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*Jiaying Howard*  
Editor

*Jeff Hansman*  
Copy Editor

*Christine M Campbell & Gordon L Jackson*  
Editorial Advisors

Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center  
*and*  
Presidio of Monterey

## ***Dialog on Language Instruction***

*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 knowledge and information among DLIFLC faculty and staff and to encourage professional communication within the worldwide Defense Foreign Language Program.

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Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center  
ATFL-AP-AJ  
ATTN: Editor, *Dialog on Language Instruction*  
Monterey, CA 93944-5006

Email

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Cover Design  
Layout Design and Formatting  
Printing Coordinator  
Webmaster

*R Murray Thomas*  
*Jiaying Howard*  
*Tom Colin, Ricky Harris*  
*Natela Cutter*

# ***Dialog on Language Instruction***

*Volume 23 (1-2), 2013*

## CONTENTS

- 1 Message from the Provost  
*Betty L Leaver*

### **Articles**

- 3 Assessment for Specific Purposes: Exploring New Ways to Evaluate Knowledge of Structure  
*Christine M Campbell & Tara L Schendel*
- 22 Learning Lesson Planning in a Pre-Service Teacher Education Course  
*Hyunsoo Hur*
- 36 Chanson as a Source of Allusions in Russian Advanced Course  
*Grigori I Iaremenko*

### **Reviews**

- 51 Applications of Elicited Imitation to Second Language Education  
*Shu-Ling Wu*

### **Faculty Forum**

- 55 Got Alignment? Instructional Design for Field Support Programs  
*Donald W Holman*
- 62 Cultural Competency as a Central Component in Immersion  
*Chi-Ping Shih*
- 65 Which Type of Homework Is Most Helpful  
*Jahangir G Saravani*

### **Meet a Team**

- 67 We Listen, We Share: Interview with Mr. Eid Istfanos, a Team Leader in Middle East School I

## News and Views

- 69 Implementing Meaningful Changes  
*Asian School I*
- 73 A Glimpse into the 2013 Faculty Professional Development Day:  
Sharing Expertise in Instructional Technology  
*Natalia Antokhin, Seung Bong Baek, Soyoun Park, Sarita C Silverman,  
Meiyi Song, Unsoon Won & Rong Yuan*

## Quick Tips

- 77 From the Provost Desk  
*Betty L Leaver*
- 78 Three Training Methods for Advanced Listening Instruction  
*Lu Ye*
- 80 Operationalizing Vocabulary Frequency Lists in the Modern Classroom  
*Erin O'Reilly & Jessica Roehrig*
- 82 Using Role-Play in the Classroom to Improve Oral Proficiency  
*Ruiqi Ma & Jihua Zhou*
- 83 Using YouTube to Enhance Students' Cultural Knowledge and  
Vocabulary Retention  
*Cong Li*
- 85 Bringing the iPad to Life in the Language Classroom  
*Natalia Barley, Sonia Estima & Edgar Roca*

## Resources

- 87 Website for Pashto Language Learning  
*Faqeer M A Gulrasoul*
- 88 Socrative for an Interactive Classroom via iPad and MacBook  
*Su-Ling Hsueh*

## General Information

- 89 Upcoming Events 2014
- 91 Information for Contributors
- 96 Acknowledgements

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## ***MESSAGE FROM THE PROVOST***

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I am pleased to welcome all of you to the current issue of *Dialog on Language Instruction* and the first under its new editor, Dr. Jiaying Howard. I think you will find this issue quite interesting. It covers the gamut of what makes up DLI from Field Support language training detachments' work to basic course classrooms and from testing to homework.

Full-fledged articles, reviews, and a faculty forum -- the tradition continues. It would not do so, though, without the active participation of DLI faculty. My thanks to the writers of these articles, for taking precious minutes out of over-full days to share their insights and experiences with their colleagues. The work of some of these authors is known to me -- in some cases, I have seen it in action. Where I have not, I would like to learn more. At a time when conferences are essentially off-limits to US government employees, helping each other by "conferencing on paper" is one of the best workarounds I can think of.

So, once again, thanks to those who are sharing their experiences in this volume, and happy reading to all of you who will be learning from them.

**BETTY L LEAVER**  
*Provost*



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## ***Assessment for Specific Purposes: Exploring New Ways to Evaluate Knowledge of Structure***

**CHRISTINE M CAMPBELL**

*Continuing Education*

**TARA L SCHENDEL**

*Curriculum Development, Language Science and Technology*

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*The role of grammar, structure, or form in both instruction and assessment is a topic of interest to scholars and practitioners alike. Most would agree that learners need some type of instruction about the structure of the language -- whether explicit or implicit, or a combination of both -- and some type of evaluation of their knowledge of structure or language control, ideally through standards-based tasks grounded in real-life context. This article will examine alternative ways to assess knowledge of structure in the Unit Tests at Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), where faculty are challenged to facilitate development of both proficiency and performance -- understood in government circles as specialized language ability focused on a limited content domain, because learners must excel in both areas in order to become fully-functioning professional linguists.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In 2004, Purpura observed that “[g]rammar, the structural glue, the ‘code’ of language, is arguably at the heart of language use, whether this involves speaking, listening, reading or writing” (p. ix). Most language learning professionals would agree with that statement; however, they continue to debate how and when to teach and assess grammar. Although Communicative Language Teaching has been the overarching methodological approach in the field of language learning since the late 1970s, most K-16 teachers were not assessing listening comprehension, reading comprehension, or writing skills using communicative tasks until the advent of the national standards in the mid-1990s. (Many had been using oral proficiency interviews for speaking assessment since the mid-1980s.) The publication of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* in 1996 began a new era for language learning: The profession now had content standards that high school students in the United States were evaluated against in order to graduate. The



standards continue to be a critical common metric that facilitates communication across diverse language institutions and organizations about goals and objectives.

Since 1996, the language education profession has worked diligently to disseminate both standards-based curricula and assessments to the faculty and administrations of learning institutions across the country. The standards-based Integrated Performance Assessments (IPAs) promoted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) are every day more prevalent. The IPAs are cluster assessments linked by a common topic or theme that target specific ranges of proficiency and are evaluated using the *ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners* (1998). The *ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment* (2003) describes the IPAs in the following way: “The Integrated Performance Assessments (IPAs) were designed to address a national need for measuring student progress toward the attainment of the goal areas and competencies described in the national standards and the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners. The IPA prototype outlines a process for going beyond current practice in foreign language testing: within a single thematic context, students first complete an interpretive task, then use the information learned in an interpersonal task, and finally summarize their learning with a presentational task. Clear rubrics guide the students' task completion and the teachers' scoring” (p. 8).

Regarding the role of grammar in the IPAs, it is seen as a language feature that is essential to complete a task, whether interpretive, interpersonal, or presentational. The tasks are scored using rubrics that are rooted in the following domains of the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners: comprehensibility, comprehension, language control, vocabulary use, communication strategies, and cultural awareness. The term “language control” in the Guidelines refers to structural accuracy, to include capitalization, punctuation, and production of characters. For example, the Novice Learner in Grades K-10 “exhibit[s] decreased accuracy when attempting to create with the language” when doing an interpersonal task.

The merits of the IPAs as valid and reliable instruments for use in conventional language learning programs are undisputed; however, there are select language programs that have specialized performance requirements that call for assessments that focus on both proficiency and performance, a distinction made by the federal government that is now recognized in language learning circles in the United States. One such program is that of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC). The curricula and assessments used at DLIFLC implicitly address the national standards—the five Cs of Communication, Culture, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities; i.e., the curricula and assessments are not explicitly organized around the national standards, but are tied to military-specific standards called *Final Learning Objectives (FLOs)* (2008) and the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) proficiency standards. Students attending DLIFLC are assigned to mission critical assignments that require specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities specified in the FLOs, while their proficiency is measured according to the

standards described in the ILR. The distinction is made between proficiency, which is understood as general language ability, “the ability to function effectively in real-life contexts” according to Liskin-Gasparo (1984) and performance, which is specialized language ability focused on a limited content domain, e.g., language for use at a checkpoint or number dictation. DLIFLC learners are to develop both general language proficiency as well as specialized ability in transcription and translation, which is described in the FLOs. In this sense, DLIFLC is teaching and assessing for specific purposes.

The majority of DLIFLC students will work as military linguists who will typically transcribe low-quality exchanges and monologues. They piece together bits of language that can be imperfect, colloquial, disjointed, and static-filled. Structural cues are critical to deciphering the language. For example, a military linguist who is unable to determine the subject of a conversation in Spanish or French because of a garbled pronoun may be able to fill in the gap if a feminine adjectival ending can be understood. In Turkish, the verb is based on a root, the suffix of which changes based on the timeframe and who is being spoken to or about. The suffix provides the listener with key information, and if it is missed, it may be difficult to figure out not only the referenced time frame, but also who is involved. In Chinese, the verb forms do not change, but placement in time is determined through contextual indicators or the use of particles.

Military linguists consistently report that they need a strong foundation in grammar and listening comprehension to perform on their jobs. DLIFLC’s primary customer, the National Security Agency (NSA), has specifically focused on the former in recent meetings. In 2009, based on input from government agencies that employ DLIFLC graduates, DLIFLC changed its lesson plan model to include one hour of form-focused instruction in the daily six-hour lesson schedule. During the hour, teachers explicitly present a grammatical concept followed by active, meaningful practice of the concept in real-life contexts. Grammar concepts are also examined as they occur in authentic passages and texts based on topical themes in each unit.

Changes in the lesson plan model were reflected in the Unit Tests, the assessments administered to students every three weeks that are based on course objectives and that assess general comprehension and knowledge of structure, the latter being one of the competencies in the Canale and Swain communicative competence model (Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983). Structure is assessed in two ways: implicitly, through general comprehension items that require the examinee to demonstrate understanding of vocabulary and structure in the context of authentic reading and listening comprehension passages; explicitly, through items that focus on structural features. In the former, examinees answer content questions about the main ideas and key supporting details of a passage; in the latter, examinees answer questions in a variety of formats: cloze, matching, short answer, and multiple choice (MC).

This article will examine the topic of assessment for specific purposes in the DLIFLC setting. Specifically, it will focus on evaluating knowledge of structure in the listening modality, which is a priority for the DLIFLC student

because a strong foundation in structure is necessary for the specialized work of the military linguist. After a literature review, it will review a variety of item types that have been used to assess knowledge of structure in the listening comprehension modality. Each item type includes statistics that indicate how the item performed when piloted. The tests then go through a validation before the final forms are issued.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the 1990s, some language professionals (Savignon, 1990; Widdowson, 1990; Larsen-Freeman, 1990; Celce-Murcia, 1991; Schmidt, 1991; Legutke and Thomas, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 1992, 1993; Scarcella and Oxford, 1992; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell, 1995, 1997) took issue with certain aspects of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and proposed changes. The majority of the concerns focused on two main issues: 1) the linguistic content base of CLT; and 2) the pedagogical treatment of linguistic forms in CLT. With regard to the former, the critics pointed to the absence of an in-depth description of the content base of CLT to be used in syllabus design that would go beyond the language functions and language notions of the late 1970s. Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) proposed such a description as part of a “pedagogically-motivated framework for communicative competence” (p. 144). Viewing their framework as an extension of Canale and Swain’s (1980; Canale, 1983), they posit that communicative competence has five components: discourse competence (the core), linguistic competence, actional competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence.

Concerning the pedagogical treatment of linguistic forms in CLT, the researchers observed that CLT proponents were neglecting the development of linguistic competence in their quest to promote the functional-notional aspects of the language; that is, CLT proponents were not paying enough attention to grammar instruction. This lack of attention typically translated to teacher avoidance of explicit grammar instruction in the classroom. To solve the problem, scholars such as Long and Crookes (1992) proposed combining pedagogical tasks with a systematic focus on form, or grammar, as the fundamental organizational units in a communicative syllabus.

In 1997, Celce-Murcia et al. argued that the language-learning field was experiencing a paradigm shift toward a “principled communicative approach” that incorporates both direct, explicit grammar instruction and Task Based Instruction (TBI) into CLT (p. 145). The paradigm shift occurred at the same time as the language learning profession was introduced to the national standards. While the standards described the content of instruction, they did not specify performance standards for each of the 11 content standards or provide assessments. The language learning profession has addressed the need for standards-based assessments by developing and disseminating the Integrated Performance Assessments. IPAs are increasingly prevalent in the K-16 sector.

As already discussed in the Introduction, DLIFLC, because of its specific mission, is teaching and assessing for specific purposes. Since 2008, the

Institute has progressively placed more emphasis on grammar instruction in response to recommendations by the NSA. When DLIFLC was tasked with developing the Iraqi Dialect Course, the Assessment Branch in DLIFLC's Curriculum Development Division (CD) began to explore various ways to assess structural features in the listening modality. Soon afterwards, the Levantine Dialect Course was added to CD's course development. The NSA set the parameters of the dialect courses: the goals of Level 2 (Working Proficiency) in Listening Comprehension in dialect; Level 2 in Reading Comprehension in Modern Standard Arabic; and Level 1+ (Limited Working Proficiency) in Speaking in dialect. Because Arabic dialects are typically heard but not written, knowledge of structure had to be assessed through listening (transcription being a subset of listening) and speaking, as opposed to reading and writing. As is evident from the literature review in this article, research in the teaching and assessment of grammar through reading and speaking is ample, but lacking when through listening.

The Assessment Branch in the Curriculum Development Division began a review of item types generally used to assess reading and writing, e.g., cloze, matching, short answer, and MC, and adapted them to the listening modality for practical reasons, given the potential of testing an average of 500 students per year. Test developers also integrated these item types assessing knowledge of structure into tests for Persian-Farsi, Punjabi, Urdu, and Korean; these will be used in new assessments for Egyptian, Sudanese, Russian, Dari, Japanese, and Tagalog. Item types used in the first semester tests focus mostly on the recognition of structural forms; in the second semester, as grammar becomes more complex, some production is required, as would be required for a cloze activity.

## **ANALYSIS OF SAMPLE ITEM TYPES**

### **Methodology**

Test developers first designed listening tasks to be used in the Iraqi assessments based on stated course objectives. Target language speakers and foreign language professionals reviewed these tasks. Based on feedback from the reviewers, tasks were revised. Then items were piloted with a class of students who had used the new course materials to which the tests were linked. After piloting, items were either discarded or revised. In some instances, tests were re-piloted to see if the changes affected student achievements.

Items used on the tests were studied using classic item analysis. The statistics of primary interest to test developers are the *p*-value (i.e., proportion or percent of students answering an item correctly) and item discrimination (i.e., the difference when comparing a cadre of top performing examinees to a cadre from the bottom, based on their overall raw test score). *P*-values tell developers that students are able to complete a task, and are a key indicator of how well student mastery can be measured from the test items.

*P*-values range from .0 to 1.0. Zero means no one answered correctly and 1.0 means 100% of the examinees answered correctly. In general, CD Assessment views *p*-values in the .68-.89 range preferable (Table 1). *P*-values above .89 indicate low discrimination -- either students have mastered the course content or the items are not challenging enough. *P*-values below .68 demonstrate great discrimination, often indicating that students with high overall raw scores did well, while those in the middle were varied, and the bottom struggled. This is an indication that the test items are faulty or, barring this, that the students have not mastered the course content being assessed. In this case, assessment specialists must consider other data, such as the item mean, median, mode, and standard deviation in an attempt to gain insight into the poor item performance. In all cases, assessment specialists consider qualitative data gathered in scoring sessions with teachers and in student critique sessions. The importance of qualitative data and comments from teachers and students cannot be underestimated, because it is key to understanding the quantitative results.

Table 1: *P-Value Ranges*

<i>P-value Ranges</i>	<i>Data Conclusion</i>
.10 - .65	Too low (i.e. hard or faulty), little or no discrimination
.65 - .68	Too low (i.e. hard or faulty), some discrimination
.68 - .89	Ideal, good discrimination
.90 – 1.0	Too high (i.e. easy or faulty), little to no discrimination

The *p*-value is sometimes considered a measurement of ease in answering an item. If students answer an item correctly, the *p*-value is high (above .90), and the item may be considered “easy.” In the opposite case (below .68), the item is considered “difficult.” In building a course-based achievement test, “difficult” and “easy” are sometimes balanced. Not all “easy” items are removed from the test, nor are all “difficult” items. Provided there is no fault with the item, students who master the course material tested should find the item “easy”. Removing “easy” items may penalize students unnecessarily and provide questionable information about student mastery to teachers. Removing all difficult items may mislead teachers and students into concluding that students have mastered critical content that they really have not.

The *p*-value can be determined for each individual item, or for the collection of items in a given activity or set. The data presented here is for the latter. It is an indicator that 1) students were able to complete the tasks, and 2) how successful the tasks were as indicators of student mastery of course objectives.

### Sample Item Types

Each language has its own idiosyncratic structure. Not all activities presented here will be suitable for all languages, nor are structures equally

challenging in all languages. For instance, the past tense in Persian-Farsi is rather easy for students who are native English speakers to master, but more challenging in French or Spanish. Activities are tailored according to the structural requirements of the language and presented at appropriate times in the course.

To facilitate explanation, the sample item types will be presented in English with a reference to the target language in question. The most basic item type used is a MC format that requires the examinee to recognize a specific timeframe. The first variation of the MC format requires that the examinee listen to three scripted statements, one each in the present, past, and future tenses and identify the past tense statement. In Persian-Farsi and the Arabic dialects, verb tenses are indicated through the use of prefixes or suffixes that change the pronunciation of the words used in the statement. The sample comes from the Iraqi and Persian-Farsi tests in the first semester (Figure 1).

You will hear a series of three statements. For each series, identify the statement that is in the past tense and mark your answer booklet accordingly. Each statement will be played only once. You will have 10 seconds to complete your answer. A sample will be played now.

The student hears the target language equivalent (Persian-Farsi or Iraqi) of the following statement one time each:

- A. It will be rainy.
- B. It is rainy.
- C. It was rainy.

**Listening 1**

A	B	C
---	---	---

The correct answer is C.

Figure 1: *Persian-Farsi and Iraqi, Verb Tenses*

In the Iraqi case, students completing this task were at ILR Level 1 and had approximately eight weeks of dialect instruction. They were given three items of this type, each worth a single point. Sixty-one students from three different Arabic Schools at DLIFLC completed this task during its piloting. The items proved to be rather easy for students, with most able to get the answers correct. The average  $p$ -value for the item set was .90 with the top 25% getting a  $p$ -value of .93 and the bottom .81. A similar task with four items in the set was piloted with 77 Persian-Farsi students at ILR level 1 with approximately eight weeks of training returned a  $p$ -value of .94 (Table 2).

Table 2: *P-Values for Iraqi and Persian-Farsi Sample*

	<i>Iraqi 61 students</i>	<i>Persian-Farsi 77 students</i>
Item Set	.90	.94
Top 25%	.93	.97
Bottom 25%	.81	.84

Because the test developers sought more robust difficulty and discrimination statistics, they amended this activity for the Levantine dialect tests. Students taking this test were required to listen to a single statement and to identify its time frame by listening for the suffix and by marking a table in their answer booklets (Figure 2). The new task better simulates a real-world job task. An English model is shown.

Listen to the following sentences. Indicate which tense the sentence is in by marking your answer booklet. Each sentence will be played twice with a 5 second pause in between.

The student hears:

My sister left the house.

**Listening 1**

<b>Present Tense</b>	<b>Past Tense</b>	<b>Future Tense</b>
	<b>X</b>	

The correct answer is “**past tense.**”

Figure 2: *Levantine Past Tense*

In this case, the test developers achieved the desired result. Levantine students were presented with this activity approximately six weeks into their course, placing them an ILR level 1. They completed six items of this type, each worth one point. This item set was piloted on two different occasions. In the first pilot, forty-seven students in three different Arabic Schools at DLIFLC completed the set (see Table 3). The *p*-values were affected by two test items in the set that were more difficult than the others. If these two items were removed, the *p*-value moved to .79. In one of the items (*p*-value = .50), the sentence contained a verb in the future tense, but an adverb in the present (e.g., “My sister

will leave the house early today.”). This confused the students who tended to indicate the sentence was in the present tense, and further proved that they were not entirely sure of the pronunciation change in the verb based on the tense. These items were left in the set because the developers determined that the problem was not the item but that the students had not fully mastered the material.

Table 3: *P-Values for Levantine Sample*

	<i>Pilot 1</i> 47 students	<i>Pilot 2</i> 12 students
Item Set	.63	.76
Top 25%	.69	--
Bottom 25%	.60	--

In the second pilot, the developers administered the items to 12 students in a single school. The average *p*-value for the activity was .76. The smaller sample size did significantly better. This may also indicate that teachers were more familiar with the new course material, and thus were able to better target their teaching.

In some item sets, the students must use context and even phonetics to get the answers correct. This sample comes from Levantine Dialect, early in semester 1 (Figure 3).

Listen to the following sentences and indicate in the table below whether the plural pronoun reference is “you/your” or “they/them/their.” The recording will be played once.

The student hears:

1. Bring them a new book that includes Shakespeare’s plays.
2. Your notebooks are with me.

<b>Sentence</b>	<b>You/Your</b>	<b>They/them/their</b>
<b>1</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>X</b>	

The correct answer for sample 1 is **They/Them/Their**.

The correct answer for sample 2 is **You/Your (plural)**.

Figure 3: *Levantine Dialect, Objective Pronouns*



To answer correctly, students must use context and be able to differentiate between two sounds, “*kon*” and “*hon*.” For native speakers, this distinction is relatively easy. Many native speakers, before seeing the piloting results, judged this task to be too easy for students. However, distinguishing these sounds is difficult for non-natives. Forty-seven students in three schools were given six items of this type, each worth one point. The *p*-value for the set was .76 (see Table 4). The item set had excellent discrimination.

In the second pilot with 12 students in one school, the *p*-value dropped slightly to .67. No changes were made between the two pilots. The recordings used in the test were perfectly clear, without the static or garbling that students will likely encounter on the job. Understanding the difference in meaning afforded by these two phonetic sounds is key for DLFLC students who must often transcribe or translate unclear recordings.

Table 4: *P-Values for Levantine Sample*

	<i>Pilot 1</i> 47 students	<i>Pilot 2</i> 12 students
Item Set	.76	.67
Top 25%	.82	--
Bottom 25%	.35	--

Several variations of this type of recognition activity have been used on tests by having students listening and identifying pronouns, nouns, adjectives vs. *Idafa* structure (a key feature of Arabic grammar) in phrases and sentences, active vs. passive participles, Arabic verb measures, comparatives, etc. Students may be asked to categorize statements. In Punjabi and Urdu, possession may be “inalienable,” “tangible,” or “intangible” and is indicated by markers that change pronunciation. Students are asked to listen and indicate the type of possession to which a speaker is referring.

Sentence completion tasks are common on the tests. In these item sets, students listen to sentences interrupted by static and complete them using one of three possible options. An English model, based on a second semester Levantine test, is shown in Figure 4.

Listen to the following sentences in which the adjective cannot be heard due to static interruption. From the three choices provided, circle the one that accurately completes the sentence. Each sentence will be played twice. There will be a 5 second pause between the two plays. You will have 15 seconds to complete each answer.

The student hears:

The doctor talked about the hospital (static) services.

<b>Options</b>		
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
medical  (definite,  Feminine)	medical  (indefinite  feminine)	medical  (definite,  masculine)

The correct answer is **A**.

Figure 4: *Levantine Dialect, Adjectives*

To complete this task, students had to look at three adjectives that were very similar, and use the clues in the sentence they heard to determine the correct adjective based on gender and definiteness indicated by sentence context. This activity is integrative in that it requires comprehension and grammar knowledge. The Levantine students who responded to this item set were approximately 31 weeks into their 64-week course, placing them on an ILR level of 1+/2. Students were given six items of this type, each worth one point. In the first pilot of 39 students spread among the three Arabic Schools, the  $p$ -value was .64 (Table 5). One item in the set was rather difficult with a  $p$ -value of .44, thus bringing down the average  $p$ -value for the activity.

In the second pilot of 12 students from one school, the  $p$ -value rose to .78. No changes were made between the two pilots. In the second pilot, the difficult item scored a  $p$ -value of .83. The developers determined that success or failure on the items depended on students' knowledge of the adjectives and their forms, which was the entire goal of the item set.

Table 5: *P-Values for Levantine Sample of Adjectives*

	<i>Pilot 1</i> 39 students	<i>Pilot 2</i> 12 students
Item Set	.64	.78
Top 25%	.84	--
Bottom 25%	.38	--

Variations on this activity have been done in both first and second semesters. Students have been required to complete sentences with proper verb forms, negations, prepositions, demonstrative words, question words, and pronouns. In some versions of this activity, students are provided with a list of words to choose from rather than a traditional multiple-choice. Lists always have more options than are needed and, in most cases, each option is used only once.

This type of assessment of structural knowledge in listening usually ends in late Semester II of DLFLC's courses. Most languages have taught the essential structural elements by mid-Semester II and any testing done after is merely for review. In these cases, test developers increase the complexity of the task by adding a production element to it. The sample from Korean (Figure 5) is from a test administered approximately 26 weeks into the 64-week course. Students were at level 1+.

In this activity, the structural forms and how their use affects meaning is assessed. Korean uses markers that when added to verbs change their meaning and function in the sentence. There is no real equivalent to this feature in English. However, it is easy to show how the meaning changes. The English translation of the verb presented in Figure 5 is "to get to" which can also be used as "to turn out to be," or "to become." The course text explains this element of Korean grammar. It is a key feature that could have operational consequence if misunderstood by DLI graduates in the field.

You will hear a series of four statements. In each series, one of the statements contains a grammatical feature that functions differently than it does in the other three. Identify the statement that has a different meaning.

The students hear four sentences:

1. I want to become an intern of this company.
2. I will become a Sergeant next month.
3. My younger brother will become an elementary school student.
4. I get to go to a graduate school (after all).

Statement Set	Feature	Different Function/Meaning			
Sample 1	“되다”	a	b	c	<b>d</b>

The correct answer is **D**.

Figure 5: Korean, Verb Use

In the Korean sample, each set of statements was played twice for the students. When four items each worth one point were administered to 20 Korean students, the  $p$ -value was .70 (Table 5). Initially, teachers were concerned that this activity would be too hard for students. But the  $p$ -value demonstrates that this was not the case at all and that there was excellent discrimination. Approximately two and half weeks later, students encountered the same task on the Unit 10 test. Results improved, possibly indicating that task familiarity can also play a role in improved scores (Table 5). The Korean example focuses on the meaning of the structural feature more than on knowledge of the feature itself. This aspect of testing grammar in listening will be discussed later in this article.

Table 6:  $P$ -Values for Korean Sample

	<i>Pilot Unit 9</i> 20 Students	<i>Pilot Unit 10</i> 19 students
Item Set	.70	.80
Top 25%	.85	.96
Bottom 25%	.60	.66

Another type of activity that is sometimes employed is a hybrid of a multiple-choice and a transcription task. In a Semester I Levantine test, students

were asked to listen to two different sentences, to identify the sentence that contained a comparative form, and then to write (in English) the comparative adjective they heard. In this way, the guessing factor was eliminated. Students had to confirm their answer (Figure 6).

Listen to the following sentence pairs. For each pair, identify the sentence that contains a comparative by marking your answer booklet. Then write in English the comparative adjective used in the sentence. Each pair of sentences will be played twice.

The student hears:

- A. The boy is very small.
- B. The boy is smaller than his sister.

Option		Comparative Adjective
Sample	A	Younger/Smaller  (written by the student)
	B	

The correct answer is **B**, and the student should write either “younger” or “smaller,” as the Levantine word has either meaning.

Figure 6: *Levantine Dialect, Comparatives*

The 47 students in the first pilot and the 12 students in the second pilot completed four items in the set. See Table 7 for the *p*-values.

Table 7: *P-Values for Levantine Sample*

	<i>Pilot 1</i> 47 students	<i>Pilot 2</i> 12 students
Item Set	.80	.92
Top 25%	.92	--
Bottom 25%	.61	--

Once the guessing factor is mitigated, the item discrimination increases. This, like the previous Iraqi example shown in Figure 5, is a layered task, but it requires less processing on the part of the students. When the task is deconstructed, they listen to two sentences, identify the correct one and then write in English what they heard.

Variations of this activity that focus more on understanding meaning are now being prepared for piloting in Punjabi and Urdu as well as Persian-Farsi. One variation requires students to listen to a sentence that contains comparative forms. Students are then asked to determine which of the mentioned items is “more” or “greater.” For example, they hear “The dog is the happiest of all the pets in the shop.” Or “My dad is more prone to laughter than my mom.” Students then must determine which one is greater/greatest. In these activities, they have to comprehend both the comparative forms that are created through the use of suffixes and the sentence structure (Figure 7).

In this part of the test, you will hear several sentences comparing two or more things. In each sentence, one thing is greater or more than the other(s). Select the thing that is greater/greatest by marking your answer booklet. You will hear each sentence twice.

The student hears:

1. The dog is the happiest of all the pets in the shop.
2. My dad is more prone to laughter than my mom.
3. Fish is less popular with teenagers than pizza.

Sentence	Thing 1	Thing 2
1	<u>Dog</u>	Pets
2	<u>Dad</u>	Mom
3	Fish	<u>Pizza</u>

Figure 7: *New Activities for Persian-Farsi, Urdu, and Punjabi*

In some languages, this type of activity is more critical and more difficult than in others. In French, for instance, the adjective “plus” can mean “more” as in “Il est plus riche que ma mere.” (He is richer than my mother.), or “most” as in “Il est le plus riche de tout le monde.” (He is the richest of everyone.), or “no longer” as in “Il n’est plus à la maison.” (He is no longer home.).

The goal of test developers is to integrate more test item types that will target structure while promoting processing of meaning by providing more authentic, real-life context, without students figuring out the answer through context and instead using structural knowledge.

A final example of a structure item for listening requires that students listen to a sentence, identify the verb, and then re-write the verb in the imperative form that corresponds to a given pronoun (Figure 8).

Listen to the following sentences. Identify the verb and write it in the imperative form that corresponds to the personal pronoun listed in the table. Each sentence will be played twice. There will be a 10-second pause between the two plays. Points will be deducted for misspelling.

The student hears:  
روح وياكم. ما  
(I'll also go with you.)

	<b>You (masculine Singular)</b>	<b>You (Feminine Singular)</b>	<b>You (Plural)</b>
<b>Sentence 1</b>	روح	روحي	روحوا

Figure 8: Iraqi, Pronoun Forms

The 64 students who completed this activity had to determine that the verb was “to go.” Then they had to conjugate the verb for each pronoun form and write that correctly. This type of activity was given to Iraqi students on their Unit 8 test. This is over half way through their course and the students were at ILR level 1+ or beginning Level 2. There were three items in the set. Each item was worth 3 points, or 1 point for each written input. The results showed that few students received all 3 points for an item. With nine points possible for the activity, the average number of points received was 4.5, and most students received only partial credit (Table 8).

Table 8: *P-Values for Iraqi Sample*

	<i>P-Value (64 students)</i>	<i>Average points out of 9</i>	<i>Point Mode</i>
Item Set	.51	4.5	4.0
Top 25%	.76	6.8	9.0
Bottom 25%	.34	2.9	4.0

Even though the sentences given were very simple, and students were allowed to hear the sentence twice, this type of item proved to be very difficult with an average *p*-value of .51. This item placed a heavy cognitive load on students, in that they had to listen, identify, transform, and then write a correct answer.

Production tasks of this sort are usually more challenging and probably better suited to a classroom or homework task. In this case, developers believe that the items demanded too much of students, forcing them to do several layers to complete the item. These types of tasks are used less frequently in Levantine than they were in Iraqi. They are being used only judiciously in current development.

Over time, test developers have learned that the best listening-grammar test items are those that are focused, i.e., tasks should not require too many cognitive steps on the part of students to complete. These items are not intended to be mind puzzles nor should they require mental gymnastics on the part of students. They must be practical, fair, reliable, and valid indicators of student mastery over course objectives.

Currently, test developers are trying to create new tasks that move beyond single sentences to short exchanges or dialogs with better focus on meaning over form. Test developers are becoming more adept at determining which grammar objectives are better tested in reading than listening. For example, verbal nouns in Arabic must be tested in reading as it is not possible to test them through listening. Some Arabic measures can be tested in listening, but others are best tested in reading. In Punjabi and Urdu, word order in sentences is a key part of understanding, and is best tested in reading. In many languages, spoken formulations differ from written formulations. Typically, spoken formulations are best tested in listening and/or speaking.

## **CONCLUSION**

In 2004, Purpura posited that although professionals in the fields of theoretical and applied linguistics viewed grammar very differently from how it was taught in the 1960s, many “grammar testers” had continued to develop assessments rooted in Structural Linguistics and discrete-point measurement (p. ix). Since 2004, the language learning profession, influenced by the national standards movement, has aggressively promoted the use of standards-based performance assessments rooted in real-life context that incorporate the goal areas and communication modes of the standards. DLIFLC’s curricula and assessments incorporate the national standards implicitly while developing proficiency and performance skills. To better prepare students for their future assignments, DLIFLC has revamped its lesson plan model to provide more form-focused instruction and integrated more challenging item types assessing knowledge of structure in its unit tests. This article has examined how DLIFLC is teaching and assessing for specific purposes, ever exploring new and better ways to assess a student’s knowledge of structure.

## **NOTES**

1. The term “form” is used interchangeably with “structure” and “grammar” in this article.



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## ***Learning Lesson Planning in a Pre-Service Teacher Education Course***

**HYUNSOO HUR**

*Faculty Development, Language Science and Technology*

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*This study explores the learning experiences of novice teachers in lesson planning in the Instructor Certification Course (ICC), a pre-service teacher education course at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC). The ICC pre-service teachers participated in a survey administered at the completion of the course. The results were processed with SPSS, a statistical analysis computer application. According to the findings, new teachers rated their overall lesson plan learning a positive experience, which helped them gain confidence in their lesson design. The study has implications for improving DLIFLC's teacher training program in assisting new teachers' socialization into the institution's foreign language methodologies and practices.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The general view is that programs for teacher education provide knowledge and skill-related instruction employable in classrooms. For teachers entering the profession, pre-service training can have a crucial influence on their understanding of the content, methodology, material development, classroom management, and other factors that affect the quality of instruction. Moreover, pre-service teacher education programs provide initial socialization opportunities that allow a new teacher to successfully adjust to the profession.

Teacher-education programs devote considerable time to training pre-service teachers how to apply their knowledge to effective instruction through the creation of detailed lesson plans. With the help of teacher educators, pre-service teachers learn the complexities in making well-designed, thoroughly thought-out lesson plans. The design of a lesson plan plays a vital role in enabling pre-service teachers “to access the inner logic of planning for teaching” (Rusznyak & Walton, 2011, p. 272). In particular, lesson planning is more likely to address meeting specific goals and needs in mission-specific educational institutions.

This study reveals new teachers' experiences of learning lesson planning in a pre-service teacher education program, Instructor Certification

Course (ICC), at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC). The study explores new teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of lesson planning instruction, challenges and gains, and self-perceived confidence in lesson planning, before and after attending ICC.

## TEACHING AND LESSON PLANNING

Teaching is a complex process, involving a variety of thinking and decision-making skills and engaging in “complex cognitive processes before, during, and after a teaching experience” (Richards & Farrell, 2011, p. 21). Both students and teachers bring to the classroom individual background knowledge, experiences, and expectations coupled with the institution's requirements. Socio-physical, socio-political, socio-historical, and socio-economic contexts also influence the dynamics of classroom learning.

Teacher preparation programs are designed to assist the instructor in understanding the process of how to instruct. Teachers learn the content required for language teaching and methods on how to effectively present the content. Shulman (1986) proposed the term *pedagogical content knowledge*, which is “the ways of representing and formulating the subjects that make it comprehensible to others” (Shulman, 1986, p. 9). *Pedagogical content knowledge* is the blending of content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of learners and their context. It is pedagogically powerful and adaptive, accommodating various levels of learners' abilities and backgrounds in the classroom (Shulman, 1987; Rusznyak & Walton, 2011). *Pedagogical reasoning skills* influence pedagogical content knowledge and represent teachers' abilities to transform subject matter into forms adapted for varying students' abilities and backgrounds in the classroom (Shulman, 1987). The extent to which teachers equip themselves with knowledge and skills assists professional growth and socialization into the profession.

Teaching consists of three aspects, which consistently influence one another (Jacobsen, Eggen, & Kauchak, 1999). These three separate aspects — goal, implementation, and assessment — interrelate continuously. The goal that a teacher sets for a particular group of students determines the teaching content, instructional methods, and assessment methods. Based on the assessment of students' achievements, teachers establish additional goals, and implement strategies for achieving those goals, followed by assessment. As such, lesson plans reflect teachers' brainstorming and decision-makings for presentation of a lesson, and the planned activities “translate syllabus guidelines, institutional expectations, and their [teachers'] own beliefs and ideologies of education into guides for action in the classroom. This aspect of teaching provides structure and purpose” for the classroom's dynamics (Calderhead, 1984, p. 69).

The successful practice of teaching requires pre-planned activities. As Rifkin (2003) underscored, the first and most important criterion for designing a lesson for language instruction is the appropriate match between the level of students' abilities and assigned tasks. Aligned with this criterion and the three

phases of teaching, teachers select learning activities, prepare students for new material, present relevant activities, ask questions, check students' understanding, provide opportunities for practicing new skills, monitor students' learning processes, provide feedback, and review (Richards, 1998). Such teachers' brainstorming and decision-making are neatly organized into a lesson plan format that a teacher chooses to follow (e.g., Harmer's model, Hunter's model).

New teachers, especially in the early stages of teacher preparation, have difficulty matching goals, objectives, forms of evaluation and application of theory into practice, such as integrating subject topics, capturing concepts embedded in the curriculum's materials, and managing content, time, pacing, and resources (Deng, 2004; Farrell, 2007; John, 2006). As such, teachers new to the classroom require "scaffolding" from more experienced teachers who possess pedagogical knowledge about students, teaching contexts, classroom management, and methodologies. Unlike new teachers, experienced teachers engage in long-term planning, have a comprehensive range of teaching skills, and have greater expertise developing materials for the subject (John, 2006; Livingston & Borko, 1989). Joint lesson planning by experienced and novice teachers in pre-service teacher education programs helps new teachers gain access to the expertise of experienced teachers and develop better mental representations as to what to teach and how to teach for the class. In other words, "*how* the students [pre-service teachers] are taught to approach their lesson preparation has the potential to scaffold their construction of pedagogical content knowledge" (Rusznyak & Walton, 2011, p. 272).

Freeman (1989) differentiated the notion of training and development. The former focuses on producing specific outcomes through a sequence of steps within a specified period of time. Development is idiosyncratic and individualized, and thus occurs on a personal level with the purpose of generating change through increasing or shifting awareness and involves "teachers in creating an approach that draws on their experience and understanding as well as their personal principles and beliefs about good teaching" (Richards, 1998). Collaborators participate in activities to trigger teachers' awareness of their existing practices. Through pre-service training, new teachers acquire certain knowledge and skills and gain further development through the assistance of teacher educators. Richards (1998) alleged that "teacher education needs to engage teachers not merely in the mastery of rules of practice but in an exploration of the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and thinking that inform such practice" (p. xiv). Deng (2004) also called for a teacher education program that assumes responsibility for helping pre-service teachers become familiar with "education, schooling, human development and learning, and acquire the intellectual and moral resources that enable them to make sound professional decisions and judgments" (p. 153). Rusznyak and Walton (2011) argued that "the practice of lesson planning should offer more to the development of a professional knowledge base for teaching" (p. 273). New

teachers' lesson planning represents projections of the developmental processes of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge.

Richards (1998) stated that assessment of teachers' performances often includes reviews of lesson plans and the actual lessons. Planning a lesson before teaching is "generally considered essential in order to teach an effective lesson" (Richards & Farrell, 2011, p. 55). Because what and how teachers present can have powerful influences on the success of students' learning, exploring teachers' learning experiences with lesson planning in a pre-service educational program helps to create a better understanding of how lesson-planning sessions have affected teachers' instructional performance. The ICC course at DLIFLC focuses chiefly on meeting the institution's requirements and expectations. The design of teacher training sessions is directly related to the expected classroom performance of teachers. This paper uses the terms "pre-service teacher education course" and "teachers' preparation course" interchangeably to refer to ICC. The same interchangeability applies to the terms "pre-service teachers," "novice teachers," and "new teachers" to refer to teachers in the ICC context.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study was initiated as an action research, a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken to better understand the rationality and justice of existing practices and current situations, and to improve the status quo (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). The intention of the first-hand investigation through the experience of an ICC instructor (a.k.a. facilitator), working directly with new teachers, is to explore how they perceive their developmental experiences in planning lessons. The scaffolding process of guiding the design and implementation of new teachers' lessons is crucial, considering that lesson planning is the lead-in to practicum, and during the practicum teachers demonstrate performance in the classroom that addresses the institution's mission, goals, and needs. Farrell (2007) noted that the practicum "has come to be recognized as one of the most important parts of the language teacher education program" (p. 193). As such, planning a lesson with the help of an experienced teacher (an ICC facilitator), and teaching a lesson that applies theoretical concepts in practice allows new teachers to develop their skills and expertise (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In order to explore novice teachers' learning experiences during lesson planning and the degree to which content planning enhances their competencies, a survey-based, descriptive research was employed to "describe the current state of affairs at the time of the study" (Salkind, 2009, p.193).

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center provides instruction in more than 20 languages to students in residence who will assume positions in national security upon graduation. DLIFLC language curricula place significant emphasis on promoting students' proficiencies in the target language and understanding of the associated culture to enhance performances and survival skills in assigned countries. The curricula, taught by native and near-

native speakers, allow students immersion in the target-language-only classrooms for at least 35 hours per week.

Because being a native-speaker is a critical factor for faculty hiring, not all new faculty receive pedagogical training prior to joining the institution. Due to DLIFLC's unique educational system, instructors, including those with prior language teaching experience, require orientation to adjust to the institution's priorities. As a consequence, the institution provides tailored teacher training to assist teachers' meeting the institution's teaching requirements and expected practices. New teachers are required to attend ICC (160 hours) to gain an understanding of learning theories, language teaching methodologies, lesson planning, learning styles, testing and professional development, followed by a practicum. The ICC curriculum emphasizes implementation of task-based instruction and employs state-of-the-art instructional technology in foreign language education that enhances students' performance.

ICC includes a practicum of five teaching days concentrating on teaching different language skills (i.e., reading, speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary). Prior to each teaching day, a day is allotted to cover the respective skills, introducing the concepts and activities for classroom adoption. Lesson-planning sessions are also conducted for teachers to prepare a lesson plan that is reviewed by facilitators. Facilitators are experienced teachers; many have taught foreign languages at DLIFLC prior to becoming teacher educators. Facilitators review the lesson plan's format, objectives, activity designs, developmental sequence of activities, and time management. Among various lesson-planning models, ICC asks new teachers to follow the PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) model (Van Els, Bongaerts, Extra, Van Os, & Janssen-van Dieten, 1984), which aligns with the three phases of teaching: goal, implementation, and assessment.

Lesson-planning sessions allow one-on-one interactions between facilitators and novice teachers, creating an opportunity for new teachers to receive tailored feedback. The sessions also diagnose a teacher's understanding of foreign language pedagogical concepts and their application in the classroom. Through lesson-planning sessions, novice teachers are exposed to expert teachers' pedagogical reasoning skills, which can help them develop similar skills. ICC not only reveals new teachers' competence levels during developmental stages, but also unveils how lesson-planning sessions contribute to successful performances by teachers-in-training.

### **Data Collection**

Due to unfettered access to ICC trainees, data collection adopted the method of random and convenience sampling (Salkind, 2009). New teachers who attended ICC during January and February 2011 participated in the survey, by completing a distributed questionnaire after completion of all five days of practicums and lesson-planning sessions. ICC trainees voluntarily participated in

the self-reported study. The study includes 42 (100% rate of return) completed questionnaires.

The survey consists of both quantitative and qualitative questions. A Likert-type scale measured possible changes in teachers' levels of confidence prior to and upon completion of the pre-service course (e.g., 1 = very low confidence; 2 = low confidence; 3 = average; 4 = high confidence; and 5 = very high confidence). The Likert scale also measured teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of lesson-planning sessions (e.g., 1 = not effective at all; 2 = effective but to low degree; 3 = average; 4 = effective to high degree; and 5 = extremely effective). Qualitative questions identified teachers' thoughts regarding the effectiveness of lesson-planning sessions, possible challenges encountered, retained outcomes from the training program, and suggestions for better assisting new teachers in the program. Considering the fact that ICC is a tailored pre-service teacher education course, survey questions focused on new teachers' learning experiences of lesson planning during ICC only.

### **Data Analysis**

After entering the information into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, the quantitative data were transferred to statistical analysis software, SPSS, for descriptive statistical analysis (e.g., mean, frequency, etc.). The emerging themes and frequencies, which were the base for analyzing qualitative data, were color coded and noted, resulting in appropriate categorization (Bogdan & Biklin, 1998). If a teacher provided more than one answer to a qualitative question, calculation for frequency included all provided answers. A small number of participants did not respond to some qualitative questions, but the quantitative data contained no missing responses.

### **FINDINGS**

Data analysis found that novice teachers felt more confident planning a lesson after ICC, and believed that ICC lesson-planning sessions were effective for learning lesson planning, time management, obtaining new ideas for designing activities and teaching techniques, integrating different language skills, understanding task-based instruction, managing classes, and preparing for teaching. Many teachers indicated that the major challenges included time management, and designing tasks and activities. Nevertheless, many of these challenging elements also seemed to be prominent learning components as teachers placed task design, lesson planning structure, time management, teaching ideas and designing activities and concepts for activating schemata as prominent outcomes from ICC lesson planning experiences. Overall, teachers appreciated the learning experience and wanted more samples of lesson plans or activities to assist them in generating creative ideas.



### Confidence Levels with Lesson Planning

Novice teachers' confidence levels increased through ICC. Many teachers perceived an average confidence level (Mean = 3.02, S.D. = 1.0) for lesson planning prior to attending ICC, but their confidence levels increased (Mean = 4.57, S.D. = .59) after attending the course. Before attending ICC, 19% of teachers reported very low to low confidence levels, 52% average confidence level, and 29% high to very high confidence levels.

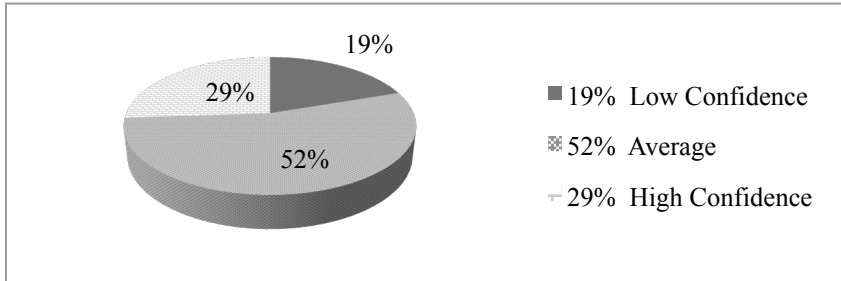


Fig. 1: Teachers' Confidence Levels before ICC

After completing ICC, the majority of teachers reported higher confidence levels: 5% responded to have developed an average level of confidence and 95% claimed a high confidence level.

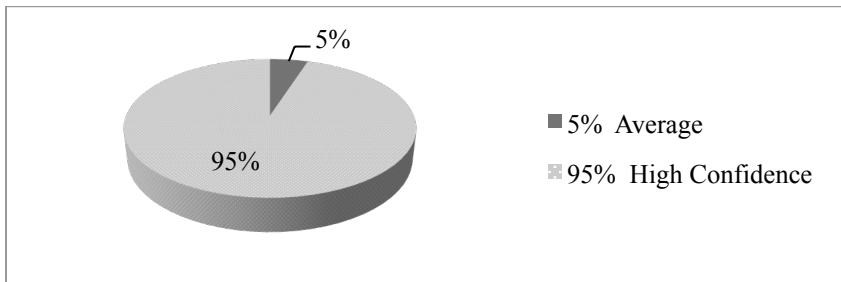


Fig. 2: Teachers' Confidence Levels after ICC

This data indicates that ICC helps new teachers become confident in lesson planning, with the possible indication that teachers expanded their knowledge and competence in lesson planning.

### Effectiveness of Lesson-planning sessions for Class Preparation

In terms of the effectiveness to learning, teachers favorably rated the lesson-planning sessions (Mean = 4.11, S.D. = .82); 86% found ICC lesson-

planning sessions highly effective to extremely effective; 7% average; and 7% lowly effective.

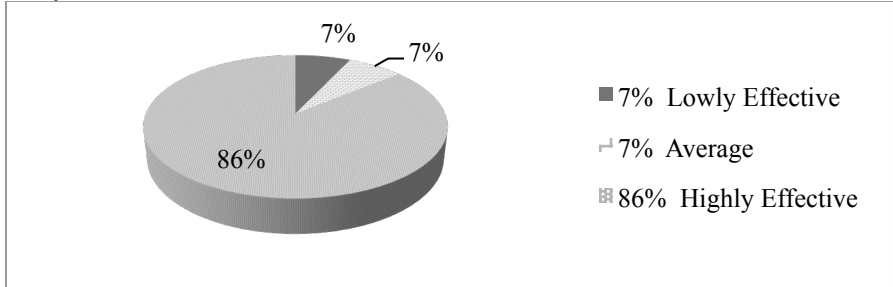


Fig. 3: Effectiveness of Lesson-Planning Sessions

Excluding two teachers who did not state opinions, 38% of the responses indicated that lesson-planning sessions were effective in learning the lesson plan format, such as preparing sequential content and matching the format to DLIFLC’s teaching context; 24% mentioned time management; 19% reported that they were helped in setting goals, preparing in advance, experimenting with various ideas, and maintaining schedules; 12% stated that lesson planning helped them design, organize, incorporate task activities, and understand what *task* means in task-based instruction; 10% noted helpfulness in providing new ideas and examples for designing lessons, such as types of activities and teaching techniques; 7% cited learning class management; 5% remarked on application of skill integration; and 14% noticed maximizing students’ output, learning to write objectives, inducing teachers’ brainstorming for activities in line with Bloom’s Taxonomy’s Higher Order Thinking Skills (i.e., apply, synthesize and create), and recognizing improvement to lesson planning.

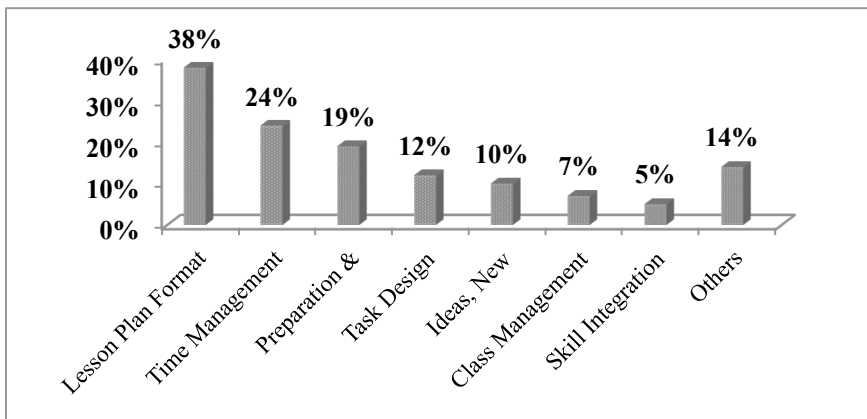


Fig. 4: Teachers’ Reasons in Rating Lesson-Planning Sessions Effective

Despite their overall favorable perspectives towards lesson-planning sessions, teachers also indicated that lesson-planning sessions were less effective because the fixed lesson plan format did not give them the flexibility to cover all materials in the allocated time. In practice, students might require more time to complete the tasks than what had been estimated by the teacher. The ability and creativity of a teacher could be more influential in designing a lesson than trying to fit the material into a fixed lesson-plan format. Additionally, it was challenging for some to write a lesson plan the day before a class.

### Challenges for Teachers

Teachers also encountered challenges during lesson-planning sessions. Thirty six percent of the teachers found time management a major challenge. They attributed that to the limitations of a 50-minute lesson, as they were required to cover more materials than class time allowed. Time constraint made it difficult for teachers to insert various types of activities or to experiment with new techniques. Designing task-based activities was challenging for 17% of the teachers; another 12% regarded generating different ideas for activities as a challenge. Other challenges included writing lesson objectives, techniques for activating schemata, creating a back-up plan, teaching certain language skills such as speaking, listening, or reading, and implementing a designed plan (23%).

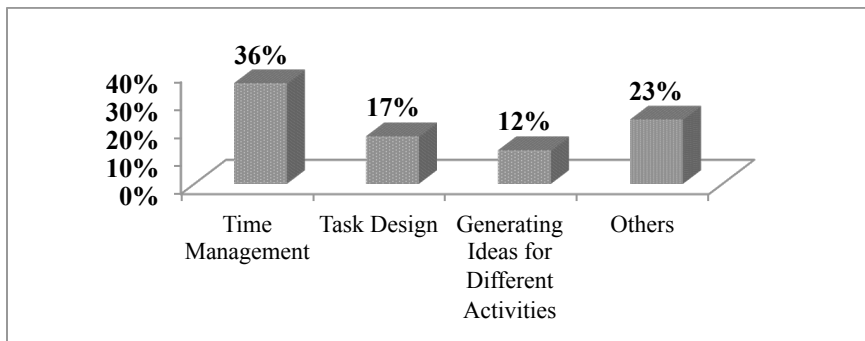


Fig. 5: Challenges during Lesson Planning

### Retained Outcomes from Lesson-planning Sessions

Many of the challenging elements have transformed into prominent learning components for teachers during the pre-service teacher education program. With regard to the major retained outcomes from taking ICC lesson-planning sessions, 43% of the teachers identified task-based instruction; 31% the structure (Lead in-Presentation-Practice-Production) and the detailed step-by-step layout of a lesson plan; 17% the importance of time management; 14% the techniques to activate schemata; and 14% integrating various methods in

designing, adopting and creating activities. Other responses included retaining knowledge and skills in class management, knowing what to teach, easing the flow of communication, keeping students on track, developing a back-up plan for unexpected situations, learning how to integrate different language skills in an activity and/or in a lesson, the importance of students' productivity in language, student-centered methodology, the use of technology, material design, and gaining confidence in one's teaching abilities.

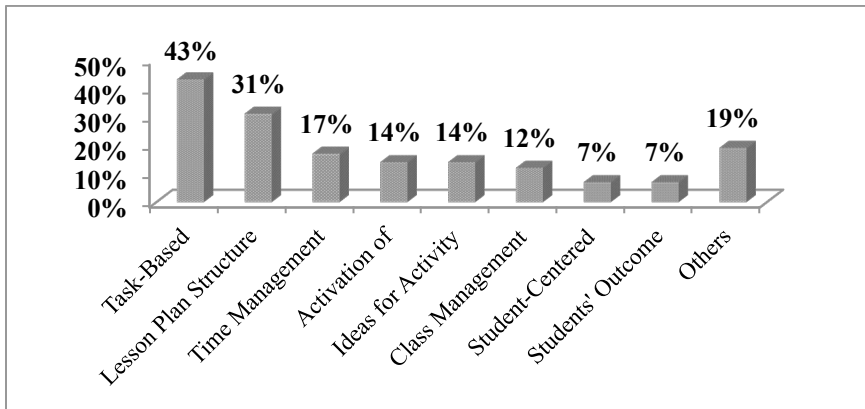


Fig. 6: Major Retained Outcomes from Lesson-Planning Sessions

### Support for Teachers

New teachers were grateful for the chance to participate in lesson-planning sessions. They were pleased with the orientation in DLIFLC's expected teaching practices offered by experienced facilitators. Nevertheless, they desired more exposure to sample lesson plans, observations of approved teaching practices in the classroom, more ideas for classroom activities, including task-based and technology-based activities. They wanted less rigidity in following the format of a lesson plan and more specific feedback from facilitators' class observations. They suggested that they be provided specific guidelines, rather than a generic approach, for different language teaching situations. They also asked that they receive feedback to their lesson plans from facilitators one day prior to the teaching. Some mentioned that they would prefer having more time for lesson preparation to attending lesson-planning sessions.

In addition to the desire for more professional support, teachers also felt the need for more respect for the knowledge that they brought to the pre-service program. They hoped ICC would focus more on what was happening in the classroom than on cookie-cutter approaches for writing detailed, step-by-step lesson plans (e.g., "Don't need strict rules on how lesson plan should be written, don't ask for too detailed steps...see more of how much students learn, see more of real dynamics of class."). New teachers were also aware that classroom

practice primarily relied on teachers - how they apply their gained knowledge into teaching. As one teacher commented, “[t]he ICC instructors have done their best and to the highest level. But it still depends on how the teacher twists those ideas and creates more and different activities.”

## **DISCUSSION**

According to the survey data, the pre-service teachers’ training course succeeded in assisting new teachers in becoming familiar with the institutional requirements. The learning experience in ICC provided opportunities for teachers to contemplate different aspects of instruction, such as activity design, time management, various methods for developing different language skills, and classroom management. Despite the program’s perceived and actual strengths and contributions, some aspects within the ICC need further examination, and perhaps readjustment to address the needs and desires of new teachers entering the profession.

One of the strengths of ICC is increasing novice teachers’ confidence in lesson planning, which requires synthesizing what they had learned in ICC to create plans for classroom practice. During the process, teachers gained competence in pedagogical content knowledge and reasoning skills for planning. The planning revealed the degree of a teacher’s readiness for successful classroom performance. The one-month intensive training included a five-day practicum, supported by lesson-planning sessions. One-on-one tailored feedback promoted teachers’ growth through facilitators’ scaffolding. Such interactions proved beneficial for the professional development of new teachers. The benefits of ICC training were illustrated by the fact that 95% of the new teachers gained high to very high confidence in lesson planning by the end of the course, compared to 29% who felt confident before the course.

Lesson-planning sessions were effective in helping teachers in four major areas: learning lesson-planning structure, managing time, preparing and planning for teaching, and designing tasks. Among different types of lesson plan format, ICC adopts the PPP model, which includes three phases of teaching: goals, implementation, and assessment for a 50-minute class. Following an established model in lesson planning raised teachers’ awareness that their teaching should meet the institution’s requirements. Learning to plan a complete lesson within a time frame compels teachers to adopt appropriate methodologies (e.g., task-based instruction) to help students in their development of language skills.

As for the most challenging aspects of lesson planning, teachers listed time management (36%), task design (17%) and generating ideas for a variety of activities (12%). DLIFLC has an intense language-training curriculum, and teachers must cover voluminous material and content in a limited amount of time. Novice teachers are uncomfortable in coping with strict time constraints while maintaining consistency with the PPP model and engaging students in complex learning tasks. To plan and execute a complex task, teachers need

sufficient time before and during class. They need to consider and apply creative ideas when designing activities, and allow students to practice the target language during class. Teachers perceive time management a crucial factor in designing a task-based lesson plan.

Teachers listed the major retained outcomes from ICC to be task-based instruction (43%), lesson plan structure (31%), time management (17%), activation of schemata (14%), and ideas for designing activities (14%). Because ICC emphasizes designing task-based activities, teachers perceive that tasks are important for arousing students' deeper levels of thinking and for foreign language acquisition. Since teachers regarded time management and task design as the major challenges during lesson-planning sessions, facilitators tend to spend extensive time on guiding teachers how to design lessons that encompass a variety of activities to fit into the prescribed time frame in accordance with the PPP model. This emphasis helped to raise the awareness of teachers to task-based instruction, and consequently influenced their acceptance of the methodology in the classroom. This shows that novice teachers are willing to pursue professional development in areas in which they perceive improvement is needed.

Richards (1998) claimed that a novice teacher's belief system, upon entering the profession, "often serves as a lens through which they view both the content of the teacher development program and their language teaching experiences" (p. 71). Based on the positive responses from novice teachers, ICC appears effective in providing initial socialization opportunities. Nevertheless, some teachers noted that ICC lesson-planning sessions were rigid, offering insufficient time for preparation. These teachers also felt that the pre-service program and its facilitators did not fully respect their inherent knowledge. Because DLIFLC has an intense language curriculum, the institution's new teacher training can also be intense. Due to the constraints and the nature of the program, some new teachers, pressured by time and rules, felt that the ICC curriculum did not always match their preconceived understanding of good teaching and lesson preparation.

## CONCLUSION

Teacher education has been "identified as a central variable in the transformation and reform of educational system at national and local levels" (Freeman, 2001, p. 608). Freeman (2001) argued, "[t]eachers are central mediators in what and how students learn in their classrooms" (p. 608); as a result, strengthening teachers' learning will empower them to enhance students' learning. As such, pre-service teacher education programs play crucial roles for assisting new teachers' socialization into an institution's expected performances, norms and values. Not only should new teachers develop the ability to plan instruction to accommodate learners' needs and the demands of the content, but they should also develop an inner logic for planning. Teacher education should

provide organized opportunities for pre-service teachers to construct individualized pedagogical content knowledge.

According to the data, ICC lesson-planning sessions were instrumental in raising teachers' awareness of DLIFLC mission and goals and in engendering familiarity with expected teaching practices. Nevertheless, the extent of teachers' development generated by the pre-service training remains unexplored, due to the relatively short duration of the training and the intensity of the curriculum, which lead teacher educators to focus more on conveying the content within the required time. Rather than regarding teachers as a "tabula rasa," the teacher-training curriculum should be designed in a way that values teachers' previous knowledge and instructional experiences. This will make ICC more adaptable for teaching.

Although the study has contributed to understanding new teachers' learning experiences in lesson planning, the study has limitations. Because the study focused on examining teachers' ICC learning experiences within DLIFLC's unique educational context, the data does not include demographic information such as gender, educational level, and prior teaching experiences. A further study that includes such data and employs a control and a treated group (e.g., ANOVA, Regression) would be beneficial to capture the complexities that influence individual teachers' development and perceptions.

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## *Chanson as a Source of Allusions in Russian Advanced Course*

**GRIGORI I. IAREMENKO**

*LTD Fort Bragg, Field Support, Continuing Education*

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*This article outlines the advantages of using Russian chansons otherwise known as “avtorskaya pesnya” in a Russian Advanced Course classroom as an abundant source of allusions. Allusions refer to people or events within one specific culture and frequently remain familiar only to representatives of that culture. The uniqueness of certain cultural phenomena distinguishes one culture from others. Allusions, referring to such specific cultural phenomena, as well as chansons, which are saturated with allusions, constitute a valuable resource of sociolinguistics and area studies. Using music, video, and chansons in a classroom brings in a flavor of entertainment, enlivens the academic activities, and encourages the students to learn more about the events that the allusions refer to. This idea is illuminated in a fragment of two lesson plans that centers around two Russian chansons reflecting a chapter of contemporary Russian history. The lesson plans make it evident that working with Russian chansons is joyful, entertaining, and interesting. It motivates students’ interest in Russian history and culture.*

### **WHAT IS ALLUSION?**

### **WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO TEACH ALLUSIONS?**

An allusion, defined by Nordquist (2012), is “a brief, usually indirect reference to a person, place, or event -- real or fictional. According to their content, allusions may be historical, cultural, mythological, literary, political, or private.”

The language of the media and the speeches of politicians and entertainers are full of allusions. Martin Luther King Jr., alluded to the *Gettysburg Address*, started his *I Have a Dream* speech by saying “Five score years ago.” The audience was immediately reminded of Abraham Lincoln's “Four score and seven years ago,” which opened the *Gettysburg Address*. King's allusion effectively called up parallels in two historic moments.<sup>1</sup> In one of his speeches Obama used allusions to a comic book, “I was not born in a manger. I was actually born on Krypton and sent here by my father, Jor-el, to save the Planet Earth.”<sup>2</sup> Safire (1988) justly remarked, “even sports newsletters allude to

[Robert] Frost. When a New York Giants tackle was diagnosed as having cancer, *Inside Football* commented, 'The rest, since there was no more to build on there, turned to their affairs.' That's an allusion to a 1916 Frost poem about a boy's accidental death: 'No more to build on there. And they, since they/Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.' (Lathem, 1969, p. 137) (The poem's title is 'Out, Out--,' itself an allusion by Frost to [William] Shakespeare; after Lady Macbeth dies, Macbeth speaks of life's shortness, 'Out, out, brief candle' (Shakespeare, 1991, p. 998)."

Giving a definition of allusion, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2013) points out its important feature: "Most allusions are based on the assumption that there is a body of knowledge that is shared by the author and the reader and that therefore the reader will understand the author's referent. Allusions to biblical figures and figures from classical mythology are common in Western literature for this reason. However, some authors, such as T.S. Eliot and James Joyce, deliberately use obscure and complex allusions that they know few people would understand." This feature of allusion was also stressed by Bloom (1979), Hermeren (1992), Hutcheson (1986), Iser (1988), Norris and O'Donnell (2010) when mentioning the idea of a "contract" existing between an author and a reader and stating that only the mutual knowledge of certain life realities, literary characters, historic anecdotes, popular phrases, etc. by both the author and the reader can make the reader fully comprehend the ideas that the author has put into his narration. We can assume that the same condition is true in relation to oral communication. Not sharing mutual knowledge with representatives of the target-language cultural medium makes it impossible for a foreigner to catch the meaning of such an American allusion as *Charlie Brown* in the phrase: "This is a *Charlie Brown* tree," or such a Russian allusion as "*dyadya Styopa*"<sup>3</sup> in the phrase: "Your younger brother has grown the real *dyadya Styopa*." The native speakers understand them as easily as any other words and they use allusions for the purpose of making their speech more colorful and expressive. The same applies to allusions to social realities, such as *Affirmative Action* in US or *propiska* (the official registration that gives an individual the right to live and work in a certain city) in Russia. "When they fail," as Samet (2012) noticed in her article in *The New York Times*, "allusions leave us exposed: either enmeshed in in elegant, patronizing explanations or cast adrift with insufficient provisions on the murky seas of a childlike half-understanding. Failed allusions produce feelings of betrayal on all sides because they reveal mistaken assumptions about shared frames of reference and like-mindedness. Unlike most tricks, the allusion triumphs only when people know precisely how it is done."

Thus, the purpose of allusions as hints to the information known to both the author and the reader/listener is to allow the latter to read between and beyond the lines. As reading between and beyond the lines corresponds to description of performance on level 3 on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale, the importance of developing the skills of operating with target language allusions in the advanced foreign language course becomes obvious.

Songs constitute a rich source of allusion for a language classroom. The research by Salsedo (2002) showed that songs served as a popular auxiliary material throughout the history of language instruction. Many instructors share their experience of using the songs for various purposes on different stages of training, noting that songs motivate students to study a language because they brighten up the lessons, bring in the beauty of music as well as the elements of kinesthetic activity and relaxation, and raise students' interest in the culture of the target language. Thus, Rainier (2011) recommended using songs and music for students' familiarization with the culture of the target language country. Tipton (2007) used target language songs for enriching students' vocabulary. Tyrrell (2009) described how she developed students' listening comprehension skills with the help of the songs. Salsedo (2002) investigated the ways of improving students' comprehension of a text by integrating a song with the reading text.

Members of the National Council of Teachers of English (2009), stating that "popular music is saturated with allusions," recommend using songs in the classroom as a source of allusions. Their publication contains the following classification of allusions to be used in the classroom:

- Allusions to authors
- Allusions to poems
- Allusions to novels
- Allusions to short stories
- Allusions to plays
- Allusions to graphic novels

For an advanced foreign language course centered on area studies and sociolinguistics, allusions to the sociopolitical realities, i.e., the events and phenomena existing within the unique culture of the target language country should be included as material for learning to read between and beyond the lines. Working with songs as sources of allusions can follow discussions of and students' research in corresponding historic events and realities in area studies. The analysis of allusions serves the purpose of reinforcing and expanding students' knowledge and understanding of the events referred to, as well as discussing attitudes towards the events from the side of the societal stratum that the author operates in. The preferable type of song is *Russian chanson*, otherwise called *авторская песня* (*avtorskaya pesnya* - the author's song).

## **WHAT IS RUSSIAN CHANSON?**

### **WHAT PART CAN IT PLAY IN AN ADVANCED RUSSIAN COURSE?**

The notion and term *avtorskaya pesnya* came to life during the time of severe Soviet censoring that combed both the content and the form of every work of literature and art, including the songs performed on stage and over the radio. As anticipated, that period of time gave birth to an alternative art that was uncensored, independent, and therefore, illegal. The author of an "illegal" song created both its music and lyrics and then performed it somewhere in a circle of

friends. The author did not care about censorship, and freely expressed an opinion on social events occurring in the country. The most prominent example of such an author-performer was Vladimir Vysotsky, whose chansons touched upon all spheres of life in the 1960s and 1970s. His songs, re-recorded from one tape-recorder to another were played nearly in every house in Russia, even though no factory-made records of his songs were sold in stores. Only during his later years, in the second half of the 1970s, did very few records of Vysotsky see the light of day in the USSR; but, as soon as the censorship was lifted in the 1990s, CDs of Vysotsky's songs became available in all the music stores in Russia.

Gradually, the status of "the author's song" underwent an evolution as the music found its way first to the stages of some restaurants, then to some clubs, and eventually to the stages of concert halls. In the process the term *avtorskaya pesnya* gave way to the term *chanson*. The *bards*, as its author-performers are called in Russia, continue expressing their attitude towards the current developments in the country in their original and witty way, reflecting *vox populi* in both the content and the form. Therefore, Russian chansons can play a double role in a language lesson: as a sample of public opinion and as a sample of colloquial speech, particularly slang.

The classroom use of these songs can serve as a completing phase in a series of lessons familiarizing the students with the events of Yeltsin's and Putin's presidencies, and their effects on social life. Before the songs are introduced in class, students can read Wikipedia's articles such as "Yeltsin," "Putin," "Organized Crime in Russia," "Criminal Russia" and so on, watch Parfenov's documentaries *Намедни* (Recently), listen to some *Особое мнение* (Individual Opinions) programs of the *Echo of Moscow* radio, and watch fragments from the movies *Бандитский Петербург* (Criminal Petersburg), *Бригада* (Brigade), etc. When working with the chansons, students watch the videos from YouTube and sing together with the author-performers, familiarizing themselves with the vocabulary of the chansons, especially with slang/jargon. When necessary, the lines can be paraphrased into the literary style of the target language.

As an example of using chansons in a classroom, let us consider two Russian chansons that reflect a contemporary chapter in the history of Russia, from the year 2000 to today. The first is Sergey Lyubavin's chanson *Разводят* (*Razvodyat* -- They Are Scamming Us).<sup>4</sup> It depicts the early years of President Vladimir Putin's power, when ordinary people did not have much information about the new leader and did not pay much attention to what they saw as yet another change in a corrupt government. What they knew well enough was that whoever had power in Russia was scamming them -- *Razvodyat*, a Russian slang term that Lyubavin used in his song's title. The plethora of slang in Sergey Lyubavin's song is a legacy of the first "varmint" decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when yesterday's criminals suddenly became important businessmen and statesmen, impacting the Russian language with their street and prison lexicon, and the life of the Russian criminal sector, including murders of their rivals and opponents.

The second is Andrei Makarevich's chanson *К нам в Холуёво приезжает Путин* (Putin Is to Visit Us in Kholuyovo)<sup>5</sup>, which reflects certain changes that have taken place during President Putin's leadership. The days of open mugging and unpunished murders, depicted in Lyubavin's chanson, have become history now that the country has returned to a traditional Russian style of life, in which killing rivals is replaced by groveling before a high boss and overly flattering him to gain certain benefits and to move up the promotional ladder. The author even chooses the name of the town President Putin is going to visit – Kholuyovo, from the root “холуй,” meaning “servant, groveler.” The title “Putin Is to Visit Us in Kholuyovo” implies a kind of awe before a great boss. It somehow makes us recall Nikolai Gogol's “Inspector-General.” The language of Makarevich's song belongs predominantly to a literary style, because the hero of the chanson is a member of the city council, in contrast to Lyubavin's man from the street.

An in-depth analysis of the chansons' texts, during which the students comment on every line of the song, takes place when they answer questions posed by the instructor. The questions are built so that when answering them, students have to read between and beyond the lines, using all the information they had received before the work with the songs started. Additionally, the students have to recall some previously learned historical facts as well as some idiomatic expressions to comment on certain lines. For example, the metaphors about the Kholuyovites painting the grass green to make it look attractive to Putin's associates with the idiom *Potemkin's villages*, which itself is an allusion to another episode from the history of Russia and can be used for making a parallel with it (see Appendix). The lesson can be concluded with a discussion of how the attitude of the Russians towards Putin changed over the years of his leadership by examining the advantages and disadvantages of Putin's leadership that are reflected in the two chansons.

The Lesson Plans in Appendix contain detailed step-by-step instructions on how to use the two chansons in a language class. The Appendix also presents the full text of the above chansons and the analysis of the allusions within them.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the above example indicates that the allusions contained in lyrics of chansons can be used for a fast review of contemporary Russian history, for initiating student's research, and for stimulating discussions in area studies and sociolinguistics. Moreover, some chansons provide vivid materials for studying Russian slang. Using chansons in the classroom allows learning and discussion of information not reflected in official mass media because of the censorship. Studying chansons dedicated to the same events but belonging to different authors makes it possible to learn the opinions of different portions of Russian society. Examining chansons dedicated to the same topic but written at different times allows students to follow the historic development of social events in contemporary Russia. Using video and audio materials containing

Russian chansons brings a certain degree of buoyancy into the Russian language classroom, entertains the students, and motivates their interest in Russian history and culture.

## APPENDIX

### LESSON PLAN 1

The **presentation** portion of the lesson, dedicated to Sergey Lyubavin's chanson *Разводят* (*Razvodyat*), consists of three parts.

1. The instructor's foreword
2. Handing out the table with vocabulary explanations for Lyubavin's chanson:

Russian Slang	Russian Literary Style	Translation
разводят (razvodyat)	дурят (duryat)	(They are) scamming (us)
загremеть по тюрьмам (zagremet' po tyur'mam)	сесть в тюрьму (sest' v tyurmu)	to be thrown into prison
сброд (sbrod)	бродяги, бомжи (brodyagi, bomzhy)	trash, bums
пасти (pasti)	следить (sledit')	to hound, to follow
валить наглушняк (valit' naglushnyak)	убивать насмерть (ubivat' nasmert')	to kill, to murder
всё ништак (vso nishchak)	всё в порядке (vso v porjadke)	O.K., no problem
уводят (uvodyat)	воруют, крадут (voruyut, kradut)	(They) steal, take away
бабки [бабульки-бабули] (babki [babul'ki-babuli])	деньги (den'gi)	money

3. Presenting the video/audio of the chanson<sup>6</sup> and asking students to explain its title and its general idea.

The expected answer: The general idea of the chanson is implied in its title -- "They are scamming us." Ordinary Russians believe that the officials' main goal is to plunder them.

The **practice** portion consists of two parts. Students are given the printed text of chanson *Разводят* and are asked to paraphrase it into literary style.

1. Students listen to the chanson a second time. They are encouraged to sing along with the recording.

2. Students paraphrase the chanson into literary style.

The **production** portion of the lesson is a discussion. The instructor may ask students to pair up and discuss what idea the author wants to emphasize when binding the beginning of Putin’s leadership with the fire in the exhibition hall *Manezh* contained in the first two lines of the chanson:

Сгорел “Манеж”. Кому-то стало жарко,  
 (*The Manezh burned down. Somebody got overheated.*)  
 И нового вождя призвал народ.  
 (*And the people called for a new leader.*)

The expected answer: The author probably mentions the fire in *The Manezh* just as a preamble for stating: “Кому-то стало жарко,” in other words, “Кто-то *перегрелся*” (“Somebody got *overheated*”), which is actually a Russian saying that implies that the overheated person does not understand what he is doing, and therefore, commits unexpected and unexplainable acts. Similarly, President Yeltsin in his traditional New Year’s Eve speech on Russian TV unexpectedly announced his resignation and appointed Vladimir Putin as acting president of the Russian Federation.

Then the students may be given the following chain of questions:

Q1: To whom does the following allusion refer?

По тюрьмам загремели олигархи  
 (The tycoons have been thrown into prison.)  
 За воровство, как самый пьяный сброд.  
 (Like drunken bums, for stealing.)

The expected answer: Many very rich Russians have been imprisoned during Putin’s term. The most famous of them is Mikhail Khodorkovsky, once head of the largest Russian oil company “Yukos.” He and his associates were imprisoned, allegedly for not paying enough taxes to the government. Their company was nationalized. That was part of Putin’s “de-privatization” campaign, which gave the Russian government control over the oil and gas extraction industries. Control over the most profitable industries, in turn, gave the Russian leadership tremendous income. Some portion of this money was spent on increasing wages, salaries, and pensions. This brought Putin the support of the majority of Russian people, and the possibility to be elected president for a second and third term.

Q2: What events does the author hint at in the second part of the *couplet*?

Опасно жить в России депутатам:

(The life of the deputies in Russia is dangerous.)

Их, блин, пасут, а после валят наглушняк ...

(They are shepherded and then murdered.)

А чем избранники народа виноваты?

(And what is the guilt of the elected officials?)

Делиться надо, чтобы было всё нищак.

(They should share [their income] in order to get rid of their problems.)

The expected answer: This is a reference to the mysterious murders of some *Duma* deputies that occurred before and soon after Putin's coming to power. The deputies were killed for various reasons, but ordinary people believed that the main reason was the illegal business many deputies dealt in and their refusal to share their income with racketeers and representatives of opponent clans.

Q3: Working in pairs, discuss with your partner what realities of Post-Soviet Russia the author implies in the refrain?

Разводят, опять разводят.

(They are scamming us again.)

Меняют воздух на российские рубли.

(In return for our Russian rubles they give us air.)

Уводят, опять уводят

(Just the air [and nothing else] they are taking away.)

Все наши кровные бабутьки-бабули.

(All our money [that is so hard to earn])

The expected answer: The author believes that Russian officials and entrepreneurs only take an interest in enriching themselves by divesting the ordinary people of their hard earned money and giving them nothing in exchange.

## LESSON PLAN 2

The **presentation** portion of the lesson, dedicated to the second chanson -- *К нам в Холуёво приезжает Путин* (Putin Is to Visit Us in Kholuyovo) by Andrei Makarevich consists of three parts:

1. The instructor's foreword.
2. The vocabulary introduction.

There is only one prison slang phrase in Makarevich's chanson: "[свезти] на нары у парашей" ([to throw] to sweat it out in jail) and two



sayings: “[*биться*] лбом об стену” (to bang one’s head against a wall) and “*наступить на мозоль*”(to hit somebody’s sore spot).

A few more words in the song need special explanation: *Наши* (The Ours --a pro-Putin youth organization), *единороссы* (members of the pro-Putin party *Единая Россия* -- United Russia), an archaic word: *холуй* (a groveler), and a bureaucratic term *решать оргвопросы* (to discuss organizational issues).

### 3. Demonstrating the video/audio of the chanson.

After reading the printed text of the chanson and singing it simultaneously with the second demonstration of the audio in the **practice** portion of the lesson, the students would be asked: “Why, do you think, the author has given the town the name *Kholuyovo*?”

The expected answer: *Kholuyovo* is the right name for the town, whose authorities are ready to grovel before the great boss from Moscow, in order to flatter him.

Working in pairs during the **production** portion of the lesson, students would have to give answers to the following chain of questions:

Q1: In what way does the author link the idea of banging one’s head against a brick wall with Putin’s visit to Kholuyovo in the first four lines of the chanson?

Наш путь к вершинам бесконечно труден:

(Our way to perfection is extremely hard:)

То лбом об стену, то наоборот.

(Once you bang your head against a wall, another time the wall will bang your head.)

К нам в Холуёво приезжает Путин,

(Putin himself is to visit us in Kholuyovo,)

Чтобы увидеть, как живёт народ.

(In order to see how his people live.)

The expected answer: The metaphor of banging the head against a wall is used here to emphasize the “huge efforts” the Kholuyovo City Council applied for the purpose of impressing Putin during his expected visit. There is also an additional background idea in these lines, according to which the Russian President is meticulously isolated from the ordinary people. If he decides to observe how people live, his visits should be thoroughly prepared beforehand.

Q2: What is unusual in the description of the local religious and secular institutions’ activities in the following couplet? What idea did the author imply in this description?

Народ в ключе такого поворота

(In view of this event, the people)

Поднялся на великие дела.

(Have roused themselves, committing themselves to exploits.)  
 И церковь поменяла план работы,  
 (The church has changed its plan of operation,)  
 И исполком звонит в колокола.  
 (And the city council is tolling the bells.)

The expected answer: It is certainly more natural for the church to toll the bells, and it does not have to change its plan of actions because of the visit of the government boss, especially since the Constitution pronounces Russia to be a secular country. The City Council (исполком) does not have any bells, and it should amend its plan of operation in connection with the President's visit.

The author deliberately mixes the names of the functions of the two institutions in order to emphasize that in Putin's Russia the Orthodox Church, as an ideological body, plays an equally important part with the local government. The equal importance of the church and the city council is also emphasized by mentioning them directly after the first two lines of the couplet. This indicates that the activities of both institutions equally incorporate the "exploits" of the people of Kholuyovo on the eve of Putin's visit.

Q3: How do the next four lines describe the *exploits* of the citizens of Kholuyovo?

Желдор вокзал достроили мгновенно,  
 (We have instantaneously completed the construction of the railway station, and)  
 В буфете понаставили всего.  
 (Filled its refreshment room with yummys.)  
 Бармена заменили на бармена  
 (We have replaced a regular bartender with the one,)  
 С погонами майора ФСО.  
 (Wearing the epaulets of an FPS major.)

The expected answer: The first line displays a characteristic feature of groveling—the fear of punishment. The railway station had been under construction for a long time, probably until the prospect of the boss coming brought in the impetus for its timely completion. The station's refreshment room filled with yummys should be an indicator of the fact that the railway station is functioning perfectly. As to the FPS bartender, it is the usual way of providing security for a VIP by surrounding him/her with law enforcement officers.

Q4: Why, in your opinion, does the author use slang when mentioning the homeless people and how is their being thrown into prison connected with removing manure from the streets?

Бомжей свезли на нарры у парашы.

(We have hidden all our bums to sweat it out in jail,)

С центральных улиц выгребли навоз.

(And raked out the manure from the central streets.)

The expected answer: The second line is the continuation of the enumeration of the Kholuyovo citizens' "exploits". They would, probably, never have raked the manure from the central streets, if not for the prospects of Putin walking there. As to the suburban streets, the boss will never go there, so the Kholuyovites do not care about them. Another important factor concerning this line is the previous line that mentions the homeless. Thus, hiding the homeless people from the eyes of the boss is a regular way of preparation for Putin's visit, just like the raking out of manure. Such a hollow-hearted approach of the groveling officials towards the homeless people is emphasized by the use of prison slang: "Бомжей свезли на нарры у парашы." This is the only line of slang in the chanson. The city councilor, on whose behalf Makarevich is singing, uses it in order to express his scorn. In addition, it should be noted that by "hiding" the homeless in the city prison, the administration violates the law twice: people are detained without committing any crime, and the prison is used for the wrong purpose. For the Russian administration, however, the law is not a solemn set of rules to adhere to, but an instrument to govern the population. In this situation the groveling officials directly follow the example of President Putin, who has violated Russia's Constitution when repealing the law concerning the election of governors, as well as when ignoring article 31 on freedom of meetings and gatherings.

Q5: Why were all the school kids dressed in the uniforms of *the Nashi*?

Всех школьников одели в форму «Наших».

(We have dressed all the school kids in the uniforms of *the Nashi* - The Ours.)

На всякий случай: вдруг задаст вопрос.

(Just in case He would ask.)

The expected answer: *Nashu* (The Ours) is a youth organization initiated and sponsored by V.V. Putin, which blindly backs up the Russian President and is always eager to confront his opponents. The Kholuyovo authorities want to show to their Moscow boss that the youth organization sponsored by him is extremely popular in their town.

Q6: What characteristic Russian phenomenon do the following four lines connote?

По городу натыканы знамёна,  
 (All through the town we stuck the banners,)  
 Проверен дым над каждою трубой.  
 (We checked the smoke over each chimney.)  
 И вся трава покрашена в зелёный,  
 (We have painted all the grass green,)  
 А небо – в безмятежно голубой.  
 (And the sky - serene blue.)

The expected answer: These lines, and especially the word *painted* (the grass is painted green, the sky is painted blue), imply a connection with the so-called *Potemkin's villages*. Once the Czarina, when travelling through the Ukraine, then governed by Duke Potemkin, saw from her carriage window beautiful pictures of comfortable houses that covered the ugly, poor huts of the peasants. Now Putin, according to the plans of the local administration, was to see a beautiful, comfortable city in place of the actually miserable and dirty Kholuyovo. The notion of *Potemkin's villages*, that is, showing the boss only what he would like to see, instead of the reality, has been a symbol of Russia ever since the time of Catherine the Great. In Makarevich's chanson the idea of *Potemkin's villages* is also reinforced by the metaphor: "We checked the smoke over each chimney."

Q7: How do you interpret the next four lines of the chanson?

Всю ночь менты решали оргвопросы.  
 (The police were feverishly preparing all night.)  
 Друг другу наступая на мозоль.  
 (Mercilessly criticizing one another.)  
 И до крови дрались единокороссы:  
 (And the "United Russia" party members were sparing:)  
 Кому встречать и подносить хлеб-соль.  
 (Who of them would offer the bread and salt of hospitality to the Boss.)

The expected answer: These lines openly manifest the groveling of the Kholuyovo administration. The police would quarrel feverishly all through the night discussing how to make their service look good in the eyes of the President. This fact calls into doubt the quality of the police regular daily service. The sarcastic picture of the members of Putin's party sparing for the right to offer him the bread and salt of hospitality hints at the way the grovelers earn their promotions.

Q8: Why did the Kholuyovo elite "not feel like laughing," when Putin cancelled his visit to their town?

Вот вам смешно – а вышло не до смеха:

(You can laugh. We did not feel like laughing:)

Элита на перроне собралась.

(Our elite all gathered on the platform,)

Вот только Путин так и не приехал,

(But Putin did not come.)

А жизнь уже почти что задалась.

(Pity, we almost managed to patch things up.)

The expected answer: One can find the answer to this question in the last line of the chanson: “we almost managed to patch things up.” Indeed, they made their town look a bit cleaner and more beautiful; they completed the construction of their railway station, and they introduced a certain order into the operation of their administrative bodies. This, perhaps, gave birth to a humble hope that order would be kept in their town for a long time. But now that Putin did not come, everything was going to return to its initial ugliness. This is the psychology of a groveler: To do something useful he needs ceaseless supervision on the part of the boss. And one more reason for Kholuyovo elite’s disappointment was the loss of the prospects of earning Putin’s favor and the loss of prospective benefits.

## NOTES

1. Citation from *Wikipedia*: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allusion>.
2. Citation from Richard Nordquist (2012, July 20). Grammar & Composition Guide. Allusion. *Grammar. about.com*. Retrieved October 12, 2013, from <http://grammar.about.com/od/ab/g/allusionterm.htm>.
3. This is an allusion to Sergei Mikhalkov’s popular poem for children *Dyadya Styopa* (Uncle Styopa) about a very tall man.
4. Любавин, Сергей (2002, December 15). Разводят. *Youtube*. Retrieved May 4, 2005, from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPic5N1RVqM>.
5. Макаревич, Андрей (2012, November 9). К нам в Холуёво приезжает Путин. *Youtube*. Retrieved January 3, 2013 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljmT5CVxcAo>.
6. We recommend presentation of only the first couplet and the refrain of the *Разводят* chanson, which corresponds to the text analyzed in the article.

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*Engage*

*Innovate*

*Apply*

*Reflect*

*Discuss*

*... Dialog on Language Instruction*

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## REVIEWS

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### *Applications of Elicited Imitation to Second Language Education*

SHU-LING WU

*LTD Hawaii, Field Support, Continuing Education*

Elicited Imitation (EI) is a technique for assessing different dimensions of second language (L2) abilities such as L2 listening comprehension, global L2 oral proficiency, or L2 syntactic knowledge (e.g., R. Ellis et al., 2006, Erlam, 2006; Naiman, 1974). Recently, Ortega and her colleagues (Ortega et al., 2002; Tracy-Ventura et al., 2013; Wu & Ortega, under review) developed and tested parallel EI tests (EIT) across six foreign languages (English, German, Japanese, Spanish, French, and Chinese) and reported that EI offers a good estimate of learners' global L2 proficiency. This review will introduce the technique of EI and discuss its potential utilization in L2 teaching and learning at the DLI setting.

EI requires participants to listen to a sentence and then repeat it as precisely as possible. The theoretical rationale, laid out by Slobin and Welsh (1973) and repeated since then, rests with the idea that when the length of a sentence exceeds one's short-term memory capacity (i.e., seven digits or words; see Miller, 1956), participants will not be able to parrot it. Instead, they will need to comprehend and decode the sentence, recall, and reconstruct it with their own grammar, and only then will they be able to reproduce it. Taking the EI design developed by Ortega et al. (2002) as an example, they designed an EI test that contained 30 recorded sentences ranging from 7 to 19 syllables. To avoid rote repetition, there was an interval of 2.5 seconds between the end of each sentence and the start of each repetition. For each sentence, the time it takes a native speaker to enunciate the sentence is calculated (referred to as  $t$ ), and the participant is allowed  $t + 2$  seconds to repeat the sentence. For a sentence that is longer than seven syllables, an additional 0.5 seconds was added to the  $t + 2$  time for each additional syllable. That is, a seven-syllable sentence is allotted " $t + 2$  seconds;" and an eight-syllable sentence is allotted " $t + 2.5$  seconds".

The recorded performance is evaluated using a 5-point scoring rubric. Consider the following examples taken from Ortega. et al. (2002):

#### *Examples of EI sentences*

(1) I doubt that he knows how to drive that well. (10 syllables, repetition time allowed: " $t + 3.5$  seconds")



(2) I don't know if the 11:30 train has left the station yet. (18 syllables, repetition time allowed: “ $t + 5.5$  seconds”)

*Grading rubric*

4 = Perfect repetition

3 = Accurate content repetition with some (ungrammatical or grammatical) changes of form

2 = Changes in content or in form that affect meaning

1 = Repetition of half of the stimulus or less

0 = Silence, only one word repeated, or unintelligible repetition

The rubric prioritized meaningful repetition over grammatical accuracy. A repetition can receive as high as a score of 3, as long as the meaning is retained despite some grammatical or ungrammatical change(s) of the form. For instance, if a participant drops the third person singular *-s* in the repetition, as in ‘he knows’ in example (1) or the adverb ‘yet’ in example (2), a score of 3 will be received, as compared to a score of 2, if more than half of the meaning is retained, and a score of 1 for less than half. The design is in agreement with the finding reported by Sachs (1967) that, after a sentence is heard, the linguistic form and specific wording of the utterance is easily lost and forgotten, but its meaning can be stored for a significantly longer time. It is also in accordance with the claim put forth by Van Patten (2004) that learners’ process input for meaning before they process it for form. Consequently, only when they are familiar with the majority of the lexical items in the input can they allocate their attention to process the form of an utterance, and particularly specific individual forms with low semantic value within it. The processing skills required for retaining the form of an utterance thus demand higher L2 proficiency, such that learners can engage in semantic processing without undue constraints and remain capable of devoting resources to process the form as well. A perfect score of 4, therefore, is given only when the sentence is repeated perfectly in both meaning and form.

Under time-pressure conditions, the technique of EI taps into the ability to process the language receptively and productively, demands the integration of verbatim memory of sentences with syntactic and semantic knowledge of the language system from long-term memory, and calls for the deployment of psychomotor skills needed for meaningful speech production in real time (Wu & Ortega, under review). EI, therefore, provides insight into learners’ knowledge and automated ability for use of core vocabulary and grammar delivered with reasonably intelligible pronunciation and fluency. Measuring these dimensions of L2 abilities can provide teachers and learners with important information on one’s proficiency level as well as data for conducting analysis on one’s L2 strengths and weaknesses.

The technique of EI can be utilized in DLI classrooms in many ways, beneficial to both teachers and learners. To begin with, teachers can extract sentences from the teaching materials and turn them into EI sentences as an achievement test to measure how much students have acquired from the lessons.

Teachers can also compile sentences of different length and difficulty from authentic sources, such as speeches or news programs, to measure students' listening and speaking proficiency. With the EI performances, teachers can gain a clear picture of learners' linguistic abilities while scoring each repetition. For each repetition that scores between 0 to 3, teachers can gauge whether the incomplete repetition is due to weakness in ability to understand unfamiliar accent, unfamiliarity with the vocabulary or grammar, poor pronunciation, or insufficient fluency. Such information will help teachers effectively assess learners' current linguistic abilities, whereby to provide constructive suggestions for future improvements. Moreover, EI can also be used as a learning tool for improving one's listening and speaking skills. The technique of repeating a sentence you heard can also be called shadowing sentences (cf. Arguelles, 2009). By repeating a sentence and mimicking another's voice, tone or intonation, one can practice on aspects such as quickly processing a sentence, reviewing or learning words and patterns, correcting pronunciation and intonation, or improving speaking fluency.

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## FACULTY FORUM

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“Faculty Forum” welcomes reader contribution. We are interested in (but not limited to) your ideas and views on innovative foreign language education practices, as well as your comments on matters of general academic interest and on articles in previous issues of this journal.

### ***Got Alignment?***

#### ***Instructional Design for Field Support Programs***

DONALD W HOLMAN

*LTD Fort Carson, Field Support, Continuing Education*

### **CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES**

It may come as a surprise to younger DLI faculty to learn that there was a time in U.S. education -- indeed, scarcely more than a generation or two ago -- when American schoolchildren were blissfully inexperienced with state-wide, standardized tests, performance on which determined whether a student would advance to the next grade or graduate from high school. Early forays into standardized testing were made bearable for young learners with reassurances that these tests were for administrative purposes only and would have no bearing on their grades. Those halcyon days of low stakes tests were, however, short lived. By the 1980s, some states and school districts began to enforce passing scores on standardized tests a requirement for graduation. By contrast, it was the *absence* of high academic standards and robust testing from curricula in lower income school districts that made it hard for even the diploma-bearing high school graduate to win admission to their university of choice. To mitigate this class divide in U.S. education, Congress passed in 2001 the No Child Left Behind Act, which made federal education funds intended for the States dependent on their establishment of clearly defined education standards for all schools that were to be measured by rigorous tests.<sup>1</sup>

The process of adapting instruction, learning, and assessment to standards that define success is usually referred to as *curriculum alignment*. Curriculum in this sense refers not only to course syllabi and textbooks, but to all decisions regarding what is included or omitted in the learning experience. These decisions may include federal and state laws, local school district policy,

textbook selection and content, and teaching content/strategies. Rather than tackle individually each of the competing curricula of the interested parties, policy makers have relied on high-stakes test -- normally the final stage of the learning process -- to initiate and enforce education reforms. By means of test outcomes and their consequences, *measurement driven reform* compels all other "curricula" to align with the assessment that alone determines their success or failure.

## ALIGNMENT OF CURRICULA AT DLIFLC

While the recent reforms in U.S. education have no bearing on language instruction at the Defense Language Institute, the theories that informed these policy changes and the scholarship surrounding them provide a conceptual framework against which DLIFLC courses, including Field Support Programs, can be analyzed and evaluated. Scholarship has identified multiple curricula that can complement or impede one another in a single program of instruction. Although terminology sometimes varies among researchers, there is significant agreement about the distinctions and relationships among key concepts. The list below, while not exhaustive, is intended to highlight the chief sources of instructional content and practice in DLIFLC Basic Course programs.

*Intended curriculum.*<sup>2</sup> The documents that lay out the purpose, general content, and mandated outcomes for DLIFLC Basic Course students come from two sources, representing distinct objectives. The Final Learning Objectives correspond to job functions to be performed by the military cryptolinguist, whereas the Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions set the standards for general proficiency at Levels 2 in listening and reading and 1+ in speaking.

*Planned or written curriculum.*<sup>3</sup> DLIFLC and department catalogs, as well as Basic Course descriptions and syllabi, articulate what will be taught and learned in the Basic Course. Although what happens in the classroom stays in the classroom, so to speak, the planned curriculum represents a public declaration of intent regarding what learning will take place in the course and how it will be accomplished.

*Supported curriculum.* According to Glatthorn (1999), this refers to "the curriculum that appears in textbooks, software, and multimedia materials" (p. 30). In DLIFLC programs, the supported curriculum includes all materials issued to students or provided for instructor use in the classroom, such as textbooks, grammar reference books, dictionaries, audio files, authentic materials, and the like.

The *enacted curriculum* (or *taught curriculum*) refers to the actual instruction that takes place in the classroom.<sup>4</sup> Teachers are not empty or neutral vessels that deliver the planned curriculum in a "pure" form. Differences in faculty competence, personality, preference, and how they understand the program and its purpose can lead to widely divergent outcomes among learners.

The *assessed* or *tested curriculum* signifies the content and skills that are included in those tests that measure the learner's mastery of target content

and skills, as a condition of passing the course of study.<sup>5</sup> All teachers and learners whose success is decided by the “big” test are familiar with the phenomenon known as *test washback*. Once the interested parties become somewhat experienced with a high-stakes test, few can resist entirely the temptation to focus to one extent or another on what can be learned about test content and on test-taking strategies oriented on the format of the test.

## CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

While concepts related to curriculum alignment have been presented here with examples drawn from the Basic Course, it is the purpose of this paper to explore how a higher (rather than lower) degree of curriculum alignment can be achieved in language programs of the Field Support Division. As we have seen, curriculum alignment can be understood and assessed as the degree to which the various curricula listed above -- planned, supported, taught, and tested -- either align with or diverge from the intended curriculum, i.e., the standards or outcomes articulated as the purpose for the course or program of study. In some Field Support programs, however, unique and transitory requirements articulated by host military units and acute limitations on time and administrative conditions can compel Language Training Detachment (LTD) administrators to draw from and adapt syllabi, textbooks, and tests that were not originally created for the new course. This results in a lower degree of curriculum alignment. Under these conditions, instructors typically draw on methods and materials used in past courses that provide them with a familiar roadmap for their teaching that can frequently lead to a different destination from the stated objective of the new course.

The relationship among the curricula that make up the Basic Course does not provide a serviceable model of curriculum alignment for Field Support programs for a number of reasons. For one, the longer program length of the Basic Course permits the creation of suitable instructional materials by the Curriculum Development Division, as the intended and planned curricula of that course will not change significantly over the lengthy span of time that it takes to produce the materials. A more suitable model of curriculum alignment for Field Support courses may be found, rather, in the field of *instructional design*, a discipline that, while not exclusively reliant on digital modes of instruction, has grown substantially with the advent of distance learning technology and online courses.<sup>6</sup> In contrast to an earlier humanist educational tradition, which stressed the incommensurable whole of learning and development of the total person, instructional design has its origins in behaviorist models of cognition and learning, as is evident in its emphasis on discrete learning objectives, measuring progress, and both the formative and summative roles of assessment.<sup>7</sup>

An early model proposed by pioneers in the field of instructional design, Walter Dick and Lou Carey (1978), remains a touchstone in the discipline despite later modifications of the authors and alternative but similar models proposed by later scholars. This article is not the place to examine the model's merits and drawbacks in detail. Rather, it may serve to highlight a few

principles that are potentially useful for guiding Field Support course developers. As can be seen in the graphic below, the process of instructional design starts always with identifying the goal or intended outcome of instruction.<sup>8</sup>

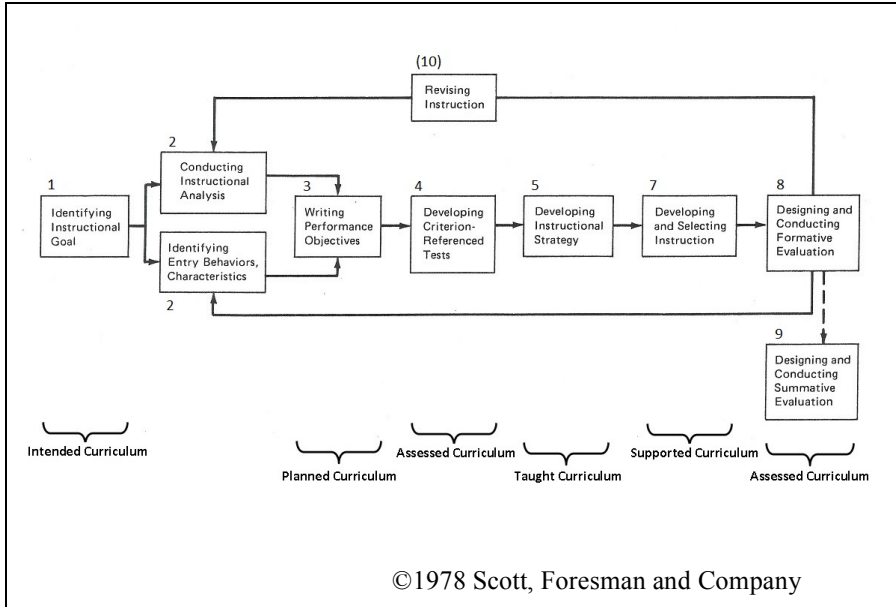


Figure 1: *The Process of Instructional Design*

What likely seemed a counterintuitive suggestion for many in the 70s—starting with the desired outcome—is now a familiar concept to most educators, often known by the term “backward design,” introduced by Wiggins and McTighe.<sup>9</sup> What is even more striking is that five of the ten steps or decisions included in this flow chart illustrating the instructional design process involve either articulating or testing goals and objectives. In other words, formative and summative assessment form the backbone (virtually the entire skeleton, as it were) of a well-designed course according to this and related models.

The formative role of *all* assessment was confirmed by recent experiences in the Field Support Division. When it became evident that contract instructors were teaching chiefly to the OPI rather than to the operational objectives of a 16-week Pashto Course for General Purpose Forces (GPF) at Fort Carson and other Field Support LTDs, a new summative assessment was designed that was consistent with course objectives, to be taken as an end-of-course test along with the OPI. Subsequent class observations indicated, however, that few changes resulted from the new test in teaching content and strategies. In order to influence instruction more directly, new job related performance objectives were introduced to students and instructors at the start of

each unit/week, and formative assessments of those objectives were held at the end of the units. As can be seen, these curriculum changes correspond to the third, fifth, seventh, and eighth steps in the Dick and Carey model. The influence of these changes on teaching strategy and content was evident both in class observations and in the competencies demonstrated by students in regular assessments. Noticeable, too, was a markedly higher level of student engagement.

These experiences suggest that thoughtful decisions about unit and end-of-course performance objectives, paired with assessments that measure those objectives, can direct and motivate language acquisition that is oriented toward those goals. This indicates that, in terms of curriculum alignment, the tested or assessed curriculum can have a significant influence (as test washback), if not an even greater impact on the taught curriculum than do the planned and supported curricula (i.e., syllabi and textbooks). Backward instructional design, then, offers a model that can facilitate—and expedite—the development of new courses that are tailored to host unit requirements.

Once clear course goals have been determined, specific performance objectives should be formulated. The ILR Language Skill Level Descriptions, for example, can help to identify the lexical and structural features of the language that should be included in course content.<sup>10</sup> It is essential, moreover, that all end-of-course tests assess precisely (and exclusively) the announced objectives of the course. Regular feedback is essential throughout the course in the form of unit performance objectives and either formative or summative assessments of the same. At the Fort Carson LTD, these periodic unit objectives and assessments were called “Milestones” because they marked the course (in the dual sense of the word) that instructors and students needed to follow to arrive at the intended objective. Textbooks and other materials, rather than being followed page-by-page, as their inherent format suggests, became tools that were applied as needed to facilitate mastery of the target skills of the respective units. This does not suggest that just any textbook can be used in any course. To the contrary, well defined performance objectives made it possible for a designated curriculum developer among the contract faculty to create materials to supplement the Basic Course textbook.

It should come as little surprise that clear objectives and valid tests of the same proved to be more than half the battle when it came to adapting printed curriculum materials to courses for which they were not developed. According to the “backward” approach to course design as illustrated in Dick’s and Carey’s model, determining goals and objectives and developing performance assessments to measure their mastery comprise five out of nine process steps (excluding revision) involved in instructional design. Perfect alignment is never possible and, indeed, may not be wholly desirable. Nevertheless, a high degree of alignment among the intended, planned and tested curricula may compensate for less than suitable instructional materials and ensure that the curriculum taught by instructors supports the course objectives.



## NOTES

1. See No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. (2002).
2. In the context of the reforms mandated by *No Child Left Behind*, Kurz, et al. (2009), define *intended curriculum* as what is “set forth in the content standards for a particular subject and grade level.” See “Alignment Of The Intended, Planned, and Enacted Curriculum In General and Special Education and Its Relation To Student Achievement” *Journal of Special Education* 44(3), p. 13. A related term used by Glatthorn (1999) is “recommended curriculum,” which refers not only to state standards but to the content and objectives “advocated by experts in the subject fields.” See “Curriculum alignment revisited,” *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 15(1), p. 30.
3. Kurz et al. (2012) ascribe the planned curriculum exclusively to the teacher (see pp. 38-40); whereas Glatthorn’s (1999) more or less parallel concept, written curriculum, includes “document(s) produced by the state education agency, the school system, the school, and/or the classroom teacher” (p. 30).
4. Kurz et al. (2009) define the “enacted curriculum” as “the content of instruction delivered by classroom teachers” (p. 132). In his essentially identical definition of “taught curriculum,” Glatthorn (1999) characterizes it as the “the curriculum that is *enacted* or put into operation” by the teachers (p. 30, my italics).
5. Here, too, the “assessed curriculum” of Kurz et al. (2009, p. 132) and Glatthorn’s (1999, p. 30) “tested curriculum” appear to be identical.
6. Moore and Kearsley (1996) make the instructional designer an essential member of the distance education team, which combines his curriculum design know-how with the respective competencies of the content expert and technology specialists. In the world of instructional design, then, the scholar within a discipline is no longer master of the classroom, but simply one of three equally important consultants, as it were. In the absence of a need for distance learning technology, as in most Field Support classrooms, this perspective would still see instructional design as an essential partner of the native-speaker/language instructor as content expert. In *Distance Education: A Systems View* (p. 15), Michael G. Moore and Greg Kearsley, 1996, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
7. In their groundbreaking early book on instructional design, Dick and Carey acknowledge that their “book will stress the behavioral science approach to designing, developing, and evaluating instruction,” even as they assert “that the humanistic and systems approaches must be integrated in the classroom to provide the best atmosphere for effective student learning.” See *The Systematic Design of Instruction* (p. 4), by Walter Dick and Lou Carey, 1978, Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company.
8. See Dick and Carey (1978, p. 9). Although versions of the flow chart that appear later in the book include more lines, illustrating more complex relations among the stages in the curriculum design process, I have chosen the first version to enhance the simplicity and clarity of the model for our purposes. The

numbers beside the boxes and the curriculum designations at the bottom of the graphic are my own.

9. Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, 1998, *Understanding by Design*, Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. See especially Chapter 1, "Backward Design," pp. 13-34.

10. It is important in this regard, not to adhere rigidly to the explicit descriptors and examples included in the ILR Language Skill Level Descriptions, but to use them as a general frame of reference. For example, when a new summative assessment was developed for the 16-week GPF Course, it was important that all speaking test tasks fall within the Level 0+/1 range. While forming simple commands – an essential task for soldiers – is not to be found in the ILR Speaking Level 1 description, the grammar, syntax, and text type (short sentence) of the function were attributed to Level 1.

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## ***Cultural Competency as a Central Component in Immersion***

CHI-PING SHIH

*Asian School I, Undergraduate Education*

Immersion programs are central to the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center's (DLIFLC) mission of educating military personnel in both language and culture. At DLIFLC, students are about to embark on advanced careers in defense, diplomacy, and intelligence, and teachers are called on to educate language learners at the highest levels of linguistic and cultural fluency. The emphasis on immersion reflects a national and even global trend toward immersive learning as a valued language training methodology. A review of the scholarly literature published in the past several years reveals a growing trend toward immersion in various educational settings -- from elementary classrooms to adult learning centers. Driving the trend is a global economic environment that demands higher levels of language and cultural knowledge among business people (Chambless, 2010; Momentum, 2013). This article will recapitulate the literature review on cultural competency relevant to immersion, and discuss its application in the DLIFLC learning context.

Lapkin et al. (1990) conducted one of the seminal studies of immersion in language instruction. Immersion programs were found to improve language learning in students, particularly oral and written grammar proficiency. In addition, students participating in immersion programs were more likely to retain cultural knowledge than students who learned culture and language in separate teaching environments (Song & Cheng, 2011). Linguistic fluency and cultural competency are interrelated systems that have the benefit of reinforcing each other when integrated. Creating opportunities for students to immerse in the culture and language, immersion programs reinforce these inherently intertwined knowledge systems.

Central to the reasoning for immersion is its benefit for developing not only language fluency, but also cultural competency. Cultural competency is necessary to ensure the linguistic and cultural accuracy of conversations and social interactions (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010). Requiring more than language knowledge and skills, cultural competency involves a sophisticated level of knowledge that relates to authentic and real-life interactions among native speakers. Cultural competence allows learners to understand the nuance and subtlety that occurs within the social and linguistic interactions of native speakers (Pavlenko, 2011). Even a fluent speaker can make damaging communicative errors when lacking cultural competence. For students preparing for careers in defense, diplomacy, and intelligence, such errors are intolerable. The fate of the nation's security lies in teaching not only linguistic fluency, but cultural competence as well.

Cultural competence includes more than acquiring cultural knowledge; it occurs when the foreign language learner begins to think in a way unique to the foreign culture, which is different from the student's native culture. The

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic determination states, “people’s thoughts are determined by the categories made available by their language” (Pavlenko, 2011, p. 2). The related hypothesis of linguistic relativity maintains, “differences among languages cause differences in the thoughts of their speakers” (Pavlenko, 2011, p. 2). DLI students must not only speak like native speakers, they must also think like them. Cultural competency provides the context in which unique cognitive and linguistic features make sense to language learners.

These findings suggest that DLIFLC should ensure that its students possess not only the highest level of language skills but also significant and relevant levels of cultural competency. Instilling students with cultural competency simultaneously meets DLIFLC’s mission of requiring students to use the target language accurately and appropriately. Immersion programs must be carefully designed to introduce students to the specific cultural experiences they are likely to encounter in their professional careers. Instructors with direct experience in these cultures will deliver the authentic relevance identified in the literature as essential to successful immersion programs.

The literature review also shows that cultural competency cannot always be imparted to students effectively through cognitive approaches. “Cultural awareness and knowledge acquired primarily through cognitive learning may remain at an intellectual level and limit students’ abilities to develop cultural competencies” (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010, p. 166). Findings from an analysis of a cultural immersion program in South Africa confirmed the value of an experiential learning approach through cultural immersion training. Students in this program were required to work directly in the community that was the focus of immersion. The students were placed in community-service positions that required them to interact directly with members of the culture and which reflected the real-life situations of their future professional experience. “Direct cross-cultural interactions expose participants to cultural realities of everyday life with the goal of increasing cultural competence” (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010, p. 172).

Researchers find that immersion programs can contribute to cultural competency by venturing outside the classroom and formal teaching approaches. Experiential learning approaches might be designed that require students to work or volunteer in communities that are the focus of the language immersion. These experiences must attempt to replicate the specific cultural context in which the students’ language skills will be applied.

Experiential learning might present logistical and cost challenges for DLIFLC, but the literature also provides evidence that experiential learning can be replicated, to some degree, in the classroom. For example, online technologies allow students to converse and interact in real time with native speakers around the world (Tedick, Christian & Fortune, 2011). Language learners must speak and think like native speakers, and these interactions can be facilitated through direct contact with native speakers via technology and immersive learning opportunities.

Despite the growth of immersion, scholars have noted the wide variation in the success of immersion programs. The growth of immersion

presents the opportunity for misapplication and diminished outcomes when it occurs without simultaneously integrating cultural competency. Foreign language teachers are called upon “to imagine and embrace possibilities for strengthening immersion education to increase its impact and better achieve its goals” (Tedick, Christian & Fortune, 2011, p. 1). This vision must include cultural competency as a central component in immersion.

Not all immersion programs are cut from the same cloth. The success of an immersion program’s capacity to deliver cultural competence depends on, as Song and Cheng (2011) emphasized, teacher education, credentialing, and professional experience relevant to what the students are likely to encounter in real-life professional careers. Professional development of language instructors should emphasize their own development of cultural competency.

Ultimately, the goal of immersion should be to replicate real-world situations faced by students in their chosen careers. Given the importance of these careers, the ability of immersion programs to deliver cultural competency at DLIFLC should rise to national-security priority.

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## ***Which Type of Homework Is Most Helpful?***

JAHANGIR G SARAVANI

*Persian Farsi School, Undergraduate Education*

Teaching requires involving students in the process of learning, finding ways to learn about their interests, providing them with meaningful learning materials, allowing them to share their feelings and opinions, and helping them feel that they are a part of the learning process. Through eliciting feedback from students, we can identify and address weaknesses in instruction. The ISQ/ESQ elicits feedback from students, but the questionnaire items may not address every issue that interests teachers.

Teachers may request permission from their school authorities to devise supplemental questionnaires and administer them to their students, which is what I did to elicit feedback on third-semester homework in the Undergraduate Persian Farsi (UPF) School Basic Course. Content aside, I wanted to learn which format of homework – transcription, translation, multiple-choice, constructed-response, fill-in-the-blanks, research on cultural topics, or a combination of two or more types of homework– was the most effective, useful, and beneficial to students.

Through the process of studying 108 students' perceptions and opinions about the effectiveness and helpfulness of the types of homework assignments in the UPF School, I learned that eliciting student feedback provides valuable and important information that can be used to improve the quality of learning materials and increase teaching effectiveness. I asked students, through a questionnaire, to rank order the helpfulness of seven types of homework activities on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the most and 7 the least helpful. The following table is a summary of my students' responses. This finding helped me to design homework assignments accordingly.

Table 1: *Helpfulness of Different Types of Homework*

No = 108

<i>Type of Homework Activities</i>	<i>Average Ranking</i>	<i>Ranking Order</i>
Transcription	2.24	1
Translation	2.77	2
Multiple Choice	3.00	3
Combination of 2 or more types of activities	3.80	4
Constructed Response	3.83	5
Research	4.84	6
Fill in the Blanks	5.29	7

A link to the questionnaire that I used in my research is provided below for all DLI instructors as an example of the content and the format of a questionnaire. The link opens in Google Chrome, or Firefox: <https://app.box.com/s/dl518msnoxvhp2iv0j7m>.

### ***CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS***

*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. It provides a forum for faculty and staff at DLIFLC to exchange professional information. *Dialog* encourages submission of articles, reviews, brief news items, quick tips, or resources.

Please refer to *Information for Contributors* (pp. 91-95) for detailed submission guidelines. Follow the guidelines in the preparation of your manuscripts.

**Deadline:** Submissions are welcome at any point. Manuscripts received by 31 January will be considered for the spring issue and by 31 July for the fall issue.

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## MEET A TEAM

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### ***We Listen, We Share***

*Interview with Mr. Eid Istfanos, a Team Leader in Middle East School I, Undergraduate Education*

*Editor:* Congratulations on receiving the Provost Team Teaching Excellence Award in 2013. Would you tell the readers about your team?

*Mr. Istfanos:* Our team has six members: Dr. Karadaghi, Dr. Salib, Mrs. Morcos, Mr. Hanna, Mr. Abdelmalak and me. We are from different countries and have had various educational and professional backgrounds before coming to DLIFLC, but now we work well as a team. In the last few years, we have consistently helped our students achieve a high graduation rate with low attrition.

*Editor:* How did you do it? Tell us your most effective practices.

*Mr. Istfanos:* Planning is very important. We need to **plan ahead and plan well**. We have a clear goal and a teaching plan to make best use of class time. In addition to a regular lesson plan, we always have a back-up plan. Because students have different learning needs and styles, materials and activities that we have planned for the whole class may not work well with some students. The regular lesson plan meets the needs of most students, but for those with special needs, we can easily draw ideas from the back-up plan, get materials from our large collection of authentic materials, and quickly help those who need more instruction or materials. For example, a fast learner will not sit around watching other students finish their work. Instead, as soon as he finishes his work, we give him a new task. No class time is wasted for anyone.

*Editor:* Could you elaborate on your collection of learning materials?

*Mr. Istfanos:* We have spent a lot of time collecting authentic listening and reading materials. So far, our team has compiled more than 1,500 authentic passages. I organized these passages according to the language level. For each and every lesson in the curriculum, I have added a package of supplementary materials, activities, and quizzes. The Dean and the Department Chair were very



supportive of my efforts. **Building up a collection of materials** helps teachers tremendously. The materials are now on Sakai. Students and teachers can access them easily.

*Editor:* You mentioned that you accommodate students' needs by tailoring their instruction. Would you give us some examples?

*Mr. Istfanos:* Definitely. It is very important to **understand students' needs**. We take our time listening and observing them. Students learn language differently. Some are fast at grasping a global picture and others take their time in analyzing details. We usually place students with similar needs and learning styles in one group and provide them with tailored instruction. As a team leader, I also try to match the teaching and learning styles of teachers and students. To serve our students better, we need to **be flexible** in scheduling, in teaching groups and individuals, in preparing materials, etc. We are open for new ideas, and ready to change to a better way of doing things.

*Editor:* These great teaching practices speak well of your team's expertise in foreign language education. They also indicate absolute teamwork. As a team leader, do you have some tips on building a strong team?

*Mr. Istfanos:* We have a great team. Everyone has the desire and determination to help the students succeed. As a team leader, I don't think I know better than my team members. I always welcome new and better ideas, and try my best to facilitate the team's work.

Respect, open-mindedness, and communication are essential for great teamwork. In consultation with my team members, I have prepared "Team Member Policies," which spell out the individual and team responsibilities, and the rules and procedures to work with colleagues, students, and supervisors. When a new member comes on board, we go over the policies as a team, and explain what is expected from everyone. We also revise the "Policies" if necessary. Because it is a document for our team, all changes are made in consensus. There is less likelihood for misunderstanding when we have a document that clearly outlines what to do and not to do.

Moreover, our team meets once a week to discuss how to teach and how to help our students. We share ideas and resources, and help each other to do a better job. In summary, we always listen to other people's opinions and ideas with respect; and we share our best practices.

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## NEWS AND EVENTS

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“News and Events” welcomes reader contributions. We are interested in (but not limited to) reports on conferences, official trips, official visitors, special events, new instructional techniques, training opportunities, and news items.

### *Implementing Meaningful Changes*

#### *Asian School I, Undergraduate Education*

On Aug 30, 2013, a Training Holiday, a group consisting of the Dean, Team Leaders, Chairpersons, Assistant Deans, and Specialists of Asian School I conducted an in-house brainstorming session. Dean Grant laid out some questions related to four topics: curriculum, methodology, leadership, and feedback. After an hour of fervent discussion, participants shared their best practices. The following is a summary of the strategies and ideas discussed at the meeting.

#### **1. Establishing a solid curriculum through textbooks, supplemental materials, tests/quizzes, and scheduling.**

- Students should be trained with a solid foundation in Chinese reading, listening, and speaking. At the beginning of the course, pronunciation errors should be corrected to improve accuracy. With the help of applications (e.g., tone tuner app) and web based resources: <https://www.yoyochinese.com/>, students will be able to easily identify their mistakes and improve.
- Online authentic videos, GLOSS, and supplemental materials should be utilized according to students’ proficiency levels: Semester I, Levels 1 - 1<sup>+</sup>; Semester II, Levels 1<sup>+</sup> - 2; and Semester III: Levels 2 - 2<sup>+</sup>.
- Target-language only policy should be implemented from Day 1 throughout the course. Both students and teachers are required to speak only the target language in class.
- Learner-driven instructional activities should be increased. Due to the structured curriculum, unit tests and sequencing requirements, teaching teams do not always have the flexibility to select the most suitable and current content for their lessons. Instead of rigidly complying with all of the curriculum requirements, teaching teams will be given the flexibility to design and implement learner-driven instructional

activities. Teachers will explore topics that are interesting to students, assign cultural research projects, and employ Learner In-Front Teaching (LIFT) methods. For listening enhancement, students will be divided into proficiency groups according to their listening comprehension levels. The stronger learners will be introduced to higher-level materials earlier, whereas weaker learners can have more opportunities to practice and review the lesson content they have just learned.

- Team leaders should have clear concepts of when and what should be taught in each semester, which requires detailed weekly schedules. Students will progress steadily according to the curriculum timeline.

## **2. Applying effective methodology in classroom teaching and homework assignments.**

- Build students' confidence through extensive reading of culturally related materials. By introducing non-textbook materials, such as fairy tales, which students are already familiar with, students can guess the content through known background knowledge. During class, teachers can assess students' comprehension through activities. They can also focus on difficult, complex sentences and grammatical structures to help students master the forms and functions of the language.
- Listening ability training:
  - Tailored instruction: Divide students into proficiency groups: strong, medium, and weak, based on Unit 1 test results. Strong students are those who understand and comprehend materials faster; therefore, authentic materials based on their interests can be included earlier. For example, cartoons can be used in Semester I, and news and cultural materials in Semesters II and III. Teachers can also utilize strategies such as diagnostic assessment (DA) and Recall Protocol. For weak learners, teachers can play listening materials twice, check for comprehension, and provide the script on the Smartboard to identify the areas (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, and tones) that hinder a student's understanding. During Semesters II and III, teachers can check on students' cultural understanding and the ability to read and listen between the lines.
  - Structure review strategies: in Semester II, systematically review materials covered in Semester I; and in Semester III, review materials covered in Semester II.
  - Synchronized (speed) listening training: in Semester III, speed training should be integrated into the structure review along with test-taking strategies for practice. All students should listen to Levels 1 and 1<sup>+</sup> materials only once, to accustom them to comprehending content at that speed.

- Enhance independent reading ability:
  - Build a solid foundation on radicals and characters. Encourage students to guess the meaning of new characters when radicals are combined.
  - Time management and test strategy: Some learners perform well in class, but poorly on tests because they spend too much time on one test question. Teachers will teach students how to find clues of meaning in the context (e.g., the previous or the adjacent sentences).
  - Develop higher-order thinking skills, such as making associations, in classroom learning tasks.
- Personalize scenarios in speaking practices to help students internalize the language. Encourage students to create questions and answers based on the passage being learned. Create portfolios of speaking tasks to provide consistent progress check. Be aware that students usually learn chunks of language better than vocabulary items. Provide error correction in speaking and consider the trade-off of “speaking a language or speaking it well” -- fluency versus accuracy. Focus teaching on the learning process.

### 3. **Modeling leadership through expectations, motivation, counseling, team building, and intervention.**

- Harmonious teamwork is critical for creating a positive learning and teaching environment. A weekly team meeting is a practical way to reach agreement on teaching and learning objectives for the following week. A team leader (TL) should provide the opportunity for team members and class leaders to give input, and make adjustments for better performance.
- Facilitate teachers to introduce appropriately authentic materials suitable to each student’s proficiency level. Each team member’s potential, personality, and talents in areas such as grammar, cultural knowledge, and so on, should be utilized through an effective team meeting. This will help teachers to enjoy teaching more and to contribute more to the team. Strategic planning of teacher assignments – placing the right teachers in the right class -- means continuity as well as flexibility in steering the learning progress of the students and promoting a positive atmosphere within the teaching team.
- DLPT 5 briefing or updates should be arranged in the schedule. Orientation of the DLPT 5 is critical in the final days of the course.
- Identify learning problems in Semester I. Swift intervention will prevent problems from growing. Counsel students with military language instructors (MLI) for immediate results, since MLIs have a better understanding of student life and its challenges in academics.
- Problems that cannot be solved at the team level should be promptly referred to the chairperson for assistance.

- If possible, recognition of outstanding team leaders for the quarter or the year should be implemented.
4. **Providing instructional feedback via error correction, diagnostic assessment, Recall Protocol, and other techniques.**
- When a weak student is identified in Semester I, administer DA, which will lead to recommendations for more effective learning strategies. After a DA is completed, regular follow-ups are necessary to check on whether the changes were made to achieve the desired improvement.
  - Teachers should identify L1 interference and provide more instruction on typically misunderstood language specifics by English speakers. Reinforcing these points is necessary for successful language acquisition.
  - Teachers should work with different error-correction strategies at the various stages of learning. This intervention will help students enter the second semester with a sound basic knowledge of the language. For homework, allow students to correct their own errors when possible, because this promotes autonomous learning and internalization of the language.
  - Teachers must be trained in error correction, Recall Protocol, and diagnostic assessment techniques. An experienced and skillful faculty will deliver better quality instruction to students.

The brainstorming session ended with Dr. Leaver's and Dr. Zhao's inspiring and encouraging remarks. Implementations of the best practices are under way in Asian School I.

(Summarized by SU-LING HSUEH)

## ***A Glimpse into the 2013 Faculty Professional Development Day: Sharing Expertise in Instructional Technology***

*Editor:* On 5 July 2013, the Academic Senate held its annual Faculty Professional Development Day. Several hundred DLIFLC faculty members attended more than 30 presentation sessions, learning about the best classroom practices, various resources available for classroom adaption, and the latest developments in foreign language education. Technology in language education continues to draw great interest from the DLIFLC community. Several presenters have generously shared the highlights of their presentations in the “News and Events” column. Those highlights are included below.

### ***iSpeaking Practice with "Complete Class Organizer"***

SEUNG BONG BAEK & SOYOUN PARK

*Asian School II, Undergraduate Education*

Speaking practice sessions in the Korean Basic Course usually use paper, pencils, and recorders for data collection. Each session’s data is solely used by one instructor and kept temporarily for his or her own reference, making it difficult to share the speaking session data among teaching team members for future reference. Because data collected from each speaking session is mostly used only once, it is not meaningfully connected to subsequent sessions.

In comparison, the “iSpeaking” sessions use iPad and a course management application “Complete Class Organizer (CCO).” Each session’s data such as the script, recorded samples, and teacher comments can be instantly collected and made accessible to instructors and learners. For instance, when the speaking session begins, the instructor opens the CCO app and clicks on the student’s name that was previously entered into the app. The instructor can then create a new tab to digitally store the session by writing comments/suggestions, creating scripts/assignments, and recording the session. Because the voice recognition technology of the app cannot provide fully reliable results when there are minor errors, instructors still have to type in comments and suggestions. When several practice sessions are stored, CCO shows multiple tabs with different dates. The speaking session data can be accessed from other iPads when the CCO app is installed.

The major benefits of “iSpeaking” sessions are:

1. They enhance learner’s awareness of the output and errors because the learners are able to visually check the script.
2. They increase autonomous self-correction, reducing the fossilization of the learner’s performance in pronunciation, vocabulary, and structure.
3. They help the course participants (learners, faculty, and the administration) to diagnose and share the learners’ strong and weak points.

iSpeaking sessions not only benefit the learners, but also bring fundamental changes to how individual instructors and teaching teams coordinate speaking practice. The “iSpeaking” model was applied to a group of students in the Korean program at DLI for six months between 2012 and 2013.

### ***GLOSS: Meeting the Needs of Students with a Range of Individual Learning Styles***

NATALIA ANTOKHIN & SARITA CHAVEZ SILVERMAN  
*Curriculum Development, Language Science and Technology*

The Global Language Online Support System (GLOSS) has lessons in 40 languages, all designed to build proficiency for independent learners. GLOSS lessons are found online at an open-source site ([dliflc.edu](http://dliflc.edu)); if you are not familiar with them already, visit the site to take a look at the lessons available in your language. Typically, they span Levels 1 through 3 and consist of 5 to 6 linked activities based on an authentic listening or reading selection (video lessons are available as well).

GLOSS lessons are designed for autonomous learners, and were originally developed to sustain and enhance the proficiency of government linguists such as those at the National Security Agency and the Foreign Service Institute, where they are highly regarded and used on a regular basis. Today, however, GLOSS lessons are also being used by DLI’s Resident programs, and have been embraced by faculty at many of our language schools. For example, the Chinese Basic Course begins using Level 1 GLOSS lessons from Semester 1, integrating their use into instruction on a regular basis and moving up to lessons at L2+ and L3 by Semester 3.

Our study analyzed GLOSS lessons to see the variety of learning styles they address. We focused on three of the nine bipolar learning style constructs included in the E & L Learning Styles Questionnaire (Ehrman & Leaver v.2.0, 2002): the global  $\leftrightarrow$  particular continuum, the inductive  $\leftarrow$  deductive continuum, and the synthetic  $\leftrightarrow$  analytic continuum. Due to space constraints, we cannot elaborate here on the learning implications for each of these continua. It is sufficient to say that in any given class of students, there will be a variety of learning styles that will be preferred by students, with no two students having identical preference profiles.

Based upon a review of GLOSS lessons, we found that across GLOSS lessons, activities that support each of the targeted learning styles can be found. Some lessons support several different learning styles in the various activities that make up the lesson. What this means is that when students use GLOSS lessons regularly, they have the opportunity to exercise a range of learning styles -- both those that they favor, as well as those that may be underdeveloped. When students -- and teachers -- are aware of students’ learning preferences, they are

able to select lessons that play to their strengths, or to select those that will help strengthen their less-dominant styles. Ultimately, this can lead to greater success for our students -- a goal pursued by all DLI faculty.

## ***Technology Integration in Online Course Design***

MEIYI SONG, RONG YUAN & UNSOON WON

*Faculty Development, Language Science and Technology*

The Faculty Development Division has been providing “Foreign Language Education (FLED)” courses as part of the in-service teacher training programs. The presenters used the FLED as an example at the Faculty Professional Development Day program to elaborate on online course design and facilitation. The online course design should integrate both synchronous (Defense Connect Online-DCO) and asynchronous (Sakai) platforms to enhance learner engagement and knowledge co-construction. Successful online or hybrid course design should promote three types of interaction: learner-content, learner-learner, and learner-instructor. Additionally, the effective use of communication tools such as Wiki, Discussion Forum, Blog, and external Web 2.0 tools, such as Linoit, is critical to optimize those interactions and foster a community of practice.

1. **Learner-content interaction:** In addition to material repository, DCO and Sakai serve as a platform for learners to interact with content developed using multimedia authoring tools such as Captivate, which enhances the learning experience, and addresses individual learner needs and learning styles. For example, the designers used Captivate and its audio feature to develop a mini-lecture on the topic of how memory works in the course of FLED III. With the help of audio narration and animated text-based input, the concept of short/long term memory was better illustrated, and important constructs underlying the theory were highlighted.
2. **Learner-learner interaction:** Sakai’s and DCO’s built-in communication tools and other external Web 2.0 tools enable learners to co-construct knowledge through case studies, individual research and group projects, etc. This happened both asynchronously on Sakai’s Wiki, Discussion Forum, or Blogs, and synchronously on DCO via audio/text chatting. Ultimately, rich interaction and ownership of learning contribute to forming a community of practice.
3. **Learner-instructor interaction:** Real-time online learning via DCO web-conferencing enhances instant feedback from instructors and guided instruction. Sakai’s asynchronous communication tools also ensure learner support and instructor feedback.

Furthermore, quality communication, engaging learning tasks, learner orientation and support mechanism are contributing factors to learner



satisfaction. Finally, the panel emphasizes that effective online co-facilitation strategies in the aspects of timing for feedback, division of facilitation load, methods for intervention, as well as forming peer support are crucial to ensure optimal learning outcomes, and to overcome technological limitations.

Current, meaningful, interesting, pioneering, dynamic?

Send it to *News & Events*.

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## QUICK TIPS

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“Quick Tips” welcomes reader contributions. We are particularly interested in previously unpublished, novel or innovative, easy to follow ideas for use in the language classroom or in any aspect of foreign language teaching, such as technology tips, useful classroom activities, and learner training tips.

### *From the Provost’s Desk*

BETTY L LEAVER

*Provost*

*Editor:* The Provost has regularly shared her expertise in foreign language education via *Thoughts for Thursday*. Included in this section are tips on three teaching methods.

### **Modeling**

Modeling involves providing a sample essay with the text structure, grammar, and syntax that students need to acquire. Students then use this to write about a different topic. Let’s say the essay is about photography as a hobby and includes information, in correct morphosyntax, about how the author learned to take good pictures, what is involved in taking good pictures, when the author finds the leisure time for this, with whom (if anyone) the author does the photography, and what this hobby means to the photographer. The student would then write a similar essay about his/her own hobby, e.g., stamp collecting: how the hobby was learned, what is involved, when it is done, etc., i.e. the same kinds of expressions, same text organization, different vocabulary, different content, highly personalized. Creating an original essay, using parallel structure as a framework (or model) for writing about an original topic is a productive activity that can rapidly build literacy skills.

### **Transcription**

While some teachers and students consider transcribing a “boring” activity with little cognitive stimulation required, the opposite is actually true. Transcription can be exciting because, like recall protocols, transcriptions can

tell us the locus of students' errors in perceiving and processing oral language. As such, it lets teachers help students and students help themselves.

What can teachers do? Teachers can look for patterns of errors in sounds. Is /b/ mistaken for /p/ or /m/? Does regressive assimilation confuse students? What about elision, dropped syllables, or whatever salient features your language has that differ from English? Knowing the errors, you can teach students to "hear" differently and vastly improve overall listening proficiency.

And students? Students can be expected to find their own errors by comparing their transcript with a teacher's version. They should look for patterns of error and repetition of error—and they should have the opportunity to listen again, both with the teacher's transcript and with their own, so that they can make secure in their minds the phoneme-grapheme relationship.

## **Recall Protocols**

**Purpose.** Recall protocols were originally used for research. (Charles James introduced this tool for listening research, and Elizabeth Bernhardt adapted it for reading). Although it can be used for memory development (when used with longer, non-repeated passages) as some have been doing at DLI, the real power of the tool is in helping teachers to get inside students' heads to see how they process language.

**Collection.** The first step of a recall protocol is to give students a reading or listening passage and then ask them to write in English everything they understood, letting them listen multiple times to avoid the need to sort memory issues from knowledge gaps.

**Analysis.** Error analysis is the powerful part of a recall protocol. A pattern of error indicates exactly what students need to be taught right now to move them toward higher levels of proficiency faster. Look for patterns of error, not isolated mistakes, in grammar (tense, case, agreement, word order, etc.), vocabulary, content, and strategy. All of these areas may require direct instruction.

## ***Three Training Methods for Advanced Listening Instruction***

LU YE

*Resident Education, Continuing Education*

### **Major Challenges in Listening**

Advanced language learners face some major challenges in listening.

***Speech delivery is too rapid.*** A narration delivered at a rapid pace complicates learning because foreign language learners do not have enough time to receive and process the information.

**Recalling short-term information.** Another challenge encountered during advanced listening is the listener may be unable to recall the previously presented information in the segment. The listener may comprehend everything that was heard but lacks a trained short-term memory for recall.

**Missing context.** When advanced learners have a sufficient vocabulary inventory, emphasis can be applied to the logical flow of context. Many times, learners may understand the content, but not the context or the structural organization, of an entire listening segment because details are out of sequence.

## Training Methods

**1. Shadowing** – responding to the challenge of rapid speech delivery

- a. Repeat every word after the source narration with a 2-3 word lag (increase the lag to 4-5, 6-7... as practice proceeds)
- b. Summarize the general idea of the narration at the end of the repeating

*Note to the instructor:* Practice in two stages. At Stage 1, use simplified news report recorded by the instructors, and at Stage 2 use authentic materials.

**2. Short-term memory training** – Responding to the challenge of inability to recall previously presented information in the segment

- a. Identify the listener's recall threshold (2+: 30 seconds of speech at normal speed; or 1 minute 30 seconds speech at slow speed – such as a teacher recorded narration)
- b. Paraphrase a segment slightly longer than their threshold

*Note to the instructor:* Peer OPI tasks and instructor-recorded narrations are a good start for this practice; they are gradually replaced by authentic materials.

**3. Logic flow** – responding to the challenge of missing context

- a. Instructor dissects the segment based on meaning
- b. Instructor creates exercises where students will complete fill-in-the-blank flowcharts to reinforce sequence and logic of the content
- c. Students draw/summarize the structure of the segment

*Note to the instructor:* Consider adopting strategies in reading skills training by adding one more skill, “visualizing audio materials.” See sample practice below:

*Sample Material:* A sound file on China-Japan relations

Step 1: Use a conventional exercise to define the context

What is NOT implied in the following script?

- A. China and Japan will have better relations.
- B. France and Germany enjoy a good relationship.
- C. China and Japan play a vital role in East Asia.
- D. The U.S. should retreat from Asia.

Step 2: Use structural analysis to help students determine how many parts are in the segment.

Step 3: Ask students to summarize the structure:

- Part I: The importance of China-Japan relationship  
 Part II: Three factors affecting China-Japan relationship  
 Part III: The negative impact of China-Japan relationship

### ***Operationalizing Vocabulary Frequency Lists in the Modern Classroom***

ERIN O'REILLY & JESSICA ROEHRIG

*Faculty Development, Language Science and Technology*

The everyday vocabulary used by native speakers mainly consists of a few thousand high-frequency words. Core word lists have been identified over the past few decades, and more recent research has focused on the application of these lists. Nation and Warring (2000) estimate that the number of high-frequency words English learners need to be productive language users is around 2,000 to 3,000. They also highlight the fact that this estimate can vary depending on language. By applying the principles drawn from frequency word lists, teachers can prepare their students to ultimately become independent, life-long learners.

Implications for understanding the role and value of high-frequency vocabulary for language learners are significant. For example, two studies conducted by Coady, Magoto, Hubbard, Graney, and Mokhtari (1993) found that increasing a learner's knowledge of high-frequency vocabulary resulted in a corresponding increase in reading proficiency. The direct learning of high-frequency vocabulary increases the automaticity of word recognition. Moreover, it ensures greater contextual awareness, which in turn aids in further, situated vocabulary learning. Additionally, Tozcu and Coady (2004) discuss how learners' greater proficiency in high-frequency vocabulary allows them additional cognitive attention that they can use in the interpretation and critical analysis of language passages, meaning the learners are better able to engage in deeper levels of processing.

In order to harness the benefits of frequency word lists, researchers offer the following strategies for vocabulary teaching:

- ***Organize vocabulary presentation according to importance: highest-frequency words first, specialized (such as academic) high-frequency words next, and low-frequency words last*** (Nation & Newton, 1997; Tozcu & Coady, 2004). Organizing vocabulary in this way ensures that students quickly develop a broad foundation in the most important words, which ensures greater comprehension and leads to additional vocabulary development.
- ***Vary teaching methods by word frequency: direct methods for high-frequency words, and indirect methods for low-frequency words*** (Coady et al., 1993; Nation & Newton, 1997). Direct methods are

essential to ensure that students quickly gain facility in the most common words. Additionally, beginning learners lack the lexical awareness to benefit from more indirect methods, such as guessing from context; however, more advanced learners who are ready for lower-frequency words profit from situated learning.

- ***Instead of teaching low-frequency words, teach strategies which students can use to teach themselves these words*** (Nation 1990). Because low-frequency words are not transferable to many other contexts, class time is wasted on instruction of these words. Instead, teach strategies to guess from context, to use affixes, and to create mnemonic devices to remember words. This approach prepares students to become independent, life-long learners.

Today, foreign language teachers can use free, online frequency lists to determine which words in a text or passage may be outside the core of high-frequency words. These lists rank words in the language according to frequency, offering teachers and learners a dynamic tool to target vocabulary instruction. Below are links to word frequency lists:

- Chinese (<http://www.quickmandarin.com/chinesecharacter/>)
- Korean (<http://www.topikguide.com/2012/08/6000-most-common-korean-words-1.html>)
- MSA (<http://www.flashcardexchange.com/cards/vocab-from-frequency-dictionary-of-arabic-1766972>)
- English ([http://www.lextutor.ca/freq/lists\\_download/](http://www.lextutor.ca/freq/lists_download/))

## References

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## ***Using Role-Play in the Classroom to Improve Oral Proficiency***

RUIQI MA & JIHUA ZHOU  
*Proficiency Standards, Testing*

Role-Play, an essential part of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), is designed to evaluate the examinee's linguistic ability in a simulated target-culture setting. Because of the spontaneous nature of playing a role in a given scenario, it is difficult to rehearse or memorize this OPI task. Students sometimes stumble on this task due to deficient knowledge of how to interact with testers in simulated real-world settings. Systematically using role-plays as classroom activities may effectively enhance linguistic proficiency and cultural awareness of students.

Because the targeted speaking proficiency levels at DLIFLC are from Level 1+ to Level 2+ for different programs, here we provide the classroom instructors a chart detailing the key functions and basic linguistic features of Role-Play from Level 1 to Level 3.

<i>ILR Level</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Key Function</i>	Survival/routine situation	Survival situation with a complication /non-routine	Unfamiliar situation
<i>Basic Linguistic Features</i>	Can react and ask/answer questions with limited vocabulary. Can initiate and conclude simple/ routine transactional and tourist-type situations.	Can interact and handle non-routine transactional situations involving a complication with high frequency concrete vocabulary and typically controlled simple structure.	Can resolve unfamiliar problems in a target-culture appropriate fashion. Can converse in private or professional situations with broad vocabulary and elaborate structure.
<i>Scenario Examples</i>	Reserving a table at a restaurant; making a doctor's appointment; renting an apartment.	Changing airline tickets due to a missed connection; getting a car fixed at a service station.	Dealing with a noisy neighbor; negotiating with a difficult building manager.

### **Tips for Classroom Role-Plays**

***Tip I: Develop a role-play scenario bank with students to empower them to learn.***

1. Categorize major Role-Playing situation types, e.g., shopping, making reservations, asking for service, scheduling appointments, making rental arrangements, etc.
2. Develop individual scenarios in each category, e.g., in the category of purchasing, one can practice buying airline or train tickets, groceries, clothes, etc.
3. Establish a Role-Play scenario bank according to the level of students.
4. Update the scenario bank to fit the social changes in the target culture.

***Tip II: Design pre-role-play activities to enhance effectiveness of learning.***

1. Brainstorm scenario-related vocabulary, key words and phrases as a pre-role play activity.
2. Formulate different approaches and possible solutions to the selected scenario.
3. Use a spiraling approach to recycle vocabulary and sentence structures. The same role-play category can be used in each learning unit with a different scenario or setting.
4. Highlight target culture appropriateness in the role play scenario.

***Tip III: Creatively act out the roles to ensure a positive learning experience.***

1. Encourage students to try different solutions for the same scenario.
2. Switch roles with students to give them different perspectives.
3. Use different modalities to act out the scenario.
4. Group students to act out one role-play per day according to the syllabus.
5. Run a weekly “The Best Role-Play” competition.

In sum, the key to effectively using role-play in the classroom is to engage students in the learning process. When they are truly motivated in doing these activities, their oral proficiency will be enhanced.

### ***Using YouTube to Enhance Students’ Cultural Knowledge and Vocabulary Retention***

CONG LI

*Resident Education, Continuing Education*

Many teachers have been using YouTube as a source of authentic listening materials. I will share my experience using Chinese movies on



YouTube in cultural classes to enhance students' cultural knowledge and vocabulary retention.

**Tip 1.** Choose movies carefully. With the vast resources and daily updates, the process of choosing an appropriate movie on YouTube has become a blessing in disguise. We need to consider the following factors:

a. **Content.** It should be related to the topic of the week. For example, if the topic of the week is education, choosing a movie about students' life before the entrance exam to college is closely related to students' learning. Teachers need to select and accumulate good videos. Sharing among teachers is an efficient way to increase the number of videos suitable for instructional purposes.

b. **Quality and Length.** Choose the HD version if it is available. The length of the video should be less than 90 minutes, so it can be covered in two class periods and leave a few minutes for class discussion.

c. **Language and Subtitle.** Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese, as two major spoken languages in China, are equally popular in videos. Even though Mandarin is the standard spoken language, many Chinese speak other dialects, which could sound totally like another language to even native Chinese speakers. Teachers should choose a video that mostly uses Mandarin, and preferably with subtitles. Subtitles help students incorporate their reading skills while watching a movie; leading to a better comprehension.

**Tip 2.** Empower students to explore and embrace the culture. Before watching a video, students already have some ideas about certain cultural aspects of China, such as the family planning policy, history and life of overseas Chinese, residency requirement, or immigrant workers. We should give students some time to discuss and reflect on what they already know. Then after watching, let students comment and ask questions. This not only helps them consolidate their cultural knowledge, but also arouses their interest in learning more.

**Tip 3.** Point out topic-related words and/or phrases throughout the video. Instead of explaining everything at the end, teachers can pause the video from time to time and remind students of key words/phrases used. Vocabulary retention is essential in learning a target language, yet remains a challenge for almost every linguist. It is easier to remember a word in context than in isolation. Reminding students of the context in which a word is used may help them remember it. Vocabulary can be reinforced with post-viewing tasks, such as writing a short commentary/review of the content.

Watching videos in the target language can be fun and rewarding. Teachers can utilize the resources on YouTube for improving students' cultural knowledge and vocabulary learning.

## ***Bringing the iPad to Life in the Language Classroom***

NATALIA BARLEY, SONIA ESTIMA & EDGAR ROCA

*Faculty Development, Language Science and Technology*

Recent years have witnessed a series of major technology related milestones at the DLIFLC. One of them is the easy access to mobile technology, such as the iPad for language learning and teaching. Below are two free iPad apps for the language classroom.

### **Videolicious**

This app allows users to create short videos by combining still shots, video clips, and recorded audio narrations. Videolicious is an excellent platform for oral practice, specifically for recording short narratives, such as providing instructions, giving directions and describing routines. When created by the teacher, the videos can serve as instructional materials. The advantage of this application over audio recorders available on the app store is the visual support it provides.

*Sample Activities:*

***Providing Instructions:*** Students select a simple recipe of a dish from the target culture. Individually or in groups, students select images, prepare, practice and record step by step recipe instructions. The recipes are then shared via email or the share folder. As a possible extension of the activity, students can select one of the recipes and prepare the dish for class potluck.

***Daily Routines/Hobbies:*** Students create a video of their daily activities. They can take pictures of themselves engaged in different activities and then create a voiceover describing the activity.

***Descriptions/Story Telling:*** In addition to instructions and daily routines, the students can also create short stories about their last vacation, their hometown, or any other topic that can be illustrated with images.

### **LinoIt**

LinoIt is a free platform that allows collaboration in real time by posting text, images, links or videos to a common area. A LinoIt account holder can work on multiple canvases, create user groups, and control user access. All group members can work on the same canvas simultaneously with the results displaying immediately on every user's screen. Sample videos are available at <http://en.linoit.com/>.

The LinoIt platform is best suited for information sharing, such as brainstorming ideas, categorizing, creating collages, or participating in group

discussions. From the language teaching perspective, Linoit allows for practice of all skill areas: reading/writing when posting one's own or reading others' text, and speaking/listening when recording or watching short videos.

*Sample activities:*

**Vocabulary:** A teacher displays new vocabulary on a canvas and asks students to provide definitions, pictures, videos, etc. Another possible vocabulary activity is a word sort: students sort a list of words into various categories. These activities can be done as homework assignments in preparation for new topics.

**Thematic canvas:** Students select a theme (a target culture custom, artifact, prominent figure, etc.). Each student or a group of students create their own wall of canvases around that theme.

**Discussion walls:** Teachers can post questions or raise controversial issues and ask students to post their opinions supported by links, videos, or images.

Both applications can serve as a first step towards incorporating mobile technology into language learning. They can enrich the language learning experience by allowing access to different resources and media and encouraging learner autonomy.

Short, practical, thoughtful, innovative, different?

Send your teaching ideas to ***Quick Tips***

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## RESOURCES

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“Resources” welcomes reader contributions. We are interested in brief write-ups on resources related to the foreign language education field, including print and non-print materials, tests, research reports, websites, computer and mobile apps, etc.

### *Website for Pashto Language Learning*

FAQEER M.A. GULRASOUL

*Multi-Language School, Undergraduate Education*

If you need teaching and learning resources for Pashto, check out this website: <http://afghanistan-analyst.org/pashto-language-resources/pashto-online-resources/>. It provides an array of learning materials, such as audio materials, interactive, and multimedia learning materials, podcasts, and video podcasts. Highlights include:

1. Pashto Instructional Recordings. Produced in 1965 for the University of Minnesota Pakistan Peace Corps Project. Provides 16 audio files and an accompanying ~180 page text for free download.

2. Teachionary: Pashto. User can click on ~300 common English words and phrases to hear the Pashto translation.

3. Audio, interactive learning modules, and other resources for learning Pashto language produced by DLIFLC.

4. VOAAfghanistan’s YouTube Channel. Hundreds of short news videos from VOA’s Ashna Television.

5. VOA Ashna Television. Daily video podcast of Ashna Television’s half hour news broadcasts. Serves as an archive for the previous 30 days of Ashna Television episodes.

6. Podcasts of VOA’s Deewa Radio and Ashna Radio, and RFE/RL Azadi Radio.

7. CeLCAR: Pashto Language Learning Podcasts. 3-minute podcasts summarizing news from Afghanistan and the Central Asian region.

8. Links to websites about Pashto, such as PashtunForums.com (Lively discussion forum for Pashto language related issues) and Afghan Jirga (video tutorial on Pashto writing, Pashto books to download, and news commentary).

## ***Socrative for an Interactive Classroom via iPad and MacBook***

SU-LING HSUEH

*Asian School I, Undergraduate Education*

Some students and teachers may lose enthusiasm in the classroom because of the daily dreary routine. When verbal comprehension checks become monotonous, how about changing to something new that excites students and teachers? Can the iPad and MacBook bring vitality, spice, and interaction to our six-hour language classrooms? Can they offer short interactive activities using quick polls, exercises, games, multiple-choice or short-answer quizzes, which arouses students' curiosity and allows them to utilize the knowledge they have learned from the textbooks?

The *Socrative* website (<http://www.socrative.com/>) and its apps make it easy for students and teachers to engage in creative learning activities via iPads, MacBook Pros, and Smartphones. *Socrative* enables teachers to initiate activities and prompt the students for responses. Teachers can put the content in a variety of pre-set formats, such as true or false, multiple choices, short answers, etc. Students can respond via smart phones, iPads, and laptops. Students' eyes light up when they see their responses instantly tallied and presented in a color graph. We can also engage students in constructive tasks by putting their comments, thoughts, and ideas to *Socrative*. Receiving feedback on what they have just created will immediately boost their pride of ownership. Another example is to launch a three-minute *Socrative* interactive review quiz that immediately shows how much students have learned in the class. Having a grasp of students' progress empowers teachers and increases their effectiveness in the classroom.

Teachers can creatively adapt a traditional lesson plan to a dynamic classroom by integrating iPads and Macbooks. It takes less than an hour to become familiar with the *Socrative* applications and website. When you see your students smile, you will know it is worth the effort. While it may be true that all roads lead to Rome, we can avoid the winding and roundabout routes by choosing a path with interesting exercises, meaningful tasks, and suitable assignments that can ignite our students' motivation to learn.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS 2014

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### JANUARY

**January 2-5** Linguistic Society of American (LSA) Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN. Information: [www.linguisticsociety.org](http://www.linguisticsociety.org).

**January 9-12** Modern Language Association (MLA) Convention, Chicago, IL. Information: [www.mla.org/convention](http://www.mla.org/convention).

**January 9-12** American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL), Chicago, IL. Information: [www.aatseel.org](http://www.aatseel.org).

### MARCH

**March 7-10** Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL), Baltimore, MD. Information: [www.nectfl.org](http://www.nectfl.org).

**March 13-15** Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT), Memphis, TN. Information: [www.scolt.org](http://www.scolt.org).

**March 14-16** Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSCTFL), Columbus, OH. Information: [www.csctfl.org](http://www.csctfl.org).

**March 22-25** American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL), Portland, OR. Information: [www.aal.org](http://www.aal.org).

**March 26-29** Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Convention, Portland, OR. Information: [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org).

**March 27** American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Spring Conference, Philadelphia, PA. Information: [www.aatj.org](http://www.aatj.org).

### APRIL

**April 3-7** American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. Information: [www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net).

**April 4-6** Southwest Conference on Language Teaching (SWOLT), Henderson, NV. Information: [www.swcolt.org](http://www.swcolt.org).

**April 24-27** National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL), Chicago, IL. Information: [www.ncolctl.com](http://www.ncolctl.com).

**MAY**

**May 6-10** Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO) Conference, Athens, OH. Information: [www.calico.org](http://www.calico.org).

**May 25-30** NAFSA: Association of International Educators Annual Conference and Expo, San Diego, CA. Information: [www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org).

**JUNE**

**June 13-15** International Society for Language Studies (ISLS) Annual Conference, Akita, Japan. Information: [www.isls.co/index.html](http://www.isls.co/index.html)

**June 16-19** American Association of Teachers of Korean (AATK) Annual Conference, Boston, MA. Information: [www.aatk.org](http://www.aatk.org).

**JULY**

**July 8-11** American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) Annual Conference, Panama City, Panama. Information: <https://aatsp.site-ym.com/>.

**July 19-22** American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), New Orleans, LA. Information: [www.frenchteachers.org](http://www.frenchteachers.org).

**NOVEMBER**

**November 21-23** American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention (ACTFL), San Antonio, TX. Information: [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org).

**November 21-23** American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX. Information: [www.aatg.org](http://www.aatg.org).

**November 21-23** American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI) Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX. Information: [www.aati.org](http://www.aati.org).

**November 21-23** American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Fall Conference, San Antonio, TX. Information: [www.aatj.org](http://www.aatj.org).

**November 21-23** Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA) Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX. Information: [clta-us.org](http://clta-us.org).

**November 21-23** National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL), San Antonio, TX. Information: [www.nnell.org](http://www.nnell.org).

**November 22-25** Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting, Washington, DC. Information: [www.mesa.arizona.edu](http://www.mesa.arizona.edu).

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## INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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### AIMS AND SCOPE

The publication of this internal academic journal is to increase and share professional knowledge and information among Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) faculty and staff, as well as to promote professional communication within the Defense Language Program.

*Dialog on Language Instruction* is a refereed journal devoted to applied research into all aspects of innovation in language learning and teaching. It publishes research articles, review articles, and book/materials reviews. The community-oriented columns -- Faculty Forum, News and Views, Quick Tips, and Resources -- provide a platform for faculty and staff to exchange professional information, ideas, and views. *Dialog on Language Instruction* prefers its contributors to provide articles that have a sound theoretical base with a visible practical application which can be generalized.

### SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

All materials submitted for publication should conform to the guidelines in this section. For additional guidance, refer to *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition, 2009).

We encourage you to submit a previously unpublished manuscript, an article, a review, a description of innovative classroom activities, a news item, a quick tip on teaching, information on learning resources, or even a comment on language instruction. Express your ideas and present your findings on all aspects of language instruction including teaching, learning, and research.

Please note that *Dialog on Language Instruction* accepts only original manuscripts with the understanding that they have not been submitted for publication elsewhere.

### Contact Details for Submission

Authors are requested to submit their manuscripts (the text, tables, and artwork) as email attachments in MS Word format to the journal editor: [jjaying.howard@dliflc.edu](mailto:jjaying.howard@dliflc.edu)



## PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Prepare the manuscripts in accordance with the following requirements:

- Not exceeding **5,000** words (not including references, appendices, etc.);
- Using double spacing, with margins of one inch on all four sides;
- Using Times New Roman font size 10 or 12 only (including tables and graphics);
- Numbering all pages consecutively;
- In black and white only, including tables and graphics;
- Create graphics and tables in a Microsoft Office application (Word, Powerpoint, Excel);
- Graphics and tables should not exceed dimensions of 7.5" (length) x 4.5" (width); and
- Keeping the layout of the text as simple as possible.

### Article Structure

<i>Abstract</i>	State briefly the purpose of the study, the principal results, and major conclusions in a concise and factual abstract of between 150-200 words.
<i>Introduction</i>	State the objectives of the work, the hypothesis, the research design, and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.
<i>Literature Review</i>	Discuss work that has a direct impact on your study. Cite only research pertinent to a specific issue and avoid references with only tangential or general significance. Emphasize pertinent findings and relevant methodological issues. Provide the logical continuity between previous and present work.
<i>Method</i>	<p>State the hypothesis of your study. Describe how you conducted the study. Give a brief synopsis of the method. Provide sufficient detail to allow the work to be replicated. You may develop the subsections pertaining to the participants, the materials, and the procedure.</p> <p><i>Participants.</i> Identify the number and type of participants. Specify how they were selected. Provide major demographic characteristics.</p> <p><i>Materials.</i> Describe briefly the materials used and their function in the experiment.</p> <p><i>Procedure.</i> Describe each step in conducting the research, including the instructions to the participants, the formation of the groups, and the specific experimental manipulations.</p>

<i>Results</i>	State the results and describe them to justify the findings. Mention all relevant results, including those that run counter to the hypothesis.
<i>Discussion</i>	Explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.
<i>Conclusion</i>	Describe the contribution of the study to the field. Identify conclusions and theoretical implications that can be drawn from your study. Do not simply repeat earlier sections.
<i>Appendix</i>	Place detailed information (such as a sample of a questionnaire, a table, or a list) that would be distracting to read in the main body of the article.
<i>Notes</i>	Use them sparingly. Number them consecutively throughout the article. They should be listed on a separate page entitled Notes.
<i>References</i>	<p>Submit on a separate page with the heading: References. References should be arranged first alphabetically and then further sorted chronologically if necessary. More than one reference from the same author(s) in the same year must be identified by the letter 'a', 'b', 'c', etc., placed after the year of publication.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u></p> <p>Benati, A. (2005). The effects of PI, TI and MOI in the acquisition of English simple past tense. <i>Language Teaching Research</i>, 9, 67 – 113.</p> <p>Cain, K. (2012, June 29). The Negative Effects of Facebook on Communication. Social Media Today RSS. Retrieved January 3, 2013, from <a href="http://socialmediatoday.com">http://socialmediatoday.com</a>.</p> <p>Lee, J. &amp; Benati, A. (2007). <i>Second language processing: An analysis of theory, problems and solutions</i>. Continuum: London.</p>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	Identify colleagues who contributed to the study and assisted you in preparing the manuscript.

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*Author* Type the title of the article and the author's name, position, school/department/office, contact information on a separate page to ensure anonymity in the review process.

Example:

Foster Learner Autonomy in Project-based Learning

JANE, DOE

Assistant Professor

Persian-Farsi School, UGE

[jane.doe@dliflc.edu](mailto:jane.doe@dliflc.edu)

831-242-3333

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## Reviews

Reviews of books, textbooks, scholarly works, dictionaries, tests, computer software, audio-visual materials, and other print or non-print materials on foreign language education will be considered for publication. Give a clear but brief statement of the work's content and a critical assessment of its contribution to the profession. State both positive and negative aspects of the work(s). Keep quotations short. Do not send reviews that are merely descriptive. Reviews should not exceed **2,000** words.

## Faculty Forum

This section provides an opportunity for faculty, through brief articles, to share ideas and exchange views on innovative foreign language education practices, or to comment on articles in previous issues or on matters of general academic interest. Forum articles should not exceed **2,000** words.

## News and Views

Reports on conferences, official trips, official visitors, special events, new instructional techniques, training opportunities, news items, etc. Reports should not exceed **500** words.

## Quick Tips

Previously unpublished, original or innovative, easy to follow ideas for use in the language classroom or in any aspect of foreign language learning and teaching, such as technology tips, useful classroom activities, learner training tips, etc. (Examples include: 5 strategies for a positive learning environment; using iPad to develop instructional video; 4 effective strategies for improving listening – tips that your colleagues can easily adapt to their classrooms). Tips should not exceed **800** words.

## Resources

Brief write-ups on resources related to the foreign language education field, such as books, audio/video materials, tests, research reports, websites, computer and mobile apps, etc. Write-ups should not exceed **800** words.

## REVIEW PROCESS

Submissions are subject to peer review at the discretion of the Editorial Office. Each manuscript will be evaluated anonymously by at least two foreign language educators. Each author will be informed of the evaluation results. In general, a manuscript will be accepted for publication if two anonymous reviewers recommend acceptance, and, by the same token, manuscripts not recommended by the reviewers for publication will be rejected. In cases in which one reviewer recommends acceptance, and the second one, rejection—a third reviewer will be asked to review the manuscript.

**Accepted Manuscripts:** A manuscript accepted for publication may be accepted “as is” or may require certain revisions.

**Rejected Manuscripts:** Manuscripts are rejected due to such major flaws as:

- Inappropriate/unsuitable topic for DLIFLC
- Lack of purpose or significance
- Lack of originality and novelty
- Flaws in study/research design/methods
- Irrelevant to contemporary research/dialogs in the foreign language education profession
- Lack of organization
- Poor quality of writing
- Inadequate preparation of the manuscript

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

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

## CORRESPONDENCE

Send all inquiries by email to the Editor: [jiaying.howard@dliflc.edu](mailto:jiaying.howard@dliflc.edu).

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