did not differ significantly in their aptitudes as measured by the DLAB. The analysis of covariance was unnecessary at this point, but it was run anyway to confirm the t-test results. It also revealed non-significant results ( $F = .020$ , n.s. for listening,  $F = .789$ , n.s. for reading,  $p > .05$ ). These results confirmed the ones obtained in the previous analyses.

## Discussion

It should be noted here that this pilot study had several limitations. The small sample size, especially in the number of officers, is the most obvious one. The extent to which the 10 officers are

representative of the entire population of officers who have studied Spanish or other languages at the DLIFLC is questionable. Thus, findings cannot be generalized. Secondly, the sample size for each group is seriously different (in a ratio of 4 to 1). One of the assumptions underlying the t-test is the normal distribution of scores. Considering the means and standard deviations for each group in this study, since they do not appear to be markedly skewed, this assumption for the t-test is considered to be met (Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). One might wonder, however, if the same is true for the assumption of equal variances. This assumption is also referred to as the "homogeneity of variance." Brown suggests that when the group sizes are markedly different, a glance at the descriptive statistics should indicate the degree to which the standard deviations (and their squared values) are different for the groups involved (Brown, 1988). Ideally, the squared values of the standard deviations for each group should be as close as possible (Tables 1 & 2).

The reason for the use of analysis of covariance was to statistically adjust for any differences between the two groups in DLAB scores. Nevertheless, no matter how much care one takes in a study like this, when it is questionable whether the extent sample represents the entire population, it is difficult to place much confidence in the results. The fact that Spanish is a commonly used foreign language might also have affected the results of the study. If I could have done this study DLIFLC-wide with its 21 languages, would I have obtained the same results?

As part of this kind of research I would like, if at all possible, to conduct a great deal of ethnographic research in the classroom during the program, to learn as much about the learners as possible. The value of such a study would be to identify characteristics of successful learners, which could in turn lead to a study of the feasibility of imparting such characteristics to less able students. That the results of this study were obtained within a specific curricular-instructional context, with a given team of teachers, using a given set of instructional materials, with a given set of instructional methods and techniques, with a given schedule, with a given set of students, and in a given language point out the need for extensive classroom research to document the curricular-instructional context and takes us back to the question of generalizability of findings (external validity) and to the need for replication in research.

If I have the opportunity to do this research DLIFLC-wide (including more target languages), I will have a larger sample, in which case I may apply some additional procedures and control variables. After conducting this study, it became clear to me that ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) would be an appropriate statistical test to use to

adjust for possible differences in variables like language learning ability (as measured by the DLAB) that might affect student learning (as measured by DLPT). For example, other variables such as motivation, could also be controlled through the use of analysis of covariance. A limitation of ANCOVA is that it statistically equates the groups only on the covariables involved.

In addition, I would administer the background questionnaire at the beginning of the classes rather than at the end, followed by short interviews to confirm the answers on the questionnaire as a control for the “reactivity effect.” Sometimes subjects may form or solidify attitudes that they did not have before filling out the questionnaire. These interviews may be necessary to keep this effect from influencing the results to an unpredictable degree, and therefore, influencing the interpretation of the study (Brown, 1988).

I would expect “mortality” to be a threat to the validity of the study. DLIFLC Basic Programs last from 25 weeks (as it is for the Spanish) up to 63 weeks (for some other languages, such as Arabic). Some subjects may be lost due to early departure from the program since in the military it is not unusual to have changes in assignment. Some subjects may also be lost due to academic, medical or other reasons. This is why it is important to keep the sample size large enough to compensate for such changes. It is also important to monitor the subjects’ status throughout the training because some subjects may change by finding international friends with whom to practice their target language on their own in their social lives. Unless such opportunities are made possible for all the subjects by the language department, this “maturation” in the subjects would inevitably affect the results of the study. Possibly, the personnel at the Research Division of DLIFLC could monitor the status of the subjects, in order to ensure that control procedures are maintained, since it is possible that none of the teachers would be informed about the study.

One of the intended control variables that could not be used for this study was to exclude all subjects who were not monolingual. Subjects who had more than word-level/novice-level proficiency in any foreign language were going to be excluded from the study. However, it became impossible to collect the size of sample used for the study with this variable; therefore, this control variable was modified. It can be reconsidered in a larger-scale study. The phenomenon I have experienced is that it is not possible to control all the variables at the same time, and still be able to get the targeted sample size (Brown, 1988; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991).

If this pilot study is replicated, hopefully with the inclusion of all DLIFLC languages, as there are a good number of uncommon languages taught at DLIFLC with much larger student inputs, and if statistically significant differences between the proficiency scores of officer and enlisted personnel are found, the results for listening may indicate: (1) officers'  $X >$  enlisted personnel's  $X$ , or (2) enlisted personnel's  $X >$  officers'  $X$  and the results for reading may indicate (3) officers'  $X >$  enlisted personnel's  $X$ , or (4) enlisted personnel's  $X >$  officers'  $X$  with alpha at  $< .05$ . Thus, we could say that difference in military rank is related to differences in proficiency.

However, this would still leave us with the question of why rank matters. If the officers outperform the enlisted personnel, this could be due to their higher level of education, since officers have at least a baccalaureate degree where as most enlisted personnel do not; this is one of the factors that could not be controlled realistically to equate the two groups. If the enlisted personnel receive higher end-of-program proficiency scores, we might speculatively attribute this finding to differences in motivation and learning styles between the two groups within a communicative method. We could administer one of the learning style preference inventories to expand the scope of the investigation. Perhaps the officers are more analytically oriented learners and that is why they are not doing better with a communicative method. We could consider that the enlisted personnel are doing better because they are not so analytical (they may be global learners) due to their educational backgrounds or due to their lesser education in general. Such results would lend themselves to other research ideas.

## **Conclusion**

If in a future study the results reveal one of these outcomes, then the problem of shuffling and reshuffling the classes one, two, or three months after the students have started the program might be eliminated to a considerable degree. Such results could be beneficial for the following reasons:

- If we believe that students can help each other and learn from each other, then we would have a balanced number of officers and enlisted personnel in each class (Kessler, 1992; Nunan, 1992).
- If we believe in adjusting curriculum to the learning potentials of students (provided that the learning potentials are indeed different), then it would make sense to keep officers and enlisted personnel in separate classes, so as to offer more challenging materials to one group and

follow a slower paced curriculum with the other group.

It should be noted that the purpose of a possible future study using the criterion groups design is not to make any causal claims on such results; however, research studies within any foreign language institution are extremely helpful. Such investigations can help us, as foreign language educators, in problem solving to facilitate the learning process of our students.

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## Appendix

Congratulations on your completion of the Spanish program in DLIFLC. Please help us to learn more about language learning and to improve placement procedures by responding to this questionnaire. For questions that do not apply to you please write NA. If you need more space for your explanations, please use the back of the questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.

*Officer and Enlisted Personnel Success*

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_ Your graduation date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_, Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_, First \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: Male ( ) Female ( ) Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Are you a high school graduate? \_\_\_\_\_  
Years of formal education after high school \_\_\_\_, Degrees \_\_\_\_, Major \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Military Service: *Please check one*  
U. S. Army ( ) U. S. Air Force ( ) U. S. Navy ( ) U. S. Marine Corps ( )  
Other ( ) Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ What is your rank? \_\_\_\_\_  
If you are not in the military please specify your position: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your job title? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is American English your native language (your mother tongue)? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where you exposed to any foreign languages when you were growing up? \_\_\_\_\_  
If your answer is "yes" state your native language(s) and briefly explain how you learned it (at home? at Saturday school?) \_\_\_\_\_

List previous languages and check your proficiency [give rating of (E)xcellent, (G)ood, (F)air, or (P)oor] If you have had Spanish prior to coming to DLIFLC, please include your previous proficiency as well.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Listening ( ) Reading ( ) Speaking ( ) Writing ( )
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Listening ( ) Reading ( ) Speaking ( ) Writing ( )
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Listening ( ) Reading ( ) Speaking ( ) Writing ( )
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_ Listening ( ) Reading ( ) Speaking ( ) Writing ( )

Is Spanish the language you have studied in DLIFLC? \_\_\_\_\_  
Please specify the starting date of your own Spanish program in DLIFLC: \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you studied Spanish prior to coming to DLIFLC? \_\_\_\_\_  
If you did, please specify: Where? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ For how long? \_\_\_\_\_  
How would you describe your previous exposure to Spanish language if you have had any prior to your DLIFLC Spanish Program? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you have previous exposure to the culture of any Spanish speaking country? \_\_\_  
Please briefly explain where, when and for how long. \_\_\_\_\_

During the course of your study in DLIFLC did you have opportunities to practice your Spanish with Spanish speaking people other than your DLIFLC teachers and classmates? (Specify how often.) \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a Spanish speaking person in your family? \_\_\_\_\_ (If so, is that person living with you presently?) \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you traveled in Spanish speaking countries prior to coming to DLIFLC? (Briefly explain where, when and how frequently.) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been assigned to any jobs in a Spanish speaking country prior to coming to DLIFLC? (Briefly explain Where/When/How long.) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever worked on a special project about the area background or culture of a Spanish speaking country prior to coming to DLIFLC? (Briefly explain.) \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave us a phone number where we can reach you if the data is incomplete (long distance is all right) \_\_\_\_\_

## *Ayça Dutertre*

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire. Your answers will be analyzed confidentially. If you have any questions regarding the use of this questionnaire you may obtain this information from Mrs. Ayça Dutertre ext. 5731/5523. If you need to turn this questionnaire at a later time please leave it with the DAD of the European and Latin American School, MSgt. Sally Cabrera.  
Good luck on your DLPT.

### **Acknowledgments**

I thank my professor Dr. Kathi M. Bailey (Monterey Institute of International Studies) for her editorial comments on the final draft of this paper, Dr. Gordon Jackson (DLIFLC Research and Analysis Division) for his comments on earlier drafts of this report, and his advice on the additional analyses used in this study; Mr. Victor Shaw (DLIFLC Research and Analysis Division) for his statistical and computational help with his computer software program; and last, but not least, Master Sergeant Sally Cabrera (European and Latin American School) for her help in the collection of the data for this study.

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## **An Experiment with Listening Materials Is Packaging as Important as Content?**

**Yoshiko Kaneda**  
*Asian School I*

*This report concerns ways in which the quality and appearance of audiocassettes might affect learners' use of them.*

### **Process and Discussion**

Developing students' listening skills to meet Final Learning Objectives (FLOs) is important to all of us who teach in DLIFLC's Japanese Branch. To help students, I prepare supplemental recordings that I copy on standard audiocassettes. Each student I work with receives about 60 of these audiocassettes during the 63-week program.

However, students complained repeatedly that the sound quality of these recordings was poor because they were recorded on recycled audiocassettes. Many students attributed low scores on listening quizzes and tests to poor quality of the recordings I provided.

At first I felt that the students were just making excuses. I did not think the sound quality of the recordings I provided was as bad as they claimed, nor did I think the recordings could adversely affect their listening. I was also a little offended because I had spent time and effort making and copying the recordings. I had even hand-lettered the labels I attached to each audiocassette.

So for a time I ignored students' complaints. I explained to them that it was necessary to use recycled audiocassettes because they were the best our school could furnish for practice purposes.

However, I began an experiment. Although it was a little time-consuming, I began labeling the students' audiocassettes with computer-generated labels that I devised.

I noticed that students seemed to like the professional look of these labels. Then a funny thing started to happen. Several students didn't want to part with their audiocassettes. It was my practice to ask students to return them for further recycling when they felt they no longer needed them and I was accustomed to getting back about 70

percent of the audiocassettes I had distributed. After I started using computer-generated labels, the recovery rate went down to perhaps 35 percent.

Students continued to voice opposition to recycled audiocassettes, however, and one day a student brought me a dozen factory-sealed blank audiocassettes he had bought. He asked me to use these when I made his recordings, attributing his mediocre scores on listening quizzes to poor quality of recordings on recycled audiocassettes.

I didn't accept his premise outright, but I recorded his next supplemental tape on one of his new audiocassettes to see what would happen. To his satisfaction, the student did better than usual on the quiz.

So I used brand-new audiocassettes and computer-generated labels for the next batch of supplemental recordings I made. Students said it made a big difference. They said the sound quality was improved. They said they felt more motivated to listen to the recordings.

Subsequently the class leader talked to the supply sergeant of our school and approval was obtained to furnish a generous supply of new audiocassettes for students on an ongoing basis.

Thus all students began getting their supplemental recordings on new audiocassettes with computer-generated labels. Though listening practice remained hard work for most of them, they loved the recordings and I heard no more complaints about them.

### **Implications**

While it was obvious that the students I worked with preferred professional-looking audiocassettes, it remains uncertain whether the packaging and appearance of recordings really helps anyone's listening comprehension skills. However, it is apparent that students in general seem to have greater respect for professional-looking materials and seem to be more willing to make use of them.

The cost to the school of furnishing supplies of new audiocassettes is not a major expense. In my opinion, it is a good investment because optimal development of students' listening skills is a primary mission of DLIFLC.

It is extra work for teachers to obtain supplies of new audiocassettes and to make computerized labels. On the other hand, teachers who do this do not have to listen to repeated complaints about the quality of supplemental recordings and, better yet, students have no excuses for not using them.

### **An Afterthought**

This report is not intended to be an academic study. It is, rather, an account of an experiment I conducted. Students inspire me in many ways. My sincere hope is that I always do my part in helping them develop language skills.

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## **News and Views**

*Dialog on Language Instruction*  
1999, Vol. 13, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 135-152

### **Life of an Idea** **DLIFLC Annual Program Review (APR)**

*Lidia Woytak*

*We all come up with ideas. We all think our ideas are unique, original, or valuable. Some ideas are ready to be grasped, others wait patiently to be picked up. Sometimes they come to us when we drink coffee at dawn, touch us when we walk in the forest, or strike us when we run for shelter in a storm.*

*Once we grasp them, we try to appraise their value. Yet, we cannot: Ideas are free. They have no property value, no intellectual property value. We cannot even copyright them. Still we search for ideas everywhere. We save them from the cyberspace, we unlock them from the ivory tower of seemingly abstract research. We attempt to imbed them into our life before they move on, or disappear.*

Many new ideas were exchanged during the 1999 Annual Program Review (APR) of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) on February 24-25 at the Presidio of Monterey (POM), California. Representatives from the US Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, DLIFLC Washington Office, HQ TRADOC, National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communication and Intelligence (ASD/C3I) attended the APR. The program included opening and closing remarks by the Commandant, reports on the overall institute program by the Provost, reports on Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, Russian, Serbian/Croatian, and Spanish by respective School deans, and an overview of DLIFLC Washington activities by its Director. Presentations were interspersed with discussions on goals, tasks, and strategies of Command Language Programs.

The participants came with a specific purpose in mind: Guided by *Vision 2010* and driven by their organizations' diverse requirements, they came to participate in finding the most effective and efficient ways

to instill language skills in military linguists, utilize new technologies, and strengthen communication platforms and forums between the DLIFLC and various Command programs.

### **Command Language Program**

In his opening remarks, Colonel Daniel D. Devlin, the Commander of DLIFLC at POM and Commandant DLIFLC, stated that a new national strategy calls for a comprehensive Command Language Program (CLP). Toward that end, he appealed to all service representatives to share their ideas, define their needs, and outline their interests to form a basis for a new defense language strategy. In his call, Colonel Devlin followed the lead of Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis J. Reimer, in his recent article in the Institute's professional journal *Applied Language Learning*, "Army Needs for the New Century."<sup>1</sup> General Reimer stated US Army language requirements have grown and diversified. In recent years, the US Armed Services have posted military linguists in over 70 countries. In addition to the traditional military language tasks, linguists have participated in civil/military operations, host-nation coordination for logistical support, military liaison, medical, and court services. The US Army needs flexible training programs to restore, sustain, and enhance language proficiency. Additionally, General Reimer pointed out that the issues of a conversion training into a related language and cross training need to be readdressed.

According to the DLIFLC Commandant, the input from General Reimer was used to form the Army Language Master Plan which in turn will be used to state Army linguist requirements. Colonel Devlin pointed out that similar inputs from the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps representatives would guide him in defining the Defense Foreign Language Program (DFLP). Moreover, Colonel Devlin stated that the major functions of the CLP are to restore, maintain, and enhance language skills of the US military linguists worldwide. The Commandant stated his goal is to turn them into outstanding linguists motivated throughout their careers—and for the rest of their lives.

The Institute has designed three major events for these linguists: Command Language Program Managers (CLPM) Seminar, Worldwide Language Olympics, and Linguist of the Year Program. The events, conducted annually, facilitate communication among linguists scattered throughout various parts of the globe. Every year the CLPM Seminar is devoted to a different theme; this year's 10-12 May theme focused on assisting the military linguists through diagnostics.

Colonel Devlin stated the tools of military linguists are

improving rapidly. He pointed out linguists in the field rely more and more on the use of the Internet for language enhancement. He also stated that computers allow members to contact each other and exchange information about good training materials. The Colonel said, "One thing we are getting better and better at is exchanging information. If someone has something that is working very well and helping that language program we try to get them to put that on our website, on LingNet, so that we can share it with all the other Command Language Program Managers." He added that this exchange of information ensures that "all the good ideas come to the top and make sure any bad ideas are eliminated."

### **Computerized Homework**

The Commandant has been espousing computerized homework since 1996 as a means to leverage improvements in language learning technology. Research indicates that certain language learning tasks are best performed with teachers, others with computers, and some with both. According to the Colonel, tasks such as vocabulary acquisition, grammar-rule drill, and communicative exchange practice lend themselves to computerized learning.<sup>2</sup>

He indicated that the learner equipped with a computer could develop his own schedule and progress at his own pace. Such an arrangement would eliminate time and peer pressures. Learners acquire languages at different speeds. Some learn fast, others need a lot of time to reach a particular objective. Averaging out learning time to a group of ten learners in a lock-step classroom would result in fast learners wasting time and slow learners pressed to move on. Pressing slow learners to move on before they are linguistically ready leads to fossilized acquisition. On the other hand, learners following their own schedule and pace would not be afraid to test their linguistic hypotheses about the new language. They would be given a certain amount of private space and time in which the language samples uttered would not be subjected to peer review. Therefore, they would not be concerned about classmates' reactions to their mistakes and imperfect progressive linguistic approximations of the model. They would develop a learning style which fits them the best.

Such learners could consult a variety of software for micro-worlds, grammar drills and pronunciation feedback checkers, and computer-mediated communication offered by the commercial world. Colonel Devlin stated that he decided to call this learning practice "computerized homework" because this practice would use after-hours student

time, not the valuable teacher classroom time.

Colonel Devlin also pointed out that the program would monitor student progress. In the morning, the teacher could instantly access data showing the quality and quantity of the homework. The data would automatically indicate whether an individual, group, or entire class missed a certain point of instruction. Thus, Devlin concluded, the teacher could use the computer to “spot holes in curriculum” and, subsequently, remove them from the syllabus.

The idea of computerized homework, if implemented, would alter functions performed by a teacher and by a student. Namely, a teacher involved in computerized homework would be more involved in planning, developing, guiding, and interacting activities and, consequently, less involved in repeating, instructing, correcting, modeling, supervising, and describing activities. Students, on the other hand, working on computerized homework would be more involved in performing, correcting, linguistic hypothesizing, planning, evaluating, and interacting.

The Commandant stated that the implementation of computerized homework would, in accordance with *Vision 2010*, redefine the roles of teachers and students. Teachers, freed from hundreds of mechanical tasks, could spend more time on higher level developmental and interactive activities and students, freed from peer pressure, could develop basic linguistic skills in their own time and space. He referred to an experiment conducted in the Spanish program. Spanish was selected because it could produce results within a shorter period of time than for most other languages. A team of curriculum developers, computer programmers, and Spanish teachers designed homework activities for this effort.

The Spanish faculty randomly selected 30 students out of a class of 90 and equipped each one with a networked laptop computer. The students were asked not only to complete, but also to deliver their homework on computers. In the meanwhile, the remaining 60 students were doing homework in a traditional manner. During the last six weeks of their 25-week program, the computerized students were connected to the Internet provider of their choice. The students spent many hours of their own time on the Internet. Colonel Devlin added, “They were talking with people in South America on a daily basis.” The Commandant stated that the advances of the computerized group of students were tremendous. “They loved the program,” he said. He showed the results of the experiment and the control groups which indicated that the experiment group definitely outperformed, notably in speaking, the latter. The students in the experimental group achieved remarkably high scores.

Many language professionals have supported the idea of “computerized homework.” Similar findings were achieved by Professor Beauvois of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, who conducted communication experiments with a group of the fourth-semester French students using a local area network<sup>3</sup>. Her experiment indicated that students who communicated via computers obtained one-grade higher scores than the ones who communicated in a traditional classroom. Moreover, in a post-experiment survey, they indicated their preference for the computer mode.

Colonel Devlin informed the APR participants that the only barrier from full implementation of this successful program is the lack of funds. Due to financial restrictions, the experiment could be repeated on a limited basis only in every other class. He stated that he has been looking at all possible sources of financing for this project. Appealing to the participants for support, he stressed, “Look how successful we are and how much more successful we can be.”

Colonel Devlin’s description of the experiment in the Spanish program aroused a lot of interest among conference participants. The participants demonstrated their support for the project by offering suggestions on obtaining additional funding. They discussed the possibility of charging the computer costs to the standard military equipment account rather than as a training cost. One representative encouraged DLIFLC to persistently request money from sources that have labeled their funds ostensibly “not for training.” Another participant added that proper justification may have an impact on the distribution of funds.

Implementation of the “computerized homework” idea would facilitate forging service members into the 21<sup>st</sup> century warriors of *Vision 2010* in several ways. First, it would place DLIFLC students in cyberspace from day one of instruction by giving them learning opportunities that go beyond classroom walls. Second, it would forge character within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Warriors by training them to act alone and to take responsibility for their own actions. Third, it would instantly unfold the real complex world awaiting them after graduation and thus would prepare them to act in it.

### **Nonresident Language Program**

Currently, military linguists can maintain and enhance their skills through enrollment in Video Tele-Training (VTT) and Mobile Training Team (MTT) programs. The Chief of Operations, Plans and Programs (OPP), Lieutenant Colonel Richard Chastain, stated that in 1998 the Institute provided 4 resident and 4 nonresident CLPM courses and trained

148 managers. Nonresident support was also given by MTTs. Specifically, in FY98 over a thousand students obtained 8,900 hours of instruction in 12 languages. The military usually provides resources for two weeks of MTT training. In some cases, however, the linguists need four to five weeks of MTT training rather than just two; thus there is a need to request additional training funds. Further, he stated that the Institute delivered 7,156 hours of instruction in VTT to 13 locations in 11 languages. He added that 40 hours per month of Desktop VTT was offered on the average to 4 locations in 4 languages. Additionally, through the Worldwide Language Olympics, 43 teams obtained training via VTT (compared to 153 teams who participated in resident games).

LTC Chastain informed the audience that since September 1998 DLIFLC has assumed responsibility for several Center for Applied Language Learning (CALL) functions. DLIFLC has become a virtual resource center for less commonly taught languages. Additionally, he said that DLIFLC has become a lead agency for creating a unified language testing program: Currently, the Institute is involved in development of speaking tests.

Pointing to the high number of 1998 CLPM Seminar participants, LTC Chastain invited the CLPMs and administrators to attend the upcoming CLPM seminar on enhancing linguist training through diagnostics. The seminar will also recognize the CLP of the Year, the 704<sup>th</sup> MI BDE of Fort Meade, Maryland.

### **Washington Contract Language Program**

The head of the DLIFLC-Washington Office, Lieutenant Colonel Griffith Hughes, stated that three primary functions of his mission are: Molink operation support, representation of DLIFLC in Washington, DC, and foreign language training. The Molink mission focuses on providing specialized training for the White House translators. Next, he stated the DLIFLC Washington office provides training in 52 languages through language program contracts, often on a short-order basis. Sometimes within one week of a request they start the program. He stated the number of students and the duration of instruction determine validity of a contract award. In general, contracts are cost effective whenever the enrollment is sparse and the program length is short. Further, he informed the participants that the candidates for a contract award are tested using the DLPT. He commented that the contractors, unlike the permanent DLIFLC faculty in Monterey, do not create their instructional materials, but often request the instructional materials from the DLIFLC.

## **Resident Program**

Reviewing the progress of the Institute in 1998, Colonel Devlin stated that increased enrollments and lower attrition were two major trends that emerged during the year. He stated that in 1998, 2076 students graduated from the Institute in comparison to 1500 in 1997. He also pointed out that, in 1998 compared to 1997, both the academic and the administrative attrition figures also have decreased, with the latter down to just over 13 percent. Further, Colonel Devlin pointed out that administrative attrition was lower than academic attrition by 2 percentage points.

He indicated that occasionally attrition numbers increase because students, lacking maturity, do not take the program seriously. On the other hand, promising students can be given the opportunity to mature at the Institute. He explained that 18-year old students may not be as well equipped for the intensity of DLIFLC language training. Sending them on through the program and waiving them (if they do not score high enough) will provide them the opportunity and time to grow and mature. Most of their scores will go up in the field. He added that statistical data existed to support this claim. He cited several examples of students who have left the Institute at overall 1+ levels, but currently score 2+ to 3—and better. He even mentioned that as a result of this progress, the Air Force (not the Army, unfortunately, he joked) has been complaining to him that because of the high proficiency of recent DLIFLC graduates, they need to place them in jobs normally reserved for higher ranking linguists. “These are the problems I love to have...” he mused. Additionally, some students have difficulty with a particular language; placing them in other languages often rectifies the problem.

Presenting the FY98 proficiency final learning objective (FLO) shown through the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) results, Colonel Devlin stated significant progress was made in 1998. Despite a 25% increase in enrollments in Category IV languages (the most difficult), students have performed very well at the Institute. The Colonel stated that all graduates attained 2/2 before they were sent to follow-on training or into the field. He said students who scored below the minimum required for follow-on training, were enrolled for 12 to 16 weeks in follow-on instruction to upgrade their proficiencies. Addressing concerns of field commanders, he stated, “It is cheaper to retrain or set students back, than to send them to different specialties. More money is spent in recruiting to get new, potential linguists.”

The Commandant reiterated his long-held concern about proficiency scores: What's the difference between 1+ and 2? A big difference when it comes to job assignments, pay, and institute statistics. In reality, however, he pointed out, the proficiency difference may be minute, amounting to perhaps just one point on a test. Moreover, he pointed out, his testing staff has informed him that sometimes students achieve lower scores in speaking just because they do not answer exactly what they are expected to say. He explained that although a question may lend itself to more than one answer, a student who does not come up with exactly the expected answer is given a lower score. Colonel Devlin stated that he has directed his staff to solve this problem.

Colonel Devlin emphasized that increased overall proficiency results constituted another major trend of basic programs in the last two years. He showed to the participants the results which indicated that scores in reading surpassed the scores in listening and speaking.

Next, Colonel Devlin reviewed language programs. Pointing with pride to charts showing attainment of Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) level 3s in some skills in several language programs, he commented about the students, "talented young people." Colonel Devlin attributed good results in the Arabic language program, the largest in the country, to a combination of good teamwork and adequate technological support. He also expressed satisfaction with progress in Chinese, Korean, Spanish, French, and Japanese. He pointed out that the Chinese faculty has pioneered waging their professional success on student success by viewing their students as customers rather than products. Further, he stated the Korean program has achieved even better results during the 18 months after implementing its new curriculum. He added that these results were partially due to the limited but expanding, use of the Internet. This use of the web helps students communicate in a foreign language, increases student proficiency, and prepares them for their future use of the Internet.

Summing up the programs, Colonel Devlin boasted that today the entry level capabilities of teachers is higher than those of many years ago. He stated that today's teachers have MAs and PhDs in foreign language education, in addition to a native proficiency in the target language. He also added that the Institute pays the tuition of teachers enrolled in Master of Arts in Teaching Foreign Language degree program through the Monterey Institute of International Studies to further expand their professional development.

Devlin stated that the Institute has been searching for several years for partners in the industry to develop language materials. Ac-

ording to him finding such a partner is not an easy task because DFLP linguists need products aiming at higher levels of language than the ones produced by commercial publishers. He added that he is conducting an extensive search for partners in the software industry and some promising contacts are beginning to emerge.

In looking beyond what the DLIFLC is doing internally for its academic programs, the Commandant also added that the Institute is conducting an experiment to improve the matching of students' learning styles to a particular language and mode of learning. DLAB scores combined with these experimental measures have had a positive impact on many students on a limited basis. The Commandant added that the findings are so positive that he is going to ask for money to conduct an official study throughout the Institute.

The next speaker, the DLIFLC Provost, Dr. Ray T. Clifford, addressed issues concerning the faculty at the Institute. The Provost stated that in 1998 faculty members taught a record number of classroom hours—569,000 in the resident program alone. A great increase has taken place in the number of hours of small group, split-section sessions. This increase was achieved despite the understaffed Korean and Arabic programs. Dr. Clifford stated that since small groups benefit students, he has been encouraging faculty members to teach even more of these types of class hours.

Further, he stated that, in accordance with the Faculty Personnel System (FPS), DLIFLC teachers are evaluated, in part, by proficiency scores attained by their students. He informed the APR participants that he had developed a formula tying in the DLAB scores and academic attrition with final proficiency scores. The score obtained from that formula quantifies teacher input into student achievement more than relying solely on test scores.

The Provost also noted that the Institute has launched a Diagnostic Assessment program to prepare selected teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses of students as well as linguists in the field. The teachers then develop a learning plan unique to each student or linguist. Through counseling, they found out that learners tend to make progress in areas in which they are already good, avoiding the weak ones. The new initiative is designed to help learners improve in areas which they need to do so the most.

While describing progress in curriculum development, Clifford pointed out that courses, especially the low-enrollment ones, are getting outdated faster than the new ones are developed due to lack of funding to develop new curricula. He stated that the course textbook writers need 25 hours of development per hour of instruction with production

and test development taking time on top of that. Clifford also informed the participants that the first phase of the new Arabic Grammar Track has been successfully developed and currently a revision of Serbian/Croatian language materials is being conducted. He stated that funding is needed for development of traditional paper-and-pencil instructional and testing materials.

### **Dean Reports**

Following the Provost, individual school deans reviewed the high enrollment programs. Professor Luba Grant, Dean of Middle East School I, gave a report on progress in the Arabic language program, Professor Peter Armbrust of Asian School I presented the Chinese language program, Professor Thomas Parry gave a report on the Asian School II Korean program. Professor Taba Tabai of European School II reported on the progress in the Persian program, and Professor Deana Tovar, Dean of the European School I, described the Russian language program and Serbian/Croatian program. Professor Ben dela Selva, Dean of European and Latin American School, gave a report on the Spanish language program and initiatives.

Professor Grant stated that during FY98 dynamic changes took place in the two Middle East schools concurrently with an increase in enrollments from 474 in FY97 to 642 in FY98. The Arabic language program, currently the largest at the Institute, is divided into two schools. Professor Christine Campbell has become the Dean of Middle East School II. This high enrollment caused a rapid influx of new faculty in need of training and an increased demand for learning materials. Despite these high enrollments, student completion rates went up from 65% to 69%. Professor Grant stated that 8 Intermediate and 10 Basic Arabic classes were completed during 1998. She added that in addition to Modern Standard Arabic, each student completed 75 hours of instruction in Syrian, Iraqi, and Egyptian dialects. Following a total of 5-weeks training in the dialects, each student was expected to identify the dialect and answer basic questions in it. The Dean also informed the audience that the teachers and the students have found the first phase of the computerized grammar track helpful. Current faculty are developing phase two and three grammar tracks, which are due in September 1999. Finally, the Dean stated that, in addition to resident training, the Arabic language program offered 1,768 hours of MTT and 1,259 hours of VTT to Fort Huachuca, Camp Lejune, and other places.

Professor Armbrust described the progress of the Chinese program. He stated that the program's Proficiency FLO scores on the

DLPT mirrored the overall proficiency scores at the Institute; they were highest in reading, and the lowest in speaking. Professor Armburst stated that he had instituted several procedures to improve Proficiency FLO abilities in the school. He conducts monthly meetings with local service unit representatives to discuss problem students and offers after-school remedial programs. The Dean stated that he was particularly concerned about the declining Performance (job skill) FLO and Speaking Proficiency FLO scores. Professor Armburst pointed out that, occasionally, low Performance FLO scores have been caused by inadequate English language skills of students at the Institute. For example, he pointed out, some students have had difficult time writing a broadcast summary even in English. Subsequently, he has implemented remedial English training for the incoming students. To improve speaking scores, he implemented new in-course evaluations and a task list for each proficiency level. Additionally, he created opportunities for faculty training on the ILR proficiency scale. Together with the faculty and staff, he has participated in discussions on success in language learning and ways to motivate students.

Professor Parry stated that despite increased enrollments from 329 in 1997 to 369 in 1998, the attrition actually went down by one percentage point. The Dean stated that average Proficiency FLO scores for 1998 were higher than those for 1997. Namely, the students scored higher in reading by 12%; and listening, by 19%. On the other hand, Proficiency FLO scores in speaking declined by 9% in comparison to 1997. In closing, Professor Parry stated that the growing Asian School II is currently establishing a fifth department, hiring and training new faculty, and validating the recently developed Korean Basic program.

Professor Taba Tabai presented student figures which also mirrored the trends of the other schools; namely, 9% higher enrollments and 3% lower attrition. The Dean stated that the Persian program promotes speaking by placing Persian signs in the hallways and the classrooms. Thus, students refer to realia in a contextualized setting. The Dean stated that the faculty and staff are currently focussing on improving assessment of student skills and providing designing more effective speaking activities.

Professor Tovar reported that, in general, the Russian program followed the pattern of the other languages at the Institute. Namely, increased enrollments, from 422 in FY97 to 601 in FY98, were accompanied by lower total attrition, from 31% to 29%. The Dean stated she has been providing opportunities for the Russian faculty to enhance their classroom observation skills and broaden their knowledge of proficiency levels. She also stated that she has been promoting both team-

work and effective, consistent computer lab usage: Students, in groups, work on authentic foreign language texts found on the Internet.

Subsequently, Professor Tovar presented information on the growing Serbian/Croatian program. Five teachers joined the department in 1998. The Dean stated that from 1997 to 1998 the department had an increase in enrollment from 40 to 49 students and in attrition from 4% to 12% students. According to the Dean, the department is currently revising and developing the basic program. Developers of core and supplementary materials focus on skill integration. Subsequently, the new materials are validated and accompanying tests are developed. Finally, she informed the APR participants that in 1998 the staff of the Serbian/Croatian department provided support to three MTTs; one at the Medina RSOC and two at Fort Hood.

### **Program Demonstrations**

The following day, during a morning of special activities, several service and agency representatives elected to attend VTT and LingNet presentations guided by an OPP representative, MSGT Charles A. Carroll. First, he led the participants in observing a Russian lesson offered via VTT to two students at Fort Meade. They observed from the same studio in which a Russian teacher, sitting at a desk, was conversing with two students. The teacher could observe two TV screens in front of her, one showing her, the teacher, and the other one, the two students. The students were conversing with each other and the teacher. The sound was clear and the black and white picture was sharp. Following a variety of technical questions, the participants moved on to the next room where another teacher was preparing a Persian lesson. She was reviewing an interview for the upcoming hour of instruction.

As amazing as this two-way interactive instructional mode of delivery is, it still offers possibilities for further development. For example, at the present moment, a classroom has only one camera. Thus, a student who would like to show a picture to the teacher needs to walk up to the camera in the center of the room. Also the technology for displaying VCR material on the screen could be improved. Currently, the teacher cannot share the screen with the VCR image, but has to alternate the screen manually between the VCR and the teaching projections. Even without these capabilities, the participants were amazed how fast and smooth, in split seconds, the instructional process flowed from the teacher at the Institute to the students on the East Coast. The session took longer than expected because the APR participants expressed great interest in this type of instruction. Instead of

moving on, they kept asking questions about the process.

Subsequently, Mr. Schwinof of OPP gave a presentation of LingNet operations and services. LingNet, created by the DLIFLC, at the present time has 7,900 members. It contains a database of 1,600 foreign language learning resources, a database of commercial language learning materials, real-time conferencing, and an extensive library containing journals such as *Applied Language Learning* and *Dialog on Language Instruction*.

## **Discussion**

During the conference, both the presenters and the discussants agreed that the implementation of the experimental programs at the Institute and the Command Language Programs worldwide were successful. DLIFLC students, teachers, and management found the Spanish computerized homework, Arabic computerized grammar, and the Korean Internet innovations helpful and effective in training. In a similar vein, the US service members worldwide found LingNet, VTT, and MTT programs helpful in maintaining and enhancing their language skills.

The APR participants extensively discussed language requirements, funding, language standards, and types and levels of skills. While discussing language requirements, the most popular topic among the participants, Mr. Glenn Nordin of ASD/C3I noted a distinction between the current DoD and the national language requirements. Mr. Nordin explained that the national language requirements call on the federal government for maintaining linguistic capabilities in 150 languages. Factors such as the concentrated sites of world populations, economic interests, and political agendas should be considered in setting national language requirements. He pointed out that while current requirements may go down or up depending on a political situation, national language requirements are less volatile.

A majority of the participants expressed concerns about current stated language requirements. Some of them pointed out that these requirements are constrained by funding. In some cases, they explained, they could not provide funding because the requirements were not stated at all or were stated too late. Mr. Everette Jordan, Chairman of the Foreign Language Committee, stated that CALL and its programs could be saved if the requirements were timely. The participants could be heard advising one another, “state the requirements,” or “identify your sustainment needs.” Overall, one could frequently hear questions and calls for action regarding the status of language requirements.

Discussions on standards revealed that the federal government

is developing national standards, looking to the commercial world for models. Mr. Nordin called for a standardized way of testing the military and the civilian language professional (such as candidates for teachers, translators, and interpreters). He stated, "Federal language schools need to follow National Standards. Go to translation and interpretation researchers for models. The community needs a test that would enable federal employers to hire the best people. The standards in the federal government need to be as high as they are in the commercial world where contractors have to pass the certification test to get the job."

Several interesting discussions evolved also around the types and levels of language skills learned at the DLIFLC. One of the representatives pointed out that the military linguists should be taught all four skills rather than just listening, reading, and speaking. He pointed out that the elimination of writing requirements puts linguists at a disadvantage because frequently they are required to write memoranda, letters, and reports in the target language. Additionally, as the Internet is becoming more popular, linguists are increasingly using it as a means of communicating with one another.

The participants asked questions about the availability of new versions of language proficiency tests. Testing managers promised several new computer delivered versions by June 1999. The term *computer-delivered* prompted a discussion among the participants regarding the distinction between computer-delivered and computer-adaptive tests. Computer-delivered testing simply amounts to administering and taking currently available tests on computers. Computer-adaptive testing involves progressive language probing. Testers respond to harder and harder questions until a sustained level of performance is achieved. This is the "dream" of future DLIFLC tests. The participants emphasized that they would prefer development of computer-adaptive tests.

On several occasions talks centered on exit requirements of training programs. The participants discussed whether they should be 2/2/1 in listening, reading, and speaking, respectively. The participants addressed the dilemma of DLIFLC's higher exit goals and follow-on training sites' lower entrance requirements, "We tell our student that the requirement is 2/2/2, yet Goodfellow AFB tells them, it accepts 2/2/1." Colonel Devlin diverted the focus of the discussion by reiterating his call for high standards, "My goal is 3/3/3."

## **Implications**

The discussions and the presentations centered on reviewing language requirements. The participants noted a cause-effect relationship between needs, requirements, and funding. They noted that funding cannot be provided without a requirement, a requirement cannot be stated without a statement of need.

The participants, including representatives from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines Corps, became aware of the importance of the Foreign Language Master Plans. The discussions, in particular, indicated that setting up the requirements is a complex process that needs to be woven through the inter- and intra-agency efforts. First, a service agency would formulate the needs or requirements in generic, basic terms. Such a statement would contain information on priority needs, military readiness, preferred methodologies, linguist sharing strategies, linguist lifecycle plans, and linguist utilization strategies. Second, guided by this general statement, the service specialists, in their area of expertise, would fill in numbers, figures, costs, and alternatives. As a result of collaborative effort of specialists within an agency, a requirement proposal would be formulated. They would verbalize such a requirement in the realm of time (current, future, and permanent) and extent (limited, medium, and full). Third, the proposals would be jointly reviewed and discussed with service representatives and translated into one joint military linguist requirement statement which in turn would be reviewed by the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The entire process would be periodically, preferably annually, repeated. Fourth, these requirements would be used to conduct needs analysis. Such analysis would contain information on types of training, availability, quality and quantity of training packages, and methods of learning. Available versus needed would be highlighted in the analysis. Information on types would focus on basic, reconstructive, maintenance, enhancement, transfer, and cross training. Information on methods would include technology-generated ways of teaching and contrast of new and old ways of teaching. It would also include a statement on language standards and certification requirements. Finally, on the basis of the needs analysis, training requirements would be formulated.

The discussion on language readiness in the military prompted more questions than answers. It was challenging because it forced the participants to think of ways and means of setting up a new language program that unexpectedly could become an urgent requirement. Constructively, the participants left with questions in their minds:

- What languages could come up? How many?
- What requirements could be expected?
- What skills would be required?
- What resources would be needed? Where could they be obtained?
- What preparations could be made now for such occurrences?
- What prototypes could be used?
- Is data on language training packages available?
- Is data on language methodology available?
- Who is responsible for maintaining and updating the information?
- Are instructions on crosstraining and transfer verbalized?

The conference presentations and discussions also dealt with the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) skill level descriptions. The reading scores were consistently higher in listening and speaking and led to questions:

- Are all reading subskills tested? Is reading aloud, for example, included?
- Are student responses adequately credited?
- Should writing also be included in testing?
- How should the attainment be reported? By level only? By level and percentile score? By percentile score only?
- Are the tasks adequate for all levels?
- What strategies are taken to avoid the terminal one or two learners?

## **Conclusions**

After two days of immersion in the inner worlds of attrition and enrollment figures, computerized homework, achievement and proficiency charts, and hidden meanings of acronyms, the Commandant took the podium again to bring the APR participants back to a core issue. He reminded everyone of the centrality of the student in the conference proceedings. Ultimately, no one else but the DLIFLC graduates perform the military language services to guard the security of the Nation.

Finally, the Commandant called on all the participants to share the APR information with their organizations and to follow-up the ideas that were raised. Colonel Devlin also pointed out that no person alone can transform an idea into an everyday activity performed by hundreds

of people; only a team can do it. Caught between little traditions and cyberspace efficiencies, the Commandant of the Institute asked the participants at the end of the day:

- What can you do to make the computerized-homework project live?
- What can your agency do to breath life into this project?

In the spirit of *Vision 2010*, Colonel Devlin created an opportunity for the participants to respond. The promptness and quality of the response is now in their hands.

### **Notes**

1. Reimer, D. J. (1997). Army needs for the new century. *Applied Language Learning*, 8(2).
2. Pusack, J. (1993). Software for language training: Directions and opportunities. *Applied language Learning*, 4(1), 62.
3. Beauvois, P. (January, 1997). Personal Communication.

### **Author**

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## **ACTFL Conference Attendance Highest Ever\***

**Robert Lee**  
*European School 1*

**Yoshimi Allard**  
*Asian School 1*

The 1997 Conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) was held in Nashville, Tennessee, November 20-23, with about 5,500 participants, the largest number ever to attend. Six-hundred sessions on methodologies, cultural aspects of language learning, and available technologies were held during the four days.

### **Objectives and Suggestions**

DLIFLC attendees were assigned no specific guidelines to follow, so they pursued their own interests and tried to see and experience as much as possible. Those who had participated in previous ACTFL conferences had the following suggestions for first-time attendees.

- Register early. Many attendees crowd into the registration area on the morning of the first day and lose time waiting in lines.
- Read the conference program to determine which sessions you want to attend. Decide on second and third alternates in case your first choice becomes unavailable.
- Spend a few minutes studying the map showing where sessions will be held. Don't waste time by getting lost.
- Set a realistic pace for yourself when planning the number of sessions you want to attend.
- Consult with other DLIFLC participants on the sessions you plan to attend. Sometimes members of a delegation can split up to cover more sessions.
- Take along a supply of personal business cards. Many attendees find them especially useful at the conference's tech and book fair.

### **Internet and Computer Technology in the Classroom**

Because of great interest in the Internet there were many demonstrations and question-and-answer sessions on using worldwide web

materials in the classroom and in classroom activities developed through the Internet programming language, *HTML*.

Many classroom activities that relied upon using the Internet “real time” met with difficulties when a particular site or web page went down. This point was raised in almost every session in which the Internet was discussed as a teaching tool. Attendees wanted to know how to make the Internet more reliable in the classroom.

Participants from the U.S. Air Force Academy came up with a solution. They downloaded specific web pages from the Internet and incorporated them into language learning activities. Next, the downloaded web pages were linked together using the simple HTML programming language. In this way, teachers were able to customize activities to fit learners’ needs.

An additional benefit, of particular concern to the Academy participants, was that this solution provided network security. By downloading information on a stand-alone computer and checking for viruses prior to uploading on the network, the Academy participants were able to maintain strict control over information on the network. Another benefit of this solution is that one can write to and distribute CD ROM disks.

Most participants said they used the Internet for accessing target language newspapers and magazines. They raised such issues as compatibility, user-friendliness, and hardware capability. They discussed the effectiveness of language learning using the Internet compared to conventional ways of teaching. They discussed the question of whether the Internet is simply another but more costly resource to obtain materials. They discussed its use in teaching listening skills. Participants pointed out that while the technology of this field advances rapidly, one must explore innovative and cost-effective approaches to language learning.

Although we expected to see cutting-edge teaching methodologies demonstrated—methodologies that might spur intense discussion as to their effectiveness or validity—we were disappointed.

For example, during the session “Teaching Verbal and Nonverbal Skills in Business Japanese,” two practical methods of teaching verbal and nonverbal interactions were presented. These activities, although presented as somewhat new in their approach, were what we often do at DLIFLC. Many of our teachers use task-based instruction or two-way information gap roleplays. It would be a great contribution to the language community if DLIFLC teachers who are experienced in using such activities would demonstrate them at ACTFL conferences.

DLIFLC, although not necessarily on the cutting edge, by no means is lagging behind.

*\*Editor’s Note:* Though this article addresses the 1997 conference, its information remains valid.

## Review

Peter Watcyn-Jones: *Pair Work 1: Conversation Practice for Elementary to Pre-Intermediate Students*, Penguin Books (1997)

**Reviewed by Yoshimi Allard**  
*Asian School I*

This book offers many concrete ideas for language teachers who try to create meaningful interactions in the classroom. It does not include sample conversation scripts, as one might expect in a conversation practice book. It is a task-based activities book.

According to research conducted by T. Pica, task-oriented interaction allows students to negotiate and increase their comprehensible input (Pica, Young, and Doughty, 1987). It also involves students in meaningful communication. The meaningful communication is produced when students by themselves choose how to talk and what to talk about. It is the way we communicate in the real world. In a classroom, however, such interaction has to be generated by a teacher.

The author's intention in this activities book is to create such interactive situations among students. Each activity assigns tasks that students can accomplish only by getting necessary information from other students, thereby generating a conversation.

### Activities

The book contains 41 pair activities, including roleplays, information-gap activities, and problem-solving activities. Each activity takes from five to twenty minutes. Each provides two task sheets for two students -- Students A and B. The information provided to Student A is different from that provided to Student B.

In one activity, both Student A and Student B are given the same drawing of a kitchen, but the drawing given to Student A shows kitchen items placed in various locations. These depictions are omitted from the drawing given to Student B. Students A and B must talk with each other for Student B to find out where things are located.

In another activity, Students A and B are given incomplete information on the life of Elvis Presley. The pair can produce a set of facts by obtaining each other's information. The author says this type of information-gap activity causes students to listen more carefully and prepares them to respond to unexpected information, as in the real world.

Such pair activities have several strengths. (1) They offer stu-

dents more opportunities to practice speaking, as everyone can be involved in the activity at the same period of time. (2) They improve the quality of student speech, enabling students to use a wider range of speech through negotiation work. (3) They create more individualized work. (4) They are positive and affirmative activities that motivate students. According to Pica and Doughty (1985) and Long (1985), this type of activity among students is as effective as one with a native speaker.

### **How to Use the Book**

*Preparations:* The book urges teachers to photocopy pages and use them in classroom activities. Not all of the activities, however, are compatible with all cultural settings. The book is published in England and maps of England and Europe are used for activities such as traveling. These activities may require adaptation for use in your classroom.

*Pre-activity:* Although each activity is provided with clear instructions for students to read and follow, students may be confused about the procedure and the purpose of the activity. Students will understand better if the teacher starts with an example and demonstrates the activity first.

*During the activity:* Teachers can monitor the activity by walking around the classroom.

*Post-activity:* Students can review sentence patterns or write or make a summary speech. The post-activity is used to reinforce students' knowledge of the language.

The activities the book offers can help teachers develop their own activities that are appropriate for a particular lesson.

The author has produced a second volume in the same series. The second volume is designed for intermediate students.

### **References**

- Pica, T., Young, R., & Doughty, C. (1987). The impact of interaction on comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 737-758.
- Long, M., & Porter, P. (1985). Group work, interlanguage talk, and second language acquisition *TESOL Quarterly*, 1, 207-228.

## General Information

### Calendar of Events\*

1999

- 6-9 March, *American Association of Applied Linguistics*, Stamford. Information AAAL, (612) 953-0805, Fax (612) 431-8404, PO Box 21686, Eagan, MN 55121-0686; Email [aaaloffice@aaal.org].
- 8-14 March, *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, New York. Information TESOL, (703) 836-0774, Fax (703) 836-7864, 1600 Cameron St., Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-2751; Email [conv@tesol.edu], URL [www.tesol.edu].
- 11-13 March, *Southern Conference on Language Teaching with Foreign Language Association of Virginia*, Virginia Beach. Information Lynne McClendon, SCOLT Executive Director, (770) 992-1256, 165 Lazy Laurel Chase, Roswell, GA 30076; Email [lynnemcc@mindspring.com].
- 7-10 April, *Pacific Northwest Council for Languages*, Tacoma. Information PNCFL, PO Box 4649, Portland, OR 97208-4649; Email [112063.622@compuserve.com].
- 8-11 April, *Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, New York. Information Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, (717) 245-1977, Fax (717) 245-1976, PO Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; Email [nectfl@dickinson.edu], URL [www.dickinson.edu/nectfl].
- 8-11 April, *American Hungarian Educators Association*, Cleveland. Information Martha Pereszlenyi-Pinter, Classical & Modern Languages & Cultures, (216) 397-4723, FAX (216) 397-4256, John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio 44118; Email [mperezszlenyi@jcvaxa.jcu.edu], URL [http://www.magyar.org/home.html].
- 15-18 April, *Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, Little Rock. Information CSCTFL, Rosalie Cheatham, (501) 569-8159, Fax (501) 569-8157, University of Arkansas - Little Rock, 2801 S. University Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72204; Email [rmcheatham@ualr.edu].

\*Courtesy of *The Modern Language Journal* (University of Wisconsin)

- 13-15 May, *JNCL-NCLIS Delegate Assembly*, Washington. Information JNCL-NCLIS, (202) 966-8477, 4646 40th St. NW, Third Floor, Washington DC 20016; Email [info@languagepolicy.org], URL [http://www.languagepolicy.org].
- 20-23 May, *Language Teacher Education*, Minneapolis. Information International Conference on Language Teacher Education, CARLA, (612) 627-1870, Fax (612) 624-1875, UTEC, Suite 111, 1313 5th St SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; E-mail [carla@tc.umn.edu], URL [http://carla.acad.umn.edu].
- 22-30 May, *Conseil International d'Etudes Francophones*, Lafayette. Information Ginette Adamson, Fax (316) 978-3319, Modern Languages, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0011; Email [adamson@twsuvm.uc.twsu.edu].
- 30 May-4 June, *Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium*, Oxford. Information Esther Callais, (512) 245-1417, Department of Modern Languages, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX 78666; Email [info@calico.org].
- 3-6 June, *ADFL Seminar West*, Palo Alto. Information Association of Departments of Foreign Languages, Attn: Elizabeth Welles, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981; Email [elizabeth.welles@mla.org].
- 11-14 July, *American Association of Teachers of French*, St. Louis. Information AATF, (618) 453-5731, Fax (618) 453-5733, Mailcode 4510, Department of Foreign Languages, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4510; Email [abrate@siu.edu], URL [aatf.utsa.edu].
- 30 July-3 August, *American Association of Teachers of Spanish & Portuguese*, Denver. Information AATSP, (970) 351-1090, Fax (970) 351-1095, Butler-Hancock Hall #210, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO 80639; Email [lsandste@bentley.unco.edu].
- 16-21 August, *International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature*, Bratislava (Slovakia). Information American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR), (202) 833-7522, Fax (202) 833-7523, 1776 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036; Email [ddavidson@actr.org].
- 28-30 October, *Foreign Language Association of North Carolina*, High Point. Information Debra S. Martin, FLANC Executive

- Director, (828) 686-4985, Fax (828) 686-3600, PO Box 19153, Asheville, NC 28815; Email [martintl@interpath.com].
- 4-6 November, *Wisconsin Association of Foreign Language Teachers*, Appleton. Information Kyle Gorden, (414) 723-6316, 4969 Hickory Court, Elkhorn, WI 53121; Email [kylegorden@elknet.net].
- 17-18 November, *National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages*, Dallas. Information Sharon Watts, (402) 557-2440, Omaha Public Schools, 3215 Cuming, Omaha, NE 68131; Email [swatts@ops.org].
- 18-21 November, *American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies*, St. Louis. Information AAASS; Email [walker@core-mail.fas.harvard.edu].
- 19-21 November, *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, Dallas. Information ACTFL, (914) 963-8830, Fax (914) 963-1275, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801; Email [actflhq@aol.com], URL [http://www.actfl.org].
- 19-21 November, *American Association of Teachers of German*, Dallas. Information AATG, (609) 795-5553, Fax (609) 795-9398, 112 Haddontowne Court #104, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034; Email [73740.3231@compuserve.com].
- 27-30 December, *Modern Language Association of America*, Chicago. Information MLA, Fax (212) 477-9863, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981; Email [convention@mla.org].
- 27-30 December, *North American Association of Teachers of Czech*, Chicago. Information Masako Ueda, (401) 863-3933, Fax (401) 863-7330, Box E, Department of Slavic Languages, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912; Email [masako\_ueda@brown.edu].
- 27-30 December, *American Association of Teachers of Slavic & European Languages*, Chicago. Information AATSEEL, Fax (520) 885-2663, 1933 N. Fountain Park Dr., Tucson, AZ 85715; Email [76703.2063@compuserve.com], URL [http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/~aatseel/].

## 2000

- 24-26 February, *Southern Conference on Language Teaching with Alabama Association of Foreign Language Teachers*,

- Birmingham. Information Lynne McClendon, SCOLT Executive Director, (770) 992-1256, 165 Lazy Laurel Chase, Roswell GA 30076; Email [lynnemcc@mindspring.com].
- 10-13 March, *Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, TBA. Information CSCTFL, Rosalie Cheatham, (501) 569-8159, Fax (501) 569-8157, University of Arkansas - Little Rock, 2801 S. University Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72204; Email [rmcheatham@ualr.edu].
- 11-14 March, *American Association of Applied Linguistics*, Vancouver. Information AAAL, (612) 953-0805, Fax (612) 431-8404, PO Box 21686, Eagan, MN 55121- 0686; Email [aaloffice@aal.org].
- 14-18 March, *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Vancouver. Information TESOL, (703) 836-0774, Fax (703) 836-7864, 1600 Cameron St., Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-2751; Email [conv@tesol.edu], URL [www.tesol.edu].
- 13-15 April, *Pacific Northwest Council for Languages*, Missoula. Information PNCFL, PO Box 4649, Portland, OR 97208-4649; Email [112063.622@compuserve.com].
- 13-16 April, *Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, Washington DC. Information Northeast Conference, (717) 245-1977, Fax (717) 245-1976, Dickinson College, PO Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; Email [nectfl@dickinson.edu], URL [www.dickinson.edu/nectfl].
- 4-6 May, *Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature and Folklore*, Lawrence. Information Marc L. Greenberg, Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Fax (785) 864-4298, 2134 Wescoe Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045-2174; Email [m-greenberg@ukans.edu].
- TBA July, *American Association of Teachers of French*, Paris. Information AATF, (618) 453-5731, Fax (618) 453-5733, Mailcode 4510, Department of Foreign Languages, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4510; Email [abrate@siu.edu].
- 1-5 August, *American Association of Teachers of Spanish & Portuguese*, San Juan. Information AATSP, (970) 351-1090, Fax (970) 351-1095, Butler-Hancock Hall #210, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO 80639; Email [lsandste@bentley.unco.edu].
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- Director, (828) 686-4985, Fax (828) 686-3600, PO Box 19153, Asheville, NC 28815; Email [martintl@interpath.com].
- 9-12 November, *American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies*, Denver. Information AAASS; Email [walker@core-mail.fas.harvard.edu].
- 15-16 November, *National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages*, Boston. Information Sharon Watts, (402) 557-2440, Omaha Public Schools, 3215 Cuming, Omaha, NE 68131; Email [swatts@ops.org].
- 17-19 November, *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, Boston. Information ACTFL, (914) 963-8830, Fax (914) 963-1275, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801; Email [actflhq@aol.com], URL [<http://www.actfl.org>].
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- 27-30 December, *American Association of Teachers of Slavic & E. European Languages*, Washington, D.C. Information AATSEEL, Fax (520)885-2663, 1933 N. Fountain Park Dr., Tucson, AZ 85715; Email [76703.2063@compuserve.com], URL [<http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/~aatseel/>].

**2001**

- 24-27 February, *American Association of Applied Linguistics*, St. Louis. Information AAAL, (612) 953-0805, Fax (612) 431-8404, PO Box 21686, Eagan, MN 55121-0686; Email [aaaloffice@aal.org].
- 27 February-3 March, *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, St. Louis. Information TESOL, (703) 836-0774,

Fax (703) 836-7864, 1600 Cameron St., Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-2751; Email [conv@tesol.edu], URL [www.tesol.edu].

19-22 April, *Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, New York. Information Northeast Conference, (717) 245-1977, Fax (717) 245-1976, Dickinson College, PO Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; Email [nectfl@dickinson.edu], URL [www.dickinson.edu/nectfl].

14-15 November, *National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages*, Washington, D.C. Information Sharon Watts, (402) 557-2440, Omaha Public Schools, 3215 Cuming, Omaha, NE 68131; Email [swatts@ops.org].

16-18 November, *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, Washington, D.C. Information ACTFL, (914) 963-8830, Fax (914) 963-1275, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801 Email [actflhq@aol.com], URL [http://www.actfl.org].

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27-30 December, *Modern Language Association of America*, TBA. Information MLA, Fax (212) 477-9863, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981; Email [convention@mla.org].

27-30 December, *North American Association of Teachers of Czech*, TBA. Information Masako Ueda, (401) 863-3933, Fax (401) 863-7330, Box E, Department of Slavic Languages, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912; Email [masako\_ueda@brown.edu].

27-30 December, *American Association of Teachers of Slavic & E. European Languages*, TBA. Information AATSEEL, Fax (520) 885-2663, 1933 N. Fountain Park Dr., Tucson, AZ 85715; Email [76703.2063@compuserve.com], URL [http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/~aatseel/].

## **Information for Contributors**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this internal publication is to increase and share professional knowledge among DLIFLC faculty and staff, as well as to promote professional communication within the Defense Foreign Language Program.

### **Submission of Manuscripts**

The success of *Dialog on Language Instruction* depends on your cooperation and support. We encourage you to submit a previously unpublished article, a review, a description of innovative classroom activities, a news item, or even a comment on language instruction. Your manuscript may deal with the following areas: (1) instructional methods and techniques; (2) curriculum and materials development; (3) testing and evaluation; (4) implications and applications of research from related fields such as linguistics, education, communication, psychology, social sciences, and other related fields; (5) assessment of needs within the profession. *Dialog on Language Instruction* accepts only original manuscripts with the understanding that they have not been submitted for publication elsewhere.

All materials submitted for publication should conform to the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th Ed., 1994), available from the American Psychological Association, P. O. Box 2710, Hyattsville, MD 20784.

### *Articles*

Manuscripts should not exceed 20 double-spaced pages. They should be accompanied by an abstract and a list of references. The abstract of not more than 200 words should identify the purpose of the article, provide an overview of the content, and list findings. The list of references should be submitted on a separate page of the manuscript with the centered heading: *References*. The entries should be arranged alphabetically by surnames of authors. The sample list of references below illustrates format for bibliographic entries:

## *Dialog on Language Instruction*

- Dulay, H., & Burt, M. (1974). Errors and strategies in child second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16(1), 93-95.
- Harris, D. P. (1969). *Testing English as a second language*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Reference citations in the text of the manuscript should include the name of the author of the work cited, the date of the work, and when quoting, the page numbers on which the material that is being quoted originally appeared, e.g., (Jones, 1982, pp. 235-238). All works cited in the manuscript must appear in the list of references, and conversely, all works included in the list of references must be cited in the manuscript. Notes should be used for substantive information only, and they should be numbered serially throughout the manuscript. Subsequently, they all should be listed on a separate page titled *Notes*.

## *Faculty Exchange*

This section provides an opportunity for faculty to share ideas through brief articles up to two double-spaced pages on innovative classroom practices, such as suggestions on communicative activities, team teaching, use of media and realia, and adaptation of authentic materials. Each sample of a model classroom activity should state the purpose, provide instructions and, if applicable, give supporting texts or illustrations.

## *Reviews*

Manuscripts should not exceed two double-spaced pages. Reviews of textbooks, scholarly works related to foreign language education, dictionaries, tests, computer software, video tapes, and other non-print materials will be considered for publication. Both positive and negative aspects of the work(s) being considered should be pointed out. The review should give a clear but brief statement of the works contents and a critical assessment of contribution to the profession. Quotations should be kept short. Do not use footnotes. Reviews that are merely descriptive will not be accepted for publication.

## *News and Views*

Manuscripts should not exceed one double-spaced page. Items related to language instruction such as reports on conferences, official trips, official visitors, special events, new instructional techniques, training aids or materials, research findings, news items, etc., will be considered

for publication.

### **Specifications for Manuscripts**

Manuscripts should be typed on 8.5 x 11 in. paper, double-spaced, with margins of about 1.25 in. on all four sides. All pages should be numbered consecutively. Each manuscript should be submitted in three copies. The first page should include only the title and the text. It is recommended that passages or quotations in foreign languages be glossed or summarized. Authors are advised to prepare a note pertaining to their professional status. An author's name, position, department, school, address (if outside of DLIFLC), and interests would be identified in the note. An example of such a note is presented below:

#### *Author*

JANE C. DOE, Assistant Professor, Foreign Language Education,  
University of America, 226 N. Madison St., Madison, WI 55306.  
Specializations: foreign language acquisition, curriculum  
studies.

### **Specifications for Floppy Disks**

Where feasible, manuscripts are preferred on 3.5" disk. Manuscript produced on DOS or Macintosh systems should be formatted as MS-DOS file on a double density disk, if possible. MS Word files are preferred.

When mailing a floppy disk, please enclose the following:

1. Word processing software used: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Disk is formatted as: double\_\_\_ high density\_\_\_

3. Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Review Process**

Each manuscript will be evaluated anonymously by at least two foreign language educators. To assure anonymity, authors should not put their names on submitted manuscripts, but should include a 3 x 5 in. card listing the title of the manuscript, author's name, department/division,

## *Dialog on Language Instruction*

and telephone number.

Each author will be informed of the evaluation results. In general, a manuscript will be accepted for publication if two anonymous readers recommend acceptance, and, by the same token, manuscripts not recommended by the readers for publication will be rejected. In cases in which one reader recommends acceptance, and the second one, rejection—a third reader will be asked to review the manuscript.

### *Accepted Manuscripts*

A manuscript accepted for publication may be accepted “as is” or may require certain revisions which may target the need to consider other sources, or to elaborate on a certain point; or, finally, may address such minor details as a typo or a lack of citation. In the latter case, the author is asked to revise it and subsequently the editor checks whether the author complied thoroughly with the guidance.

### *Rejected Manuscripts*

Manuscripts are rejected due to such major flaws as:

- inappropriate/unsuitable topic for DLIFLC
- lack of purpose
- lack of organization
- poor quality of writing
- lack of applicability to instruction

The editor duly informs the author that the manuscript is unacceptable for publication. Normally this finding ends the revision process.

In some cases, an author whose manuscript was already rejected decides to revise the manuscript thoroughly and to resubmit it for publication. Since the quality of the version is unpredictable, no promises can be issued to the author regarding publication.

## **Correspondence**

Submit your correspondence and manuscripts to *Dialog on Language Instruction*, ATTN: ATFL-AP-AJ (Editor), Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944-5006.

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