

MultiTasks, MultiSkills, MultiConnections

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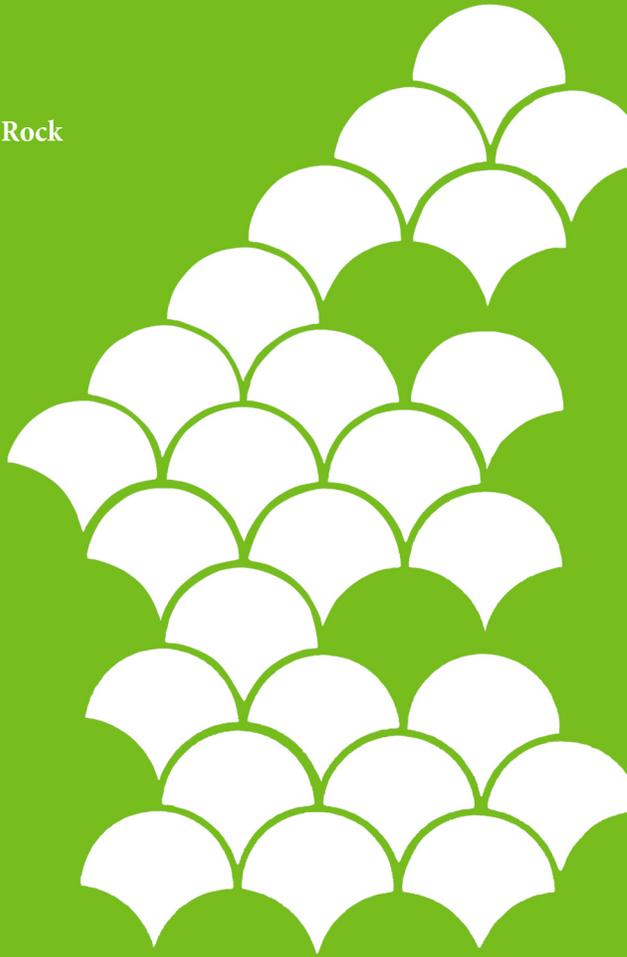
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2013 Report of the
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

MultiTasks, MultiSkills, MultiConnections

**Selected Papers from the 2013
Central States Conference on the Teaching of
Foreign Languages**

Stephanie Dhonau, Editor
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

**2013 Report of the
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

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Review and Acceptance Procedures Central States Conference *Report*

The Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages *Report* is a refereed volume of selected papers based on the theme and program of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Abstracts for sessions are first submitted to the Program Chair, who then selects sessions that will be presented at the annual conference. Once the sessions have been selected, presenters are contacted by the editor of the *Report* and invited to submit a manuscript for possible publication in that volume. Copies of the publication guidelines are sent to conference presenters. All submissions are read and evaluated by the editor and four other members of the Editorial Board. Reviewers are asked to recommend that the article (1) be published in its current form, (2) be published after specific revisions have been made, or (3) not be published. When all of the reviewers' ratings are received, the editor makes all final publishing decisions.

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Preface

MultiTasks, MultiSkills, MultiConnections

The 2013 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, a joint conference with the Ohio Foreign Language Teachers Association, focused on the ways that teachers work together daily with other world language teachers and teachers from other disciplines to connect the curricular areas. By integrating world languages into the entire school, we are strengthening the position of these languages in the curriculum. I keep telling my students that everything is connected. It is the study of another language, the people and their customs, that creates this curriculum-wide, worldwide connection, and helps them to develop attitudes and skills that will ensure their success as students, as well as citizens of the 21st century. There are problems to be dealt with as language teachers; we, as teachers and students are developing the skills needed to surmount these challenges. Our success depends on our ability to relate to and work with other teachers in our school, as well as the world beyond our school walls. It is up to us to advocate for language learning and make the case for our connection to the rest of the curriculum.

In the Keynote Address Terry Caccavale, past president of NNELL and Foreign Language Specialist for Holliston Public Schools, Holliston, MA, energized the teachers and encouraged them to connect with each other and with teachers of other disciplines to face the challenges of the 21st century. Alone we are good. Together we are great. Terry also presented a workshop on “Literacy: The Key to Second Language Development.”

Our multi-talented presenters enriched the program with more than 200 workshops and sessions, dealing with topics from Oral Proficiency Interviews and Common Core Standards to assessment, teaching in the target language, and using iPads in the foreign language classroom. Teachers shared their expertise on connecting with students via music, poetry, art, culture, film and technology with attendees from the 17 central states. Fourteen states were represented by “Best of...” presentations, and several “All Stars” returned from last year’s CSCTFL and OFLA conferences. Eight sessions have been developed into articles that are included in this *Report*.

This multi-faceted volume of the *Report* offers a variety of topics and ideas to enhance our teaching and help us to connect with all students at all levels and with teachers of other disciplines, proving that the foreign language faculty is a vital part of a school that can connect the entire curriculum.

Leann Wilcoxon
2013 CSCTFL Program Chair

Multiple Approaches to Furthering World Language Proficiency

Stephanie Dhonau

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

This year's volume of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSCTFL) Report centering on the conference theme of MultiTasks, MultiSkills, and MultiConnections focuses on the importance of world language use within the classroom and beyond with articles extending the conversation on target language use in instruction, on 21st century skills and accompanying Web 2.0 technologies that faculty and students can access and use to connect to the larger world, and applications of standards-based instruction at K-16 levels of instruction.

The profession's K-16 *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* are well represented in this year's volume as all articles connect in some manner with one or more of the 5Cs in meaningful ways, demonstrating how the profession has embraced the national conversation on what *students should know and be able to do* in a second or multiple language.

MultiTasks

The articles in this section of the volume share the theme of instructor target language (TL) use with recent attention placed on the role of the target language in instructed situations, questions of how much, when and for what purpose are discussed in two articles. In the first article exploring the issue of TL usage in the classroom, "Instructor Target Language Use in Today's World Language Classrooms," Diane Ceo-DeFrancesco shares the results of a questionnaire distributed at a regional conference investigating world language teacher target language usage in the classroom. Over 247 participants shared their goals for TL use in the classroom while also self-reporting their perceived usage of the TL for instruction. The author discusses the disconnect between goals and usage in instruction with recommendations for improving TL use in the classroom environment. The second article in this section "Keeping it in the Target Language," authors Aleidine Moeller and Amy Roberts discuss classroom target language use by exploring the prevailing literature and then offer a principled approach to designing instruction to emphasize target language usage, focusing on concrete methods to increase TL use of both instructor and students. While multiple standards are invoked in this section, significant attention is given to the standard of Communication.

MultiSkills

In this section, the reader finds a focus the Partnership for 21st Century skills and technology integration in three articles. In "Enhancing Communicative

Competence Through Integrating 21st Century Skills and Tools,” authors Leah McKeeman and Blanca Oviedo discuss the Partnership for 21st Century Skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking as it relates to the elementary college level classroom by employing a variety of open source Web 2.0 tools to use the target language in meaningful, personalized project-based learning; moreover, the authors discuss student impressions of the use of technology to meet communicative goals. Secondly, in the article “Developing MultiSkills in 21st Century Learners,” Rosalie Cheatham, Tracy Bishop, Dave McAlpine, and Sherrie Ray offer an extensive overview of the ACTFL World Languages Skills Map, providing a discussion of a year-long professional development workshop series for area world language teachers conducted at their institution to share this curricular innovation. In the article they describe the process of understanding how the ACTFL P21 Skills Map may be incorporated into K-16 instruction alongside standards-based instruction. Finally, in this section, the use of multimedia and Web 2.0 applications are addressed in the article, “Effective Chinese and Japanese Character Instruction Using an Etymological CALL Approach,” authors Sadatoshi Tomizawa, Kazumi Matsumoto, and Miho Endo write about the challenges of reading and writing for students of logographic writing systems. They focus on multimedia solutions and innovative technology development to aid learners of Japanese and Chinese learn to read and write the characters in these two less commonly taught languages as well as focus on the strong cultural influences and meaning embedded in the writing systems. In this section, significant attention is devoted to Communication, Culture, and Comparisons.

MultiConnections

This collection of articles integrates various aspects of language learning usage for various purposes including connections to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), to service learning for collegiate intermediate Spanish students not necessarily pursuing a major or minor in the language, and to innovations for providing more literature exposure into language learning. In Carolyn Gascoigne and Juliette Parnell’s “Tasks and Focus on Form: Connections in the US and Europe,” the authors discuss contemporary thought on meaning- focused, form-focused, and finally, focus on form instruction to aid the language acquisition process, turning to the CEFR’s six-step auto-reflection tasks to design focus on form instruction. In a second article, “Service-Learning for Students of Intermediate Spanish: Examining Multiple Roles of Foreign Language Study,” Chin-sook Pak discusses the inclusion of a service learning component in the last required world language course in a university requirement. Discussing the fact that most world language service learning projects have focused on majors and minors pursuing the language, this project concentrated on sharing with a diverse group of students how they could use their required language study to become life-long learners and communicators. The author discusses the benefits of students expanding their cultural and world view. Finally, in “Innovative Approaches to teaching Literature in

the World language classroom,” Teresa Bell examines the need to provide and support literary texts in language instruction by bridging the gap between developing language proficiency for interpersonal communication and developing literary understanding of authentic literary texts. She offers multiple suggestions for engaging students in the process of reading for information and enjoyment. Within this section, significant attention is focused on Communities and Connections.

1

Instructor Target Language Use in Today's World Language Classrooms

Diane Ceo-DiFrancesco
Xavier University

Abstract

Current best practice recommendations for world language teaching and research in second language acquisition point to the importance of consistent teacher target language use in order to aid students in the acquisition process. In light of research and recommendations, this study sought to investigate K-16 current practices with regard to target language use. A survey of instructors' goals of target language use revealed that instructors tend to value the importance of using the target language with their students. However, based on self-reported actual target language use, it was found that many instructors do not reach their goals. Qualitative data reveal the reported obstacles and classroom realities of 237 language educators impacting target language utilization. In order for instructors to reach their goals effectively, this article identifies and describes specific recommendations for classroom target language use to enhance student acquisition.

Background

Few researchers and theorists today would disagree with the essential role of target language input in the language acquisition process. Target language input has been identified as the overarching concept that permeates all second language acquisition theory (ACTFL, 2010; Burke, 2010; Chavez, 2006; Gass, 1997; Lightbown, 2000; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Shrum & Glisan, 2010; Wilbur, 2007). A reoccurring topic in publications, target language input is fundamental to overall language development. Exposing students to significant amounts of comprehensible input has proven to be crucial to the development of student proficiency and essential for the establishment of mental linguistic representations of the language. Chambers, 1991; Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 2005; Ellis, Tanaka &

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Yamazaki, 1994; Ellis & Sinclair, 1996; Frey, 1988; Gass, 1997; Gass & Varonis, 1994; Krashen, 1987; Krashen & Terrell, 1988; Lightbown, 1991; Macaro, 1997; Pessoa, Hendry, Donato, Tucker, & Lee, 2007; Van Patten, 2002; Van Patten, 2003; Wong-Fillmore, 1985).

Researchers have urged world language instructors to maximize their use of the target language during instruction (Ellis, 2005), to create a target language atmosphere in their classrooms and a context for real communication in order to set an example for and promote student production (Hall, 2001; Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Macaro, 2000; Macdonald, 1993), especially given the fact that there may be few opportunities for students to encounter input outside of the class setting. Many students themselves would claim that, beyond course or credit requirements, a logical rationale for studying a language is to develop the ability to communicate. Official statements and policy as to the amount of instruction that should take place in the target language has been established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2010), ACTFL and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (ACTFL/NCATE, 2002) and the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Language Programs (NADSFL, 1999). ACTFL's 2010 Position Statement on target language use emphasizes the importance of 'meaningful communication' and 'interactive feedback' that leads to communicative and cultural competence. In addition, the statement cites the emphasis on target language interaction in the K-16 Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century. Finally, the statement "recommends that language educators and their students use the target language as exclusively as possible (90% plus) at all levels of instruction during instructional time and, when feasible, beyond the classroom" (ACTFL, 2010). Teacher training publications advocate target language use for overall classroom interactions, including instructions for activities and tasks as well as behavior management (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010; Hall, 2001; Lee & VanPatten, 2003; Lipton, 1994; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Shrum & Glisan, 2010).

Theory, research and practice do not always go hand in hand. In the case of target language use in the world language classroom, in fact, there is a tension between policy, research and practice. Thus, while research and policy have made statements regarding the importance of target language input in the acquisition process, studies dating back to the 1990s document the wide range of the percentage of class time that instructors dedicate to speaking the target language to their students (Duff & Polio, 1990, Macaro, 2001; Turnbull, 1999; Wilkerson, 1994, 2008). Further data from the fall 2008 ACTFL survey of 2,208 teachers, cited that 25.4% of the educators reported using the target language 100% during instructional time (ACTFL, 2009). In that survey, it was commonly reported that 50% of instruction was done in the target language in lower-level classes and 75% in upper-level courses. During the 2007-2008 academic year, 5000 elementary and secondary schools revealed in a survey conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) that roughly one third of their teachers used the target language 75%-100% of instructional time (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2008). Burke (2010) reports from her observations of U.S. elementary and secondary language classes, that

“...English is still dominant, whether in a Beginning or Advanced class” (p. 50). The claim made by Grove (2003) regarding the “enormous disconnect between theoretically informed research and generalized classroom practice” suggests that further work is needed (p. 310). The purpose of the current study is to investigate and report the contemporary realities of classroom practices across levels (K-16) and languages. The overarching research questions are: (1) What differences exist, if any, between instructors’ goals for target language use per class session versus self-reported actual usage? (2) What obstacles do instructors report as the root cause of not speaking more often to their students in the target language?

Methodology

Questionnaire

Administration of anonymous questionnaires took place at regional world language educator conferences and workshops in Western Pennsylvania and Southwestern and Central Ohio. A short questionnaire (See Appendix A) was administered in paper format to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on teacher target language use. Instructors chose a percentage range that matched their goals for target language use. Additionally, respondents estimated their actual target language use during a typical class session by choosing from the same percentage range categories. The questionnaire included open-ended reflective questions in which respondents listed the obstacles that prevent them from using more target language with their students. The qualitative data were organized and tabulated under twenty-four categories, based on type of responses. These twenty-four categories were further organized into three overarching thematic groupings. Instructor responses were tabulated and frequency of response in each category and thematic grouping was recorded.

Participants

Surveyed instructors came from three states: Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Size and type of institution as well as languages taught were not restricted. Sampling was not random in that instructors were attending conferences and workshops on professional development. Of the 237 instructors who completed the questionnaire, 11.8% were university instructors, 74.3% taught in a high school setting, 19.4% in a middle school and 9.7% at the elementary school level. Some instructors reported teaching at multiple levels. Seven languages were represented by the respondents: 0.4% teaching Arabic, 1.7% Chinese, 24.5% French, 7.6% German, 1.3% Italian, 1.3% Japanese, and 71.7% Spanish. Some instructors reported teaching more than one language.

Results

Goal versus Self-reported Actual Usage

Many respondents reported goals of target language use aligning with the ACTFL 2010 position statement: 40.9% of the instructors indicated that their goal was to use the target language during 90-100% of any given class session. 23.2%

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reported a goal of 80-90%, 18.6% reported a goal of 70-80% and 10.5% indicated a goal of 60-70%. Only 6.8% of respondents had goals of target language use below 60% (See Figure 1). Clearly, instructors tend to value the importance of providing input to their students in the target language during every class session, with more than 80% of the respondents indicating a desired usage rate of 70% or greater.

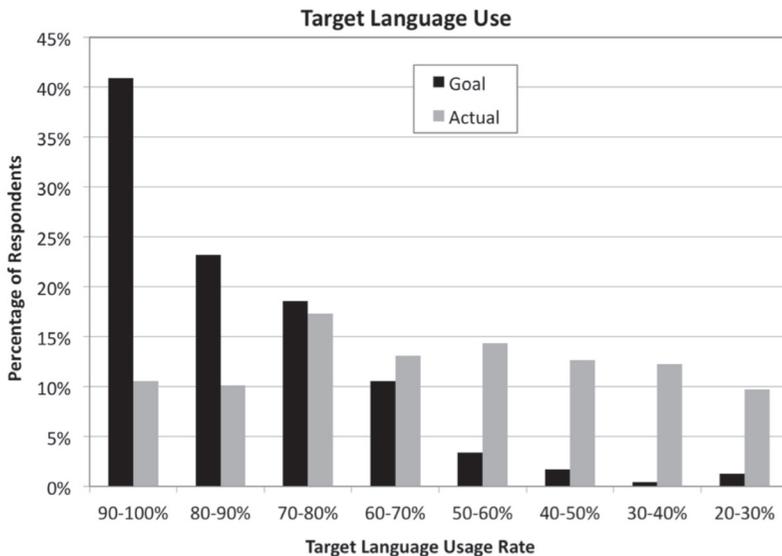


Figure 1. Target Language Use

The self reports of the 237 respondents reveal a wider, more even distribution of actual target language use, differing considerably from the reported goals. The most marked difference occurred at the highest level of usage with only 10.5 % of the instructors reporting actual utilization of the target language 90-100% of the time compared to 40.9% stating this rate as their goal. Similar numbers of respondents reported actual target language use for nearly all rate ranges. Figure 1 shows a comparison of instructor goals and self-reported actual use of the target language. Note that, in general, these results suggest that teachers tend to fall short of their goals for use of the target language during instruction. There was a significant positive correlation between level of teaching and the reported goal of target language use (p -value < 0.03). The reported use of target language also trended higher with teaching level, however it was not statistically significant.

Reported Obstacles

The qualitative responses were organized into three overarching thematic groupings: obstacles beyond the instructor's control, student factors, and teacher training issues. Respondents were free to indicate more than one obstacle. Among the reported obstacles, 11.3% of all responses pertain to factors beyond the teacher's control, 31.4% refer to student factors and 57.3% of the responses

relate to teacher training issues. Instructors reported the following obstacles as factors beyond the teacher’s control: large class sizes; lack of parent, community, administrative and/or technology support; scheduling interruptions; and the need to maintain program for job security. See Table 1 for a breakdown of the percentage of respondents who indicated each of these obstacles.

Table 1. Obstacles Beyond Teacher Control

Obstacle	% Respondents
Large class size	5.5%
Maintain program/job security	1.3%
Lack of administrative support	2.1%
Lack of technology	1.7%
Schedule interruptions	1.7%
Lack of parental support/community involvement	1.7%
Frequency of class sessions/scheduling	3.0%

Qualitative data results show that 31.4% of respondents cited student factors to explain their lack of target language use. Listed in Table 2 are more specific obstacles belonging to this thematic grouping, along with the percentage of respondents who cited these obstacles in the study questionnaire. One instructor stated, “The biggest obstacle is initial student resistance.” Another instructor describes students who literally ‘shut down’ or ‘tune out’ any target language provided by the teacher. Teachers feel forced to speak in English, since their students refuse to even try to understand cognates. Perceived lack of comprehension and frustration among students as well as instructor lack of confidence in students’ ability to actually comprehend input solely in the target language convinces some teachers that they must provide English clarifications. One instructor reported “feeling like they *must* understand everything,” while another stated, “I assume that students will not understand or rebel.” Key words that teachers often included to describe student reactions to teacher target language use include resistance, frustration, refusal, unwillingness, ignorance, panic and fear. Thus, instructors reported feeling forced to resort to English, but also described a feeling of guilt when they did so. According to one instructor, “The students’ frustration leads me to speak English. I feel that every time I speak English, I am failing my students.”

Table 2. Obstacles Involving Student Factors

Obstacle	% Respondents
Lack of motivation	11.8%
Negative attitude	21.1%
High anxiety	3.0%
Frustration	9.3%
Low attention span	1.7%

The third overarching obstacle contributing to the difficulty of teacher target language use involves teacher preparation and training. Instructors noted lack of linguistic abilities to speak the target language, as well as a need for teaching techniques to deal with the following: students' varying abilities and previous preparation, classroom management, establishing rapport with students, inadequate time allotted to achieve program goals, grammar and cultural instruction. Many teachers wrote comments in which they sought advice, training, suggestions, and new techniques for using the target language successfully with their students. Table 3 presents obstacles belonging to this thematic category and the corresponding percentage of respondents who mentioned them. Representative instructor responses for all obstacle categories are available in Appendix B.

Table 3. Obstacles Involving Teaching Training

Obstacle	% Respondents
Time allotted to complete curriculum	15.2%
Teacher language proficiency	4.6%
Classroom management issues	5.5%
Dealing with a range of student ability	12.7%
Delivering grammar explanations	16.5%
Lack of student previous preparation	6.3%
Lack of teaching methodology training in general	8.0%
Establishing rapport with students	2.1%
Delivering cultural lessons	0.8%
Physical issues/fatigue	1.7%
Tendency to give instructions in English	5.1%
Excessive concern with student comprehension	7.2%

Discussion and Recommendations

Reported goals versus estimates of actual target language use reveal that instructors often fall short of their proclaimed goals. Furthermore, two previous studies utilizing self-reporting found that the respondents underestimated their use of English during class sessions, due to instances of code switching, comprehension checks involving translation, and other types of intervention in the native language (Wing, 1980; Wilkerson, 1994 in Wilkerson, 2008). In a study on target language use by Polio and Duff (1994), there came to light an actual "... lack of awareness on the part of the teachers as to how, when, and the extent to which they actually use English in the classroom" (p. 320). Furthermore, as one instructor from the current study stated, "I've been conscious of using too much English in class, and start out speaking Japanese, then later find myself speaking English again." Therefore, since instructors may be unaware of the extent to which they are utilizing English during class sessions, their projections may be overly high estimates. In other words, the discrepancy that exists between goals and estimated use may be larger than demonstrated through self-reports.

Various studies conducted abroad in secondary, foreign language settings report the use of English for discipline, grammar and culture explanations, instructions for setting up activities and homework, lexical translation and comprehension checks, building relationships with learners, testing, listing lesson objectives, and to account for the mixed abilities of learners (Dickson, 1992; Franklin, 1990; Kharma & Hajjaj, 1989; Prahbu, 1987; Macaro, 1995; 1997; 2000; Meiring & Norman, 2002; Mitchell, 1988). In the United States, research has revealed that instructors utilize English for discipline and classroom management, grammar explanations, clarification, saving time and avoiding ambiguity (Duff & Polio, 1990; Kraemer, 2006; Wing, 1980).

Reported goals for target language use demonstrate that many instructors view its use in the classroom as important. However, this acknowledgement of the language acquisition process does not automatically translate into the ability to apply the appropriate techniques to make the target language used in the classroom comprehensible. According to the qualitative data from this study, the overriding factor hindering instructor decisions to provide target language input for their students involve areas that show lack of teacher preparation and training. Based on the obstacles reported, the following recommendations support instructors as they increase the amount of target language provided to students in each class session.

Instructor Strategies

There are numerous strategies that instructors can employ to assist learners in comprehending the spoken language without providing translations or class sessions in English. If applied as a total package, instructors can consistently surround students with the target language, while providing learners with the level of support necessary for them to participate actively in real language tasks.

1. Instructors can make extensive use of Total Physical Response techniques, concrete objects, visuals, gestures, facial expressions and body movements in order that the target language is meaningful and comprehensible to students.
2. The use of modeling or acting to convey meaning is an essential technique to assist student comprehension. Instructors can pair the modeling with spoken language while using exaggerated gestures and props to model or act out every step of a process or direction lines. This can provide a positive challenge for the students as they consider all of the contextualized clues, take risks and guess the meaning of the target language.
3. Instructors can utilize graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams, concept maps, T charts, tables, and bar graphs to assist learners with target language comprehension and to train them in the application of higher order thinking skills.
4. For applicable languages, instructors can take advantage of cognates. By extensively utilizing cognates, instructors can deliberately assist learners in their comprehension of the spoken target language.
5. The instructor can fill silent moments with talk in a target language environment. For instance, as the instructor faces a technology issue or searches for materials,

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verbalizing these activities aloud to students during the lesson will ultimately assist students in comprehending more target language. These actions are associated with the target language and occur in natural and real world situations.

6. Instructors can teach guided note taking as a technique to assist students in comprehending explanations offered in the target language. A sample of the notes with blank spaces, much like a cloze activity, keeps learners engaged and assists them in organizing new information.
7. Instructors can check for comprehension without translating to English. Students can utilize specific gestures to demonstrate comprehension. They can act out actions the instructor describes, draw what they hear, or signal comprehension with hand raising, pointing, standing or showing a number or card.
8. Instructors can teach grammar in the target language. By acting out the meaning of a situation which contains specific structures, the instructor can assist students in making form-meaning connections. Use of presentational software, animation, props and visuals as well as a real world context provide a need for the targeted structures for communication purposes.
9. Sustaining culture as an integral part of each lesson is a key to maintaining instruction in the target language. Instructors can enhance class sessions through target culture visuals and concrete, authentic materials that enrich the context. Utilizing graphic organizers can aid students in the application of higher order thinking skills as they examine products and practices and identify the perspectives of the target cultures.
10. Instructors can give deliberate thought to lesson planning to consider the instructions, transitions, and possible student responses and questions in order to predict and plan for use of effective and comprehensible target language.

Learner Strategies

Students can benefit from learning specific strategies for making sense of the target language they are hearing during class sessions. Students who tend to panic when confronted with a new language will appreciate the support of strategies that they can apply from the very first day of class. They may also find these strategies applicable to their studies in other academic areas.

1. Instructors should teach students metacognitive and cognitive strategies that will greatly enhance their ability to function in a target language classroom environment. These include effective practice strategies, learning style preferences, organizing and self-monitoring progress, and guessing meanings of new material through inference. How do students cope with hearing lots of target language? Support learners by informing them that they do not need to understand every word the instructor says, nor is word for word translation a useful strategy.
2. By teaching specific coping strategies for dealing with frustration, anxiety and

panic, instructors will eventually face less resistance if they persevere and believe that their students can comprehend and develop proficiency. Instructors can suggest that students listen for key words. Also, instructors can calm students' fears by sharing stories of past successes and informing students that they are not the only learner feeling anxious. Offering suggestions for reducing anxiety can eliminate the anxiety that can cause total lack of comprehension. Instructors may find training materials for teaching strategies in various print and online materials (Brown, 2002; Cohen, 2003; Oxford, 1990; Rubin & Thompson, 1994).

3. Students also need to know that language learning is a process of practice as well as trial and error. Risk taking and making educated guesses are vital to the acquisition process in which everyone learns at a different pace. Ambiguity is part of the comprehension process.
4. Instructors can teach students how to utilize to their advantage the techniques that the instructor deliberately employs to assist them in comprehending the target language. Through the use of examples, students can practice how to utilize cognates. Instructors should explain the advantage of props, gestures, visuals, and modeling in order that learners notice and focus on these techniques.
5. Students can become aware of the basic listening strategy that they already utilize in their first language: They do not listen nor do they hear every word that speakers utter to them. Instead, students listen for key words and form a guess as to the overall meaning. If students realize that their guess is incorrect, they can ask follow-up questions for clarification or watch and listen for further gestures and explanation.
6. Students should be taught simple language phrases, questions or other language 'chunks' to assist them in keeping interactions in the target language during class sessions. Instructors can provide these on note cards, posters or colored card stock for easy reference to apply during pair work, group work or full class interaction.

Classroom Management Strategies

Instructors should not feel that they will lose control of their class if they speak the target language consistently during class sessions. Simple measures to address management issues are applicable regardless of the language spoken in the classroom. As instructors teach students the appropriate and expected classroom norms of behavior, learners gain further meaningful experiences in the target language.

1. Instructors can privately address the 'resident interpreter' in each class, applauding the student's abilities to comprehend and interpret, but also explaining how important it is to allow all students to reach that level of comprehension.
2. Instructors can establish clear classroom rules and consequences. Once established, the instructor should model and practice these classroom norms in the target language through signaling and Total Physical Response. Safely

admonishing students in the target language is possible. Although they may not understand all of the words, instructors can make the meaning clear by utilizing the context, gestures and cognates.

3. Establishing specific classroom routines and predictable tasks assist with classroom management while at the same time reducing anxiety and providing students with a feeling of comfort and confidence.
4. Creating a target language environment sends students the message that the target language is a means of real communication. As the teacher models effective use of the target language in authentic situations, this can motivate the learners to do likewise. Using authentic target language resources and insisting on only target language interactions maintains high standards for communication. Establishing this environment is important from the very first day of instruction.
5. Instructors can create a community of learners and a cooperative and interactive atmosphere by treating all information that is communicated by class members as important. Teacher responses show interest in the content of student responses, not simply the grammatical correctness of the utterance (Condrón Flores, 1998; Hall, 2001).

Professional/Linguistic Development

Special considerations can provide instructors with the professional development opportunities that they seek. Delivering assistance, support and feedback in a non-threatening environment can go a long way toward allowing instructors to try out new techniques and strategies for keeping the instruction in the target language. Offering opportunities for non-native teachers to build on their own proficiency can increase their confidence with the language that they teach. It can also spark a renewed enthusiasm for the cultures that speak the target language.

1. Instructors can develop more self-awareness of the language that they employ through the use of recording devices to view and analyze class sessions. Professional reflection and self-evaluation are means of identifying the difference between goals and the perceived classroom reality. Working with a trusted peer, teachers can collaborate to first identify instances of code-switching and then suggest alternative strategies in order that instruction remains in the target language. One-on-one coaching and consultation with veteran teachers or teacher educators can produce similar results if the environment is non-threatening. Providing teacher study groups during which instructors analyze videotaped lessons can assist in raising awareness of the importance of self-monitoring teacher talk (Pessoa et al., 2007).
2. Instructors need to be confident in their students' and their own abilities. It is important to realize that students can function with some ambiguity and that word for word translation is not necessary. Excessive concern for student comprehension can actually hinder the development of proficiency, as this concern can lead teachers to conduct comprehension checks in English or to speak in the target language and then translate into English

as ways to ensure student understanding. Both of these practices defeat the purpose of teaching for proficiency and providing a richly contextualized target language environment.

3. Teacher-identified obstacles involving how to handle students' varying abilities and previous student preparation point to the need for additional training and coaching in these areas. Instructors can find practical information to address these obstacles in publications on differentiated instruction (Blaz, 2006; Thomlinson & Imbeau, 2010; Theisen, 2002).
4. As some teachers in this investigation point out, a lack of linguistic ability is the root cause of their lack of TL use with students. A recent study by Fraga-Cañadas (2010) found the need for more professional development opportunities for non-native high school teachers of Spanish in order to maintain and improve the oral proficiency of current teachers in the field. Beyond local linguistic professional development, teachers can explore various funding possibilities, such as state, regional and national language organizations' study abroad scholarships, to enhance their linguistic and cultural knowledge. A consistent connection with native speakers and the target culture can improve teachers' linguistic abilities and confidence using the target language in the classroom. Further suggestions for teacher target language maintenance involve language conversation partners, reading for pleasure, book discussion groups and university courses focusing on target language production.
5. Comments from instructors in this study suggest that teachers at times revert to English due to time factors. The pressure to complete a specific grammatical syllabus and the underlying push to cover a specific number of chapters and grammatical presentations in a given period of time may in fact hinder instructors from providing more target language input. Examination of curricular goals and teacher, school and district articulation sessions may lead programs to adopt more appropriate objectives of oral proficiency, thus alleviating this obstacle for instructors.

Advocacy

Promoting language studies is a constant and necessary challenge for world language educators. Parents, administrators and colleagues need to understand current best practices and how they differ from language learning experiences of the past. Instructors should seek opportunities to share their students' learning experiences with the community as often as possible.

1. Instructors can educate their administrators and community members regarding the goals of language learning and the ways in which world language studies enhance the students' overall academic preparation. Through information sessions, newsletters and meetings, teachers can inform constituents of the effective techniques they utilize to promote communication in the target language.
2. As instructors incorporate communication and cultural tasks, community-based projects, technology and 21st Century Skills, they can plan

opportunities for students to share their communication efforts in authentic ways with the school community and beyond. This publicity is an important means by which world language instructors gain positive exposure for their programs and for their efforts to teach others to effectively communicate in another language.

3. Create out-of-class, interactive assignments periodically throughout the academic year. Students must interact and teach a staff or faculty member a specified communication task. The adult or faculty member utilizes a form to rate and report on the ability of the student to communicate and to teach the task in the target language. Students practice communication functions as they teach, while they simultaneously advocate for the world languages program.

Limitations of Current Study

One limitation of the current study is that no distinction between native versus non-native speaking instructors was made. The impact of this variable on the amount of target language input provided to learners is not completely clear. Given the fact, however, that several of instructors in this study blamed a lack of linguistic ability for failure to provide target language input, a comparison of the two groups could prove relevant. In addition, respondents in this study did not report years of teaching experience and pedagogical background. An exploration of this area may prove useful in future studies, in order to gain its potential impact on the amount of target language input provided by instructors.

The questionnaire utilized for this study did not allow teachers to specify target language use by course level. Some instructors made note of this, commenting that their use of the target language did depend on the level of the course. For the purposes of this study, teachers were asked to estimate an average among all courses taught. This study did find, however, that target language goals correlated significantly with the level of the teaching institution. On the other hand, this correlation with institution level was not significant for reported actual use. Currently, however, professional guidelines on best practices do not differ according to course level.

The broad categories of qualitative data that were created for organizational purposes were chosen subjectively. In addition, instructors may also bias estimates of target language use, taking into account the recommendations from research and teacher education programs. The fact that all respondents were attending professional development workshops when they completed the questionnaire for this study points to a positive trend in this regard. It should be noted that given this fact, the participants were perhaps more motivated than others to improve their language instruction. A limitation of the survey instrument pertains to question 5. This question is inherently biased due to the fact that it assumes the instructors surveyed are not reaching their goal for target language use. Finally, follow-up video recordings of class sessions would be necessary to verify self-reports of individual instructors. That work, however, is beyond the scope of this study and should be an area for further investigation, not only to verify self-reports,

but to also document effective teaching strategies that align with professional recommendations for target language use.

Conclusion

In this study, it was found that instructors' stated goals for utilizing the target language with their students frequently exceed what they are able to achieve in practice. Some instructors mentioned feeling 'guilty' for not teaching more of their class sessions in the target language. The use of the target language "should be a challenge to pupils and the teacher, not a threat" (Guest & Pachler, 1997, p. 105). A classroom atmosphere wherein the target language is accepted as the normal mode of communication is desirable. To advance pre-service and in-service teacher training in this area, educators must come to realize and gain confidence in the fact that it is possible for students to comprehend and function in the L2 classroom environment that is established. Some instructors in this investigation express a need for further training and call for more opportunities for professional development to address the obstacles with which they struggle. Confidence in the acquisition process, coupled with a practical framework of techniques, can provide effective strategies for both instructors and their students. Concrete suggestions for using the target language in order to foster comprehension, production and interaction can guide instructors in achieving greater success in reaching their goals.

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Appendix A

Target Language Use in the World Language Classroom: Questionnaire

1. I am currently teaching at the following level:
 High School Middle School Elementary School University
2. Languages that I teach: Chinese French German Italian Japanese
 Spanish Other: _____
3. My goal or objective for target language use in the classroom is:
 90-100% 80-90% 70-80% 60-70% 50-60% 40-50% 30-40% 20-30%
4. The actual percentage of my target language use in the classroom is:
 90-100% 80-90% 70-80% 60-70% 50-60% 40-50% 30-40% 20-30%
5. Typical obstacles that I face in reaching my goal of target language use are:
6. Additional Comments:

Appendix B

Obstacles: Representative Instructor Comments by Category

Student Factors

- “confidence of students on their abilities (feeling like they must understand everything)”
- “The biggest obstacle is initial student resistance.”
 - “Beginning learners do not understand and get frustrated. This results in loss of engagement.”
 - “If students feel lost or in over their heads, they will not continue with their language studies.”

Factors Beyond the Instructor’s Control

- “Lack of administrative support (being told I cannot expect total immersion in a city school).”
- “We begin language instruction in the 9th grade which is just too late for language acquisition.”
- “Large class size seems to prohibit the use of the TL. My average class this year is 22 but I have had up to 35 students.”
- “pressure from administration and parents on difficulty of the class”
- “Large classes, students have difficulty hearing, numbers of students and physical space”

Teacher Preparation and Training

Variety of Students

“ability level of students (non-honors, learning disabled, etc.), percentage varies between classes”

“Students come to Spanish class in mixed groups with varying levels of aptitude and/or language exposure.”

“varied ability levels in the classroom especially in the first year”

Teacher Lack of Linguistic Abilities

“personal loss of proficiency due to being out of the language”

“I don’t feel confident enough.”

“inability to simplify what I want to say;”

“personal physical challenges: headaches when I speak the target language too long”

“Bringing down the level of Spanish to an appropriate level is also difficult because it’s hard to explain everything.”

Lack of Time

“time-I feel I am short on time to begin with and it takes longer to speak in the TL at times (for transitions, etc.)”

“explaining course logistics (how to do activities, homework questions, etc.) explaining difficult grammar concepts”

“It takes longer to explain in target language, especially the college-prep level, sometimes it’s just easier to explain a grammar point in English and I’ll do it if I get behind and need to save some time.”

“time constraints-When students do not understand, having to explain something another way but still trying to accomplish objectives and finish the curriculum.”

“sacrificing TL due to time constraints: when giving directions, setting up group work”

“getting through the curriculum in time”

“too high expectations with too little time to meet them,”

Difficult to Establish Rapport in TL

“Losing the mentor relationship with the students is a challenge for me. Some students need L1 contact to develop a better rapport with the teacher.”

“Building relationships with lower level students in the target language is really hard.”

“finding the right balance between speaking in the target language and creating/building relationships with students”

Previous Teachers Did Not Speak in TL

“Teachers of prerequisite levels do not know how to develop this facility. They either can’t or don’t use the language enough.”

“I am a first year teacher and the previous teacher used no Spanish, so my students fight trying to understand.”

Classroom Management

“disciplining students effectively in TL, explaining abstract concepts”

“...feeling like I want to communicate more information than they have the vocabulary for; pressure of introducing ‘culture’ that needs more vocabulary”

Seeking Advice

“need new and innovative approaches”

“I would appreciate tips of remaining in the TL when managing the class.”

“It’s more difficult and I get distracted, need to make it more of a habit, routine.”

“I believe I need more strategies/activities so students feel comfortable listening to and using French.”

“ability-Sometimes I myself am unsure of how to get something across a 3rd/4th time if it didn’t work in the 1st or 2nd. “

“I run out of ideas on how to keep in target language (motivation).”

“I’m a new teacher so I’m not used to using the TL for all things.”

“I am concerned if students are understanding materials or not if I explain in TL for beginners-help!”

2

Keeping It in the Target Language

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Abstract

This article investigates how target language use can be optimized in the language classroom to enhance language development. Principles and guidelines for integration of the target language are extracted from empirical evidence and best practices demonstrated by teachers who maximize target language. Classroom tested strategies and examples are described and illustrated.

Introduction

There is much debate about the use of the target language (TL) and first language (L1) in the foreign language classroom. How much TL will maximize language development? When should L1 be used and how often? Language teachers are receiving mixed messages that range from 100% exclusive use of target language to selective integration of L1 to maximize the benefits of code-switching. This article extracts principles and guidelines for integration of the TL in the language classroom from (a) empirical evidence regarding the use of the TL and L1 in the language classroom, and (b) best practices demonstrated through classroom observations of teachers who maximize L2. In addition, classroom-tested strategies and examples designed to optimize and expand L2 use in the classroom are described and illustrated. These examples embody classroom tasks that develop and expand learning skills and build connections between TL and L1 that promote language development.

What we have learned from research

Macaro (2005) points out that there is a continuum of perspectives on target language and first language use. On the one side of the spectrum advocates for TL see little pedagogical or communicative value in the first language. Drawing on Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input hypothesis, proponents argue that exposing learners to extensive periods of comprehensible TL input will ensure mastery of the target language. Swain (1985) builds on this theoretical rationale by arguing that producing the TL is an important aspect of the learning process and learners must be provided opportunities to produce written and spoken output related to the input. Researchers have shown that the amount of TL input does affect learners' target language development (e.g. Larsen-Freeman, 1985; Lightbown, 1991; Liu, 2008; Turnbull, 2001) and have established a direct and positive correlation between learner achievement and teacher use of the target language (Carroll, 1975; Wolf, 1977; Burstall, Jamison, Cohen, & Hargreaves, 1974). Van Lier (2000) and Cook (2001), however, heed that simply using L2 does not guarantee TL learning since input must become intake in order to become internalized.

MacDonald (1993) and Wong-Fillmore (1985) asserted that TL use will result in increased motivation as students realize the immediate usefulness of TL. Such support for exclusive target-language use has led language professionals, publishers and teachers to accept target language use as best practice in second and foreign language learning and teaching.

Challenges to this position of exclusive use of TL have emerged in the research community that question this perspective. Macaro (2000) found that the majority of second and foreign language teachers believe that while code-switching (switching between one or more languages in the context of a single conversation) is often necessary, they also believe it is errant and lamentable. Teacher use of TL is crucial as it serves as the significant, and sometimes only, source of authentic, scaffolded input. While participants in Macaro's study agreed that the target language should be the "predominant language of interaction in the classroom" (p. 68), qualitative studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Macaro, 1997; Poli & Duff, 1994; Turnbull, 1999, 2005) have revealed that the amount of target language used by teachers in the classroom varies greatly.

Several studies have confirmed that the first language can be beneficial as a cognitive tool that aids in second language learning (e.g. Anton & DiCamilla, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Watanabe, 2008). Dickson (1992) found that it is not the quantity of exposure to TL that is important, but the quality of exposure. Such studies have provoked a reexamination of exclusive TL use resulting in advocacy for *maximized* target language use (Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Turnbull, 2001; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). These scholars argue that by using L1 as a frame of reference, language can be more easily processed by the learners as language moves from input to intake (Turnbull, 2001, p. 533), resulting in a greater understanding of the TL (Dickson, 1992; Py, 1996). However, caution is advised against overuse of L1 (Ellis, 1984; Atkinson, 1995) as this can result in and lead to student de-motivation (MacDonald, 1993).

Code-switching can be an effective teaching strategy when it is used deliberately to further the students' TL proficiency by using L1 as a reference point and to help construct knowledge in the TL (Coste, 1997). L1 is recommended when "the cost of the TL is too great" (Cook, 2001, p. 418) and when it assists students' understanding of particular concepts. Swain & Lapkin (2000) noted that using L1 to mediate TL learning can create a more affective learning environment.

Lapkin (2000) argues that denying students' access to L1 deprives them of an invaluable cognitive tool. When a teacher uses L1 in the TL classroom, learners use it as a cognitive tool to help "scaffold" their learning (Anton & DiCamilla, 1998). The three primary reasons students use L1 during collaborative tasks include: increasing efficiency, focusing attention, and facilitating interpersonal interactions (Swain & Lapkin, 2000).

Research suggests that code-switching often occurs when using unknown language words (Knight, 1996) or for social interaction (Tarone & Swain, 1995). Kern (1994) found in his examination of a reading comprehension task that students used L1 to their advantage in order to (a) reduce the limitations of working memory, (b) comprehend the meaning of the text, (c) secure meaning into long term memory, (d) transform input into more familiar terms (thereby reducing anxiety) and (e) understand lexical items. Macaro (2000) reported that teachers most frequently used L1 when (a) teaching grammar explicitly, (b) providing complex procedural instructions, (c) controlling students' behavior, (d) building personal relationships with learners and (e) checking for comprehension quickly when time pressures dictate. Code-switching becomes a useful communication strategy when the amount of input modification needed is too great for the time allocated to them. Macaro concluded that code-switching is beneficial when it improves the learning of the TL. There exists, however, a lack of consensus on the effect of code-switching in second/FL classrooms.

There is relatively little empirical evidence as to the amount or nature of TL versus L1 use upon which to make sound pedagogical and policy decisions (Levine, 2003). The question of how much TL the teacher and students use and when is very much linked to a variety of related classroom practices. Levine found that the TL was used most often for topic/theme-based communication, less for communication about grammar, and even less for communication about tests, quizzes and assignments. Most interesting is his finding that there exists a negative correlation between reported amounts of TL use and reported TL use anxiety. Greater TL use may not necessarily translate into greater anxiety for many learners. *Many students feel comfortable with more TL use when that is what they are used to.*

Creating a learning environment where TL is standard

How do teachers create and sustain a learning environment in which students become "used to" TL input and output? An immersion-style learning environment requires significant attention and preparation regarding the development of a curriculum that represents best practices and promotes a respectful and risk-taking community within the classroom. The following principles stem from research

and inquiry on TL classroom use as well as from teacher practitioners who make maximal and nearly exclusive use of the TL in their language classrooms. These principles can serve as guidelines for language teachers and are designed to assist language educators to introduce and sustain the TL while creating an engaging learning environment which approximates authentic language communication.

Principles for keeping it in the TL

1. Build a curriculum grounded in theory and standards: *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (1999) is rooted in a socio-cultural approach to language learning and teaching that emphasize communication, specifically three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational. Learners are placed in the role of active constructors of knowledge through a series of well-scaffolded tasks created by the teacher. Teachers identify and students personalize learning outcomes, preferably in the form of can-do statements at the onset of the instructional unit in order to make transparent what students will know and be able to do with language at the conclusion of the lesson, unit, semester, or program (backward design). The teacher introduces the content and context, carefully crafts learning tasks that actively engage the learners in the learning process and facilitates as they practice and perform these tasks. Finally, students review the learning goals and reflect at what level of quality they have achieved the learning outcomes. Formative and summative assessments provide useful feedback that improves the learning during and after the lesson. Well-constructed and standards-based lessons place the student in the role of active learner and create a context and learning environment where the TL can be optimized.

2. Create a respectful community of learning that promotes risk taking: A community based on mutual respect among students and between teacher and students promotes a comfortable and low affective environment in which students feel free to produce language without fear of being mocked. One effective strategy that communicates to students the importance of respect consists of posting and using the following acrostic that defines clearly and makes transparent to students what respectful behavior looks like in a learning community:

Reglas de nuestra comunidad	Rules of our community
Respetar personas y cosas de la clase.	Respect people and things in class.
Español, Español, Español.	Use the TL.
Sé responsable.	Be responsible.
Prepara para clase cada día.	Prepare for class each day.
Estudia-habla con amigos.	Study-talk with friends.
Ten una actitud positiva.	Have a positive attitude.
Obtén asistencias si es necesario.	Obtain assistance if needed.

Figure 1. Rules of the community



Figure 2. Respect poster

Risk-taking is crucial in a communicative language classroom and an important characteristic for a language learner to acquire. While high risk taking yields positive results in second language learning (Brown, 2000), the “key to risk-taking as a peak performance strategy is not simply in taking the risks. *It is in learning from your ‘failures’*” (p. 150). Creating a safe space where students are free to attempt and practice language without reprisal is “necessary to develop an ample affective framework to overcome learner’s anxiety of learning the target language” (Dufeu, 1994, p. 89-90).

Building a respectful, risk-taking environment requires time, modeling and much practice. It is as important to teach respect as it is to teach language. Respectful behaviors can be learned. A pedagogical approach that can assist in helping students to understand the importance of a respectful environment can be initiated by introducing Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982). Krashen posits that learning is decreased when negative emotions such as anxiety, self-doubt or boredom interfere with acquiring a second language. These negative elements can be minimized through the creation of a low-anxiety environment where learners are motivated through comprehensible input, where errors are viewed as developmental and as necessary in order to acquire language and where risk taking is rewarded. It is important to celebrate “aha” moments when students self-correct through a smile, “high five” or external rewards (e.g. Euro). Students

thus become fully aware of the importance of taking risks and making errors during the language acquisition process.

3. Employ “meta moments” that encourage learner reflection: Using “meta moments” allows learners to see clear purpose and rationale behind the strategies and approaches used by the teacher in the classroom. Metacognitive strategies can “help learners exercise ‘executive control’ through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating their own learning” (Oxford, 1992/1993, p. 18). Affective learning strategies “enable learners to control feelings, motivations, and attitudes related to language learning” (Oxford, p. 19). For example, after a teacher has introduced a story using PowerPoint (PPT) in which the vocabulary comprehension is enhanced through visual images, the teacher can pause and ask, “How did this become comprehensible to you? Why do you think I used an image rather than the English translation to communicate the meaning? How did this help you to decode the meaning of the story?”

Grammar structures can be introduced inductively as the teacher provides students with four sentences that illustrate the usage of a particular structure (e.g. the preterite in Spanish). After studying the four sentences in pairs, students are asked to create a rule that explains the verb formation. The teacher asks the students, “Why did I do it this way rather than give you the rule?” Once students internalize that teachers are experts/professionals who understand how to increase learning and that teachers clearly have purpose in what they do in the classroom, *trust builds between the student and teacher*. Students begin to realize there is purpose to each activity and a clear rationale for how the learning is introduced. This strategy results in a growing relationship of trust between the teacher and students, and the students relax in knowing the teacher is there to guide them toward accomplishment of the learning goal through the tasks in which they participate. As Graham declares, “For learners, a vital component of self-directed learning lies in the on-going evaluation of the methods they have employed on tasks and of their achievements” (p. 170).

4. Use comprehensible input (visualization, gestures, non-verbal clues, prior knowledge): When introducing vocabulary, or telling a story, use images, preferably culturally authentic visuals. By using images to enhance the textual input, recall and recognition is enhanced by presenting information in multiple sensory forms (visual and verbal). This eliminates the need for the L1 as learners use background knowledge and visuals to decode meaning. For example: When introducing new vocabulary or grammatical concepts, use a story which serves as rich context allowing learners to fill in the linguistic gaps that may occur. Select a story that has a clear plot and story line and contains repetition and simple structural patterns that ease comprehension. The story is introduced through a text and images that support comprehension of the text. While reading or acting out the story to the students, the teacher uses gestures and non-verbal clues to assist learners in decoding key/new words. Such teacher behavioral aids promote contextual guessing and provide students with much needed confidence to not rely solely on word for word translation as they navigate the text. In order to involve the students actively in the text, students, working in pairs, can sequence

the pictures (provided to students) as the teacher re-tells or acts out the story. This optimizes memory benefits of simultaneous aural and visual input and creates a language rich environment.

5. Teach concrete learning strategies that improve learning (e.g. circumlocution, chunking, graphic organizers/mind mapping, goal setting, self-assessment, mnemonics): Learning strategies are defined as “the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990, p. 1). Language research suggests that training students to use learning strategies can (a) help them become better language learners (b) promote the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability. Oxford’s example (1992/1993) illustrates concretely how language learning strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage and retrieval of new language: “In learning ESL, Trang watches U.S. TV soap operas, guessing the meaning of new expressions and predicting what will come next (p. 18).” Memory strategies “aid in entering information into long-term memory and retrieving information when needed for communication (p. 18)” while cognitive language learning strategies “are used for forming and revising internal mental models and receiving and producing messages in the target language (p. 18).”

Interactive games are an excellent venue for promoting spontaneous language use and building circumlocution skills. For example: A learning task based on the \$20,000 Pyramid TV game show calls for three or more students to face the classroom audience while one student faces the overhead screen (back to the classroom audience) containing a list of six vocabulary words related to a story that was read. The team has 60 seconds to correctly guess the vocabulary words based solely on the description of the student who can see the projected vocabulary words. Rules include describing and talking around the vocabulary word without using any part of the word and without using hands. Students are encouraged to use the story to provide a context for the vocabulary words to assist in identifying the word quickly and efficiently. When students participate in such task-based games, anxiety is significantly reduced and the students become so engaged in the task that they are willing to take risks to communicate their message. The ability to talk around a word that they may not know explicitly is a strategic tool that promotes authentic interpersonal communication in the language classroom.

6. Reward errors and celebrate self-correction: Errors are seen as developmental and are rewarded by the teacher and peers by lauding self-correction when students correct their own mistakes. Such an approach to error correction promotes risk-taking and promotes a safe learning environment. Students need to understand that making an error is not only a natural and frequent occurrence while learning a new language but also a critical part of the language acquisition process. An explanation of the importance of making errors as indicators of progress is critical in order for students to notice and attend to form. These explanations should be accompanied by celebrations of self-corrections as they occur. The teacher asks students to reflect on how she approaches and reacts to errors in the classroom. For example, “Students, have you noticed specific ways I correct errors during

class?” Some may respond, “Yes, sometimes you repeat what we say in a different way.” The teacher can respond, “That’s correct. It is called recasting. Many times it goes unnoticed by students because it can be quite ambiguous. Why do you believe I would employ such a technique?” A possible response may be, “You do not want to call too much attention to one student.” “Yes, this is correct, but I would like you to listen for these types of errors and try to determine the error yourself. If you are able to do this, it will help you repair the error; this is an incredible learning indicator and should be considered a success. I get excited when I hear you make errors and self-correct.” This allows students to become more aware of strategies that can assist in error correction and draws attention to the methods, especially the more implicit techniques, that result in more discernment and noticing of grammar structures on the part of the students. Such an approach to error correction promotes risk-taking and creates a more affective learning community. It is important for the teacher to keep track of the more common misconceptions of grammar structures and return to these via direct teaching or through a learning task that promotes practice with these shared errors.

7. Exhibit enthusiasm for your students’ learning—celebrate each “oh” and “aha”: Oftentimes non-verbal clues communicate more than language. Effective ways for teachers to inherently communicate encouragement are behaviors such as varying voice speech, making eye contact using body language, using facial expressions and providing constant encouragement. These teaching behaviors express supportiveness and communicate an “I am on your team” attitude. All students need encouragement to be able to do their best. Encouragement motivates students to continue participating in an activity and is best transmitted to students in the form of feedback. A sincere compliment instills confidence in your students and communicates your belief in them. You can push students to higher levels of learning and achievement by telling them through your encouragement that they can do it, they can perform the task you have assigned.

8. Integrate technology to move from consumer of language to user of language (input to output): Technology offers the world language teacher the opportunity to create a learning environment where language communication is authentic, relevant, and meaningful. Web 2.0 applications place language learners in the role of producing language and are especially effective in promoting creativity. Popplet, Prezi, Voki, and Toondoo are but a few examples of the myriad tools available on the Web that put the learner in the role of producer of language. The vast majority are free and user-friendly websites which students can utilize to create diverse projects which can serve as assessments and progress indicators of language proficiency. When students are motivated, they produce their best work, work they are proud of and want to share with others.

Below are examples of student products from a level one Spanish course as well as a level three Spanish course that illustrate how digital media can be used to produce TL in the classroom. Using Popplet, a Web 2.0 mind mapping tool, students can create elaborate mental maps for organizing vocabulary, or deconstructing stories, songs or poems. This site is extremely user friendly and students may collaborate simultaneously. The students also have the option of adding photos, songs, videos, images and drawings with a click of a button.

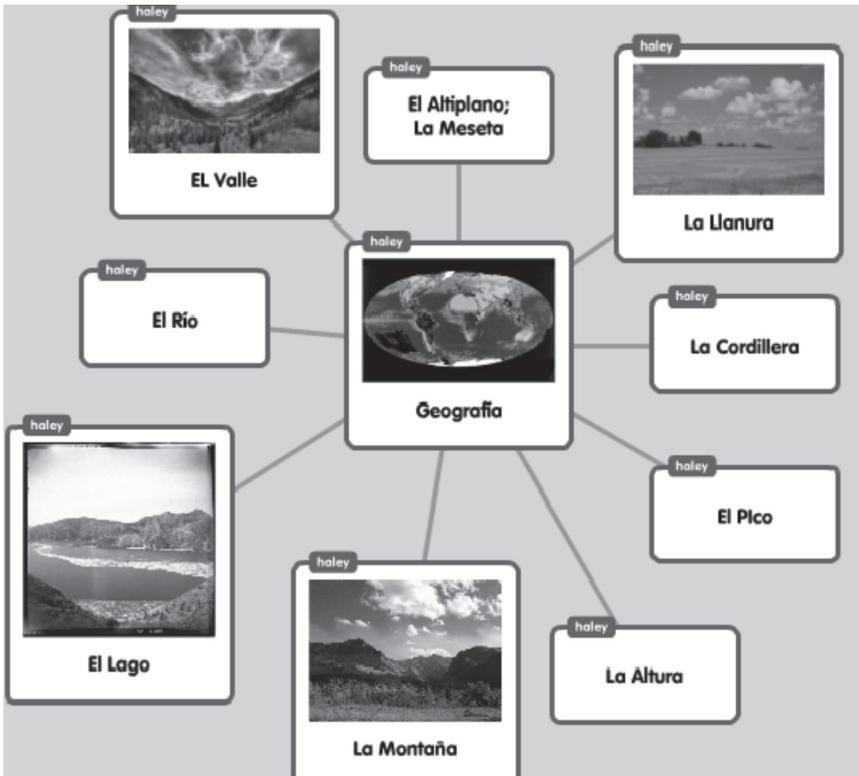


Figure 3. Popplet Mental Maps/Mind Mapping

Prezi is another online tool that can be used for multimedia presentations. Prezi is user-friendly, creative and visually stunning. (See Figure 4, next page) This presentational tool can easily incorporate and import videos, photos, pdfs and maps. This site also allows two or more students to collaborate on a project. The slide below provides a glimpse of a student-prepared Prezi in which they depict an ideal party they would like to host in their classroom. The Prezi group who was voted the most creative by their peers is awarded the honor of actually hosting a classroom party. This requires creating invitations, preparing the food and providing entertainment, all of which is conducted in the TL.

Voki is a Web 2.0 tool that allows users to create their own visual avatar and use the TL actively for comprehension/listening activities. For example: Students can mimic their own physical characteristics and use the TL to describe themselves, their hobbies, and interests without revealing their name. Equipped with a list of students in the classroom, classmates go from computer to computer in a gallery walk and attempt to identify each individual. These avatars can also be projected on a screen as a whole class activity as students identify their peers. Such a personalized and authentic language task motivates learners to listen intently for meaning as they are focused on the task of identifying the individuals.

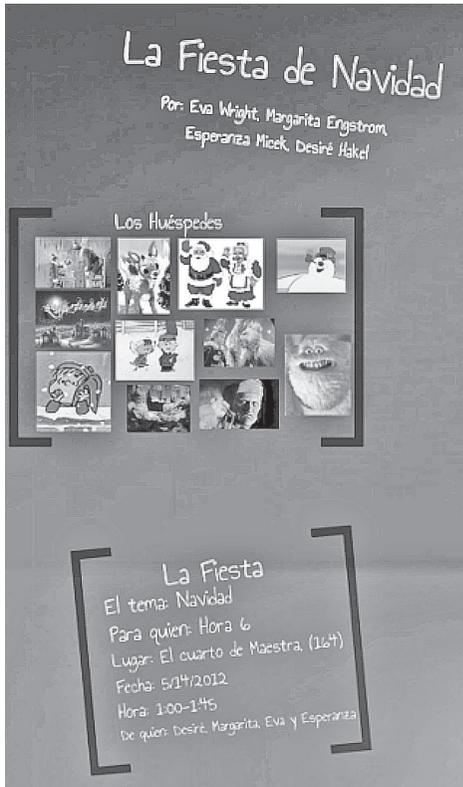


Figure 4. Prezi presentation



Figure 5. Voki avatar

Toondoo is a Web 2.0 tool in which students can create their own comic strip or storyboard detailing a story, or offering an alternative ending to a story read in class. This activity allows for personalization of content in ways that promote creativity.



Figure 6. Toondoo Comic Strips

9. Use extrinsic motivation strategies and move toward intrinsic motivation:

Building an affective communicative learning environment requires a great deal of comprehensible input by the teacher, but it is essential that students become producers of the language as well. The students may need some incentive at the onset of the course. One effective strategy is to reward participation through the awarding of speaking points for the use of the TL. This can be in the form of a tangible token of sorts. Students earn such rewards for using complete phrases in the TL during class, asking and answering questions, sharing ideas and opinions and using the TL during communicatively task based activities. The goal is to encourage discourse among students and between the students and teacher. These points/tokens can also be earned for spontaneous conversation outside of class. This can be documented through a note and signature signed by the individual with whom the student spoke. The experience of authentic communication in the TL outside the classroom walls increases motivation and makes language learning meaningful. With practice and growing confidence, the students will notice their own improvement and will experience a sense of pride and accomplishment. In turn, motivation will move from extrinsic to intrinsic. (See Figure 7 on following page.)

10. **Teach grammar inductively—“crack the code”:** Research indicates teachers typically resort to L1 when teaching grammar. In order to overcome this temptation, grammar can be approached inductively and presented in a context that will allow students to discover rules of grammar on their own, thereby processing more deeply and enhancing comprehension. This results in a greater sense of accomplishment and promotes self-efficacy, the realization that with effort they can achieve their goals. This technique also encourages students to be active and engaged participants in their own learning via a problem solving task.

One way to introduce this inductive approach when introducing a grammar concept is to select a story or very short text that introduces varied forms of one



Figure 7. Using extrinsic rewards (Euros) for speaking in the TL

new grammar structure, for example, *I, he/she/it, we, they*. The teacher tells or reads the story as students focus on interpreting the auditory input for meaning. The teacher then provides the students with a textual version of the story asking students to focus on the grammar structure. In pairs, students work in a think/pair/share mode dubbed “crack the code.” They talk aloud and work to decipher the rules of the new grammar concept solely by its use in the story. The teacher facilitates this task by moving about the room asking questions and supporting ideas, but not providing the answer. When a pair has “cracked the code,” the teacher asks them to share their ideas or rules with the class. They explain how they came to the conclusion allowing the teacher to identify misconceptions for later review. This activity is a great discovery learning task that promotes cognitive engagement, collaborative learning and empowers students as they realize their own skills and abilities.

11. Personalize lessons by using stories and pictures from your real life adventures: Using stories and photos from your own life will help form a connection with students and give them a glimpse of your real life outside of the classroom. When teachers personalize instruction, students’ interest is piqued and the effort invested in comprehending the TL is greatly enhanced.

In the example pictured below, the teacher introduced new vocabulary in context by using a story about her own experiences (related to the travel/plane vocabulary) while she lived abroad in Italy. The students’ main focus was on comprehending new vocabulary presented, but the real life context of the story sparked a great deal of discourse and questions in TL on the part of the students. Students were motivated to learn more about this exciting adventure, “Was it real?; “How old were you then?; “Where is this?; “Were you afraid?” Such

spontaneous questions and dialogue are real and authentic. The focus shifts to meaning and authentic communication resulting in students speaking freely in order to express their ideas.

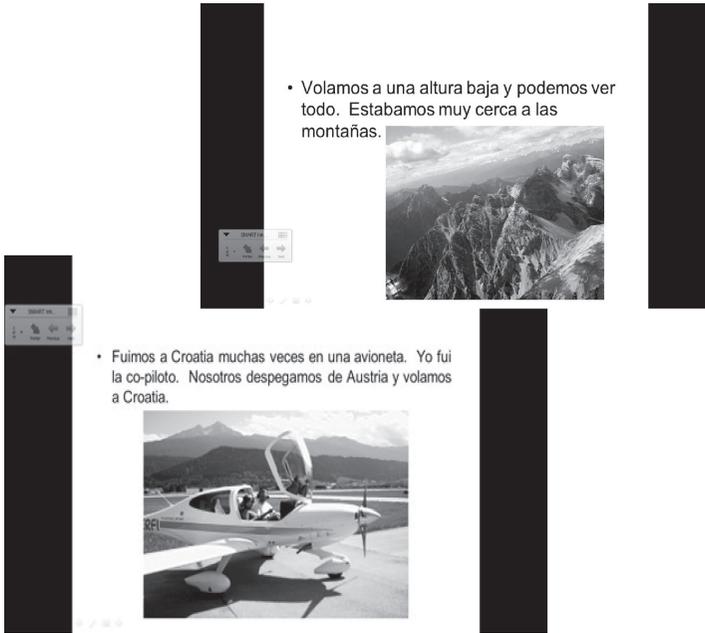


Figure 8. Personalization of lessons piques student interest

12. Connect curriculum to authentic lives of students: Pop icons in music and television, as well as social media tools (Facebook, Twitter, texting), constitute a large part of the lives of today’s students. Integrating pop culture into the classroom increases student motivation and captures their attention. The use of photos of pop icons eliminates the pressure to understand each word as images activate background knowledge and provide immediate visual information. One effective learning activity that combines pop culture and social media tools can be accomplished by using cell phones in class together with an online digital survey such as polleverywhere.com. Teachers can create surveys, multiple choice, true/false or open-ended questions and students use their cell phones to text in responses. The results are immediately projected on the Smart board screen or projector. Students read, respond and view results posted by peers, which can provoke follow-up discussions.

Another simple, yet effective strategy to promote discussion is to use photos of popular musicians or actors. These can easily be used in a number of communicative lessons, such as comparison or description activities. The photos below were used in a Spanish course as they learned to compare two or more items. Partner A had a picture of Taylor Swift; Partner B had a picture of Demi Lovato. As Partner A described the features of the individual in her photo, she could use

her background knowledge to provide additional information to get Partner B to identify the individual. For example: “She has won top country music awards; she has dated a lot of high profile men; she sings about her ex-boyfriends; she is dating Conor Kennedy.” Such insights and facts allow the learner to show what she knows and share this in the format of a learning task that is both enjoyable, promotes risk-taking and stimulates conversation.

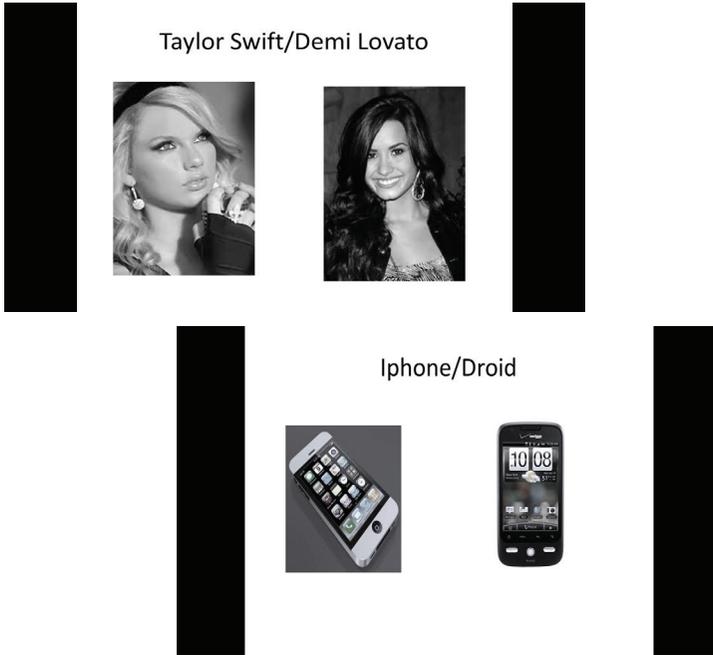


Figure 9: Using Pop culture in the language classroom

By using students’ background knowledge and the context of their daily lives, the gap between linguistic and cognitive abilities is reduced. One of the major reasons students experience anxiety in the language classroom is due to the fact they are cognitively functioning at the formal operational level (Piaget, 1977), yet, linguistically, in the TL they are functioning at the infant or pre-operational level. This gap between the cognitive and linguistic ability can be narrowed by using contexts from their daily lives that use their acquired knowledge and build on it to decode meaning.

Professional Community

Building a professional community (peers, administrators, parents, students) where inquiry and continual development are valued and encouraged is key to sustaining a vibrant school environment where teachers and learners are actively engaged in teaching and learning.

It is important to establish a “community of inquiry” with peers in the language department that is grounded in a common philosophy of teaching

and learning. This will promote a sharing of ideas and resources and create a vibrant and organic environment of learning. This will also ensure horizontal and vertical articulation for students as they move from one language level to the next to ensure a trajectory of growth in language proficiency. Communicate with administrators about what you do (language teaching), how you do it (pedagogy) and how you assess the progress and achievement of your students. Invite them to observe, participate and unpack a lesson with you to provide a first-hand view of standards-based teaching and learning. Moments invested in such efforts are well-worth the reward when languages are seen as an integral part of the school curriculum. These efforts allow others to see the important role language learning plays in building students' academic success (strategies, motivation, persistence) and the important connections and contributions of foreign languages to other disciplines (content based language learning).

Conclusion

The strategies for keeping it in the TL outlined here may result in higher language proficiency for students, as well as promote intrinsic motivation for learning a FL, resulting in lower attrition and greater appreciation of language learning. Together with best pedagogical practices, maximizing the TL in the classroom will ensure a lively and engaging language experience that can approximate authentic language use and make language learning meaningful to learners. Too often, language learning is regarded as a "seat time experience" with little connection to the everyday world in which learners live. When students cross the threshold of your classroom and expect to understand and respond in the TL, language learning becomes real and the ability to communicate in another language becomes a highly-valued skill that can be shared with others.

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3

Enhancing Communicative Competence Through Integrating 21st Century Skills and Tools

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Abstract

In this paper the authors discuss four 21st century skills (communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking) that can be manifested through integration of Web 2.0 technologies, resulting in enhanced student communicative competence. Integrating relevant and meaningful multi-media assignments in a world language class fuses 21st century skills with standards-based instruction seamlessly. An overview is provided, sharing the fundamentals of communicative competence, how these 21st century skills are defined, and a brief explanation of the Web 2.0 tools utilized. Highlighted are four technologies that were integrated within a post-secondary language class: VoiceThread, Poll Everywhere, Animoto, and Xtranormal. The authors share the impact these Web 2.0 technologies had upon student communicative competence, their engagement with the content, and their motivation to learn. Finally, implications for future instruction are discussed, giving insights for world language teachers who plan to integrate Web 2.0 tools within their instruction.

Introduction

Communication is the cornerstone of world language learning. In order to capitalize upon communicative opportunities, the authors sought after advanced tools and innovative platforms to advance world language instruction within an ever-changing classroom dynamic. World language teachers work diligently to instruct students on authentic pronunciation, proper grammar and intonation,

cultural nuances of the language in order to successfully communicate in the target language. While the premise of communication hasn't changed, rapid changes are occurring in *how* we communicate with one another, through new platforms, applications, and socially mediated sites. In addition, students entering the classroom are a different generation with a different set of expectations and a unique set of needs; of these, the millennial generation crave connectivity 24/7, personalized self-guided learning challenges, and learning environments that are collaborative and cooperative (Raines, 2003 & Jonas-Dwyer & Pospisil, 2004). Students today are digital natives having grown-up with technology and not knowing a world without it (Prensky, 2001). To them, technology is a tool for learning not a superfluous frill or afterthought. "The 'spaces' where students learn are becoming more community-driven, interdisciplinary, and supported by technologies that engage virtual communication and collaboration" (Johnson, Smith, Levine & Haywood, 2010, p. 4). To meet these ever changing demands, Web 2.0 tools offer a way to engage students in meaningful and authentic communication while anchoring learning and pedagogy to 21st century skills and world language content standards.

To address these issues and meet the changes occurring within our classroom and community, the authors investigated how Web 2.0 tools could be integrated into instruction to enhance student communicative competence, encourage engagement with content, and foster increased motivation in learning. This study was grounded in the belief that world language instruction should be contextualized, meaningful, rigorous, and relevant. In order to achieve this, thoughtful planning was given to how to integrate Web 2.0 technologies within instruction in order to support 21st century skills development within a standards-based learning environment.

Defining Communicative Competence

Communication is a requisite to discuss, discover, and learn about all other concepts. Communicative competence is comprised of grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983 & Savignon, 1997). Grammatical competence is the knowledge of the structure and form of a language; some of which include its morphologic, syntactic, phonemic and graphemic features. The knowledge of the interrelationship between and logic across sentences and phrases is characteristic of discourse competence. An individual with strong discourse competence can aptly judge the relationship between different ideas within a text. Sociolinguistic competence focuses on the recognition and accordance of the rules of interaction; taking turns, appropriate greetings, proper use of formal/informal register, naturalness or overall native-like language. Finally, strategic competence is characterized by the ability to make the most of the language, particularly when compensating for language deficiencies. For instance, it is the ability to successfully circumlocute an idea or concept that an individual lacks the proper name for, or to negotiate meaning during conversation through verbal and nonverbal communication techniques. When skillfully combined, the result is successful communicative competence in which one can express, interpret, and negotiate meaning (Savignon, 1998).

To assess communicative competence and determine a student's growth and skill, world language teachers turn to how Communication is defined within the standard. Communicative competence is manifested within the national standard through the interpretive mode, interpersonal mode, and presentational mode of communication (ACTFL, 2012). The interpretive mode of communication is characterized by the ability to interpret and understand spoken and written language whereas the interpersonal mode of communication describes the ability to maintain conversation between two or more individuals. The presentational mode of communication is highlighted by information presented through spoken or written language. When combined, these three modes of communication represent authentic real world communicative settings (ACTFL, 2012). As a result, the authors chose to target the Communication Standard of world language learning when exploring the integration of 21st century skills and Web 2.0 tools.

What are 21st Century Skills?

In 2011, the American Council for Teachers of Foreign Language (ACTFL) in collaboration with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) developed the World Language ACTFL P21 Skills Map for the foreign language content area. P21 argues for “bridging the gap between how students live and how they learn” (2011b, p. 4). P21’s model has been gaining momentum and impacting educational settings. Since its inception in 2002, a 21st century skills movement has reached 15 state educational systems. With the growing reach and potential impact of the P21 model on education - more classrooms are being affected. P21 skills, “advocate for 21st century readiness for every student. As the United States continues to compete in a global economy that demands innovation, P21 and its members provide tools and resources to help the U.S. education system keep up by fusing the three Rs and four Cs” (P21, 2011b).

Communication

Communication is at the heart of world language instruction and is also a keystone of the P21 skills. In order to be successful in this growing global economy our students must be able to communicate clearly and effectively, to

- articulate their thoughts and ideas through oral and written language;
- listen effectively to others by not just hearing them, but attending to their intention, meaning, knowledge, and perception;
- use communication skills for a variety of purposes and intents;
- effectively utilize multiple technologies and new literacies in order to construct knowledge and validate its impact; and
- “communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multi-lingual).” (P21, 2011a)

These aptitudes that reside under the umbrella skill of communication directly align to the foreign language Communication standard. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills directly promotes and validates the value world language instruction provides.

Collaboration

Charles Darwin said, “In the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.” Collaboration is an essential component within the P21 framework. Individuals need to demonstrate a(n)

- ability to work successfully and respectfully within a diverse team;
- willingness to negotiate and the flexibility to compromise in order to achieve a common goal; and
- aptitude to share workload, valuing individual contributions within the collective team (P21, 2011a).

Friedman writes, “In a flat world, where value is increasingly created, and complex problems solve, by whom you connect with horizontally, having a high trust society is even more of an advantage” (2005, p. 320). This sense of collaboration is vital within a successful world language classroom. Through the creation of a positive, collaborative learning environment students’ affective filters (Krashen, 1982) can be lowered, allowing for greater learning potential.

Creativity

Embedded within the skill of creativity, P21 promotes the ability to think creatively, work creatively with others, and act on creative ideas in order to make practical, innovative contributions (P21, 2011a). Sprenger stresses the importance of utilizing digital technology to foster student creativity and engagement (2010). Creative thinking includes the ability to implement a broad range of idea creation techniques, to develop new and worthwhile ideas, and to analyze and refine existing ideas in order for their optimization and enhancement. Elaborating upon collaboration skills, P21 emphasizes that creativity includes the ability to work in a creative capacity with others, to

- effectively develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others;
- demonstrate originality and inventiveness while simultaneously recognizing real world limits when adopting new ideas; and
- view failure as an opportunity to learn.

This valuable trait of recognizing the learning and growth potential from mistakes and failures is fundamental to success within world language classrooms. As a student’s monitor develops, s/he must be willing to take risks, recognizing the potential for growth from learning from one’s errors (Krashen, 1982).

Critical Thinking

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills embeds four primary abilities within the larger skill of critical thinking, they include effective reasoning, systems thinking, making judgments and decisions, and solving problems (P21, 2011a). Effective reasoning is the ability to choose and use reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) depending upon the situation. The ability to analyze parts of a whole, recognizing how parts interact to produce complex systems describes a systems thinking disposition.

Formulating decisions and judgments is the capability to

- analyze and evaluate arguments, opinions, and evidence-based positions;
- synthesize and evaluate differing perspectives;
- make interpretations and draw conclusions from the analysis; and
- reflect critically upon ones own learning and metacognitive processes.

The fourth component, problem solving, is characterized by the ability to solve unique non-familiar problems via conventional or innovative methods, and pose questions that seek out new perspectives and insightful solutions.

The four C's affiliated with the 21st century skills (communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking) offer a solid framework with which to integrate Web 2.0 technologies and connect with the five C's of foreign language instruction (Communication, Connections, Communities, Culture, and Comparisons). Technology tools integrated within teaching practices can support a standards-based instructional design. According to Grabe and Grabe, "In a tools approach, students learn by applying the technology to a task rather than by being directly "instructed" by the technology" (2007, p. 13).

Web 2.0 Tools

The Internet and other Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are influencing how we read, gather information, and communicate (New London Group, 1996). Beyond this, our personal, professional, and academic lives positively imprints by developing technologies including Web 2.0 tools. It is important to investigate how 21st century skills and tools can be used within world language instruction as a result. The following open sourced technologies were researched: VoiceThread, Poll Everywhere, Animoto, and Xtranormal. These four tools were used because they were user friendly, incorporated video tutorials, provided classroom management tools for both student and instructor. In addition, they addressed different learning styles and their interactive websites had easy accessibility for users.

VoiceThread

Created by educators for educators, VoiceThread is an online, open source, collaborative slideshow in which conversations surround embedded multimedia (text, images, video, and/or documents). World language teachers have only limited time with students to immerse them in the target language. VoiceThread was chosen as a Web 2.0 tool as it offers a platform to extend world language learning outside the classroom while simultaneously enhancing interactions with the target language (McKeeman, 2012). Additionally, the ability to present and connect to students' multiple intelligences through the multimodal and multimedia nature of the threads was an attractive feature of this tool.

Poll Everywhere

This online platform provides a quick and efficient way to create stylish real-time experiences for events through the use of mobile devices. Poll Everywhere is an instant audience response system using mobile phones, twitter, and the web to gather data and provide instantaneous results. It is an easy way to gather live

responses in any venue: classrooms, presentations, conferences, online settings, web or Twitter. The user is able to set up both the questions and the answers, offering customization of content.

Animoto

A social networking web application, Animoto, produces videos from user selected photos, video clips and music. Users can create a movie by uploading pictures from the program or using their personal collection. The final product is a video slide show with music. The uses of Animoto enable the educator as well as the students to create, communicate, collaborate using critical thinking skills in an online environment. As an educator one can choose to narrate history, a short story, a specific moment in time, a 'how-to' video, the alphabet or a pre or post video in the target language assisting students and allowing repetition with learning projects. This is an excellent tool for teachers to record students in a language class and upload it. Students can watch and reflect on their performance and/or pronunciation allowing Animoto to provide additional learning opportunities as opposed to other online voice recorder Web 2.0 technologies.

Xtranormal

Xtranormal instantly turns words into a 3D animated movie, allowing users to create online movies in minutes from any web browser, anywhere. This technology can support interactive creation of language lessons such as using avatars to create a greeting with an online visual process, watching videos of history in the target language, seeing history come alive, and engaging students with meaningful learning assignments. Users can choose to import their own voice, previously recorded audio clips or select from a text-to-speech built in software system allowing their voices to be converted to English or a different language. This web-based tool enables language learners to create conversations through story telling and movie making using a vast array of animated three-dimensional characters. Language learners apply vocabulary and simple sentences creating conversation via avatars. The technology allows students to practice their vocabulary by recording their voice in a relaxed environment.

Communicative Competence in Action

As reflective practitioners, the authors performed action research to explore how Web 2.0 tools and 21st century skills could be utilized within instruction to enhance communicative competence, foster engagement, and impact student motivation. Communicative competence, as previously described, was at the heart of this study. Increasing communication proficiency was emphasized during each lesson. The authors believed that a distinction existed between student engagement and student motivation. Motivation leads to engagement; engagement being a student's psychosomatic investment in the learning process. When students are engaged in instruction, they are actively learning and interacting with the content. Often when engaged, a student is internally driven to persevere and maintain

focus through a task. While similarities exist, external forces can readily impact a student's level of motivation. Student motivation is typically determined by environmental factors (Marciano, 2009) and the relevance s/he feels it has in his/her life (Sprengrer, 1999).

The study was conducted within a post-secondary introductory Spanish course. The action research followed general qualitative methods (Creswell, 1998), employing specific case study techniques (Stake, 1995 & Yin, 2003). Study participants included post-secondary students, and the instructor. In compliance with IRB (Internal Review Board) guidelines, participants were debriefed on the data that would be collected for the study; in addition, participants agreed to, and signed a letter of informed consent prior to participation within the study. Student participants were a mixture of traditional and non-traditional students with little to no background in the Spanish language. Instruction was delivered through direct methodology coupled with the natural approach to second language acquisition. Whole group instruction was used to introduce new content, individual and collaborative assignments were chosen to review, reinforce, and practice concepts. These assignments integrated Web 2.0 tools, incorporating P21 skills, with one final project where students had the choice to create environments applying vocabulary they had learned in the classroom and learning new vocabulary as they completed their project. These artifacts, completed student assignments and projects, comprised a data set documenting students' skills and communicative competence. Assessment of these assignments and the final project were scored using a rubric stressing communicative competencies. Data were collected via student participant reflective journal entries conducted after assignments; this data gauged students' levels of engagement and motivation. Data from field notes and observations collected by the researchers were used to assist in triangulate findings. Data were analyzed through constant comparative analysis and general qualitative analysis (Creswell, 1998).

There were a total of three VoiceThread assignments and three PollEverywhere interactive pre-test review sessions within a seven-week Introduction to Elementary Spanish I course. Additionally, students were given the option for their final, either a written exam or a Web 2.0 project, a voice over PowerPoint via Animoto or Xtranormal. Students chose the latter option. Through thoughtful preparation and planning, developing a cohesive instructional plan for the course and lessons, prior to implementing Web 2.0 activities, the authors were able to reinforce, scaffold, and recycle content (vocabulary, grammar, culture, and overall language learning). Students built upon their prior knowledge and skills, continually recycling content as they learned new material, all the while leading students toward mastery of content. Through researcher observations and supported in student reflective journal entries, some students extended their communicative discourse and expanded upon basic requirements as they become more comfortable with the content, technology, and assignment structure.

VoiceThread Assignments

Of the three VoiceThread assignments, the general structure and objectives of the assignments were similar while the specifics of content changed based upon

the assignment. For all VoiceThreads, instructions were written and given orally on the initial slide. During the first VoiceThread assignment, students were to demonstrate their competence of basic greetings and introductions (introducing themselves, talking about where they lived, where they were from, their age, etc.) (Appendix A). The next VoiceThread assignment asked students to respond to a series of questions regarding the differences between their family and a Latino or Hispanic family based upon their interpretation of an embedded video (Appendix B). The third VoiceThread had students write an essay and present it orally using the video camera function, stressing the ability to skillfully utilize all four elements of communicative competence (grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic) (Appendix C). Students were asked to introduce themselves within the essay and share information about their backgrounds, interests, likes and dislikes. This assignment stressed authentic language usage that they might encounter when having a conversation with someone in the target language.

With all three VoiceThread assignments, students reported routinely revisiting and reviewing their own contributions as well as those of their peers. One student said, "I think that it was encouraging to be able to record your voice, listen to your recording, and redo it if you were not happy with it. It was also nice if you are a shy person, to not have the whole class looking at you while answering questions." This concept further carried over to reinforcing student comprehension of general classroom content. The collaborative nature of the VoiceThreads supported critical thinking. Students thoughtfully commented on threads and negotiated meaning and understanding from comments made by their classmates in the target language. This critical thought was reinforced when analyzing student's responses from their reflective journal entries. VoiceThread allowed for content learning and extended the time students were exposed to input in the target language. A student stated, "I read and interpreted online text differently through VT [VoiceThread] because I could go back and hear what my classmates had said multiple times. In an actual classroom setting you cannot hit the rewind button, so that is an advantage that I felt our class got." The final projects submitted by students were of higher quality, more substantive, and contained fewer errors than when doing more traditionally based in-class dialogues. It was particularly pleasing to find students wanting to push the boundaries of their proficiency level in order to express themselves and relay their message. Here the students' strategic competence was enhanced and further developed.

These VoiceThread assignments encouraged collaborative, meaningful dialogues between students. Participants demonstrated their communicative competence via all three modes of communication within each of these assignments. They exhibited their skills related to the interpretive mode of communication when reading instructions and comments and listening to audio comments and video embedded within the slides of the VoiceThread. When performing their dialogues and commenting on others posts, students demonstrated their skills in negotiating meaning and sharing the communicative burden when participating within the interpersonal mode of communication. Presentational modes of Communication

were routinely displayed with each comment, post, and through each completed assignment. Reflective journal entries consistently articulated how students would revise, redo, and polish oral or written comments when completing VoiceThread assignments.

Poll Everywhere Activities

Introduced to the class prior to an exam for review, Poll Everywhere engaged students in a whole class environment, and it provided immediate feedback to students. Questions focused on grammar, vocabulary, and culture (Appendix D). Based upon student responses, it was determined if additional reinforcement or revisiting of content was needed. Questions were presented in different formats: binary option, multiple choice, and short answer. This allowed for variances in the taxonomy of thinking skills (Bloom, 1956 & Pohl, 2000) and greater assessment of student comprehension and knowledge.

Communicative competence was achieved through the interpretive mode of communication. Students processed the content individually via one-way, introspective communication. In order to determine student comprehension of content, students presented their responses via text or e-mail.

Animoto or Xtranormal Final Project

This cumulative final project had students create simple conversations encouraging creativity and personal expression via the technology platform of their choosing, Animoto or Xtranormal (Appendix E). This project-based assessment allowed students to demonstrate their learning in a more authentic meaningful venue. "In a Web 2.0 world simulation immersive experiences are significantly different" (Borden, 2012). This project demonstrated student's ability to communicate via interpersonal and presentational modes of communication. During this project as with the VoiceThread assignments, the authors noted how students were spurring themselves to do more with the language they had, pushing the limits of their strategic competence.

Discussion

Based upon the data collected and analyzed through student reflective journal entries, student assignments/ artifacts, and researcher observations and field notes, the authors recognized the positive impact the Web 2.0 tools that were used within instruction had upon students overall communicative proficiency, student motivation to learn, and student engagement in learning activities. Students were unable to hide their weaknesses. In a more traditional classroom setting students can rely on others to carry more of the communicative burden or blend into the background of choral responses. Participation within these technology tools forced students to take ownership of their language ability, making it clear to the teacher what content needed to be revisited, and which skills needed reinforcement and review. Poll Everywhere epitomizes checks for comprehension. This tool not only provided immediate feedback to students, allowing them to monitor their own progress and learning, but it also provided a platform for teachers to

gain immediate insight into the class's overall understanding of the content and material. In addition, many of these assignments encouraged collaboration, a P21 skill. As a result of collaboration, students had to negotiate meaning in order to achieve and complete a task. Students learned from one another by analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating what others did, encouraging higher order thinking skills, but most importantly through the use of technology in the classroom, their ability to communicate in the target language was enhanced. "Listening to other peoples comments encouraged me to make a better effort." This meaningful, contextualized learning and understanding can be used for a lifetime. Animoto and Xtranormal specifically addressed skills of creativity; through this platform students were truly creators of content. VoiceThread assignments stressed critical thinking skills as they sought diverse perspectives, encouraged the evaluation of content, and analysis of opinions.

In analyzing student responses from the reflective qualitative survey, themes emerged regarding communication, motivation, and engagement. Discussion of communicative competence centered on repetition for retention, and improvement of pronunciation. Students shared that through the use of Web 2.0 tools such as VoiceThread and Xtranormal they tended to practice the target language more. Refining, rehearsing and redoing what they wanted to say allowed for more polished products and pronunciation. One student stated, "The VoiceThread helped me learn how to pronounce words better since I had to repeat myself over and over." An element of communicative competence particularly in a novice level language classroom is target language pronunciation. "Intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence" (Morley, 1991, p. 488). The authors recognize that there is pedagogical value and power in unrehearsed or cold conversations. However, when learning another language, practice and repetition are quintessential for success. Through the use of these Web 2.0 tools and technologies, repetition was fostered by design. A student stated, "When I would think about my VoiceThread I would have to record it over and over again until I felt it was right."

As stated earlier, the authors believe that there is distinction between student motivation and student engagement. Students were motivated by that which was of interest to them, the desire for good grades/scores, and the format through which to learn. Having "fun," finding "excitement," and being "kept interested and laughing" were all contributing factors for how motivated students were. Several students reported their desire for a good grade was a significant motivating factor. Insightfully, some students shared that they prefer to learn through "hands-on experiences" or via "project-based learning" which lent itself to these types of instructional assignments and activities.

Student engagement with content was most successful when learning activities and assignments were collaborative and allowed for creativity, both 21st century skills (P21, 2011a). Students stated they wanted to do something "unique" or to be able to "show personality" within assignments. One student shared that she not only enjoyed the chance to be creative during the assignment but also sought after the chance. Having test anxiety, she found the opportunity to demonstrate her abilities in

a creative way was preferable. The majority appreciated the chance to collaborate, work with others, and “interact as a team.” A student stated, “I was not just studying from a book, I was interacting with the work so it helped me to retain the info.”

While motivation and engagement did not have a direct correlation to a students’ communicative competence, they were contributing factors to students’ abilities to achieve. The more motivated and engaged a student was, the more potential existed for intake (Krashen, 1982), by extension impacting a student’s communicative competence. Web 2.0 tools like VoiceThread, Xtranormal, and Animoto offered learning platforms that encouraged student motivation, student engagement, and fostered an increase in communicative competence.

Web 2.0 tools have the ability for students to create, evaluate, analyze and apply. Technology had the power to produce higher order thinking skills. Students were able to develop conversations in a virtual environment. Web 2.0 tools enhanced their learning and speaking abilities in a second language. Through these assignments and the integration of Web 2.0 tools, students created simple yet contextualized and authentic conversations using their creativity and expanding their communicative competence.

Implications

This study illustrates the potential that exists to positively impact learning when 21st century skills and tools are coupled with sound pedagogy. It is important to note, during this study the authors were diligent when attending to and planning for how the specific Web 2.0 tools were to be integrated within instruction. Very different results may have emerged if researchers had simply inserted a technology tool for an assignment in place of a more traditionally delivered assignment. The metaphor of treating technology integration into instruction like “old wine in new bottles” needs to be avoided (Lankshear & Knoble, 2003). Teachers need to be thoughtful in designing their instruction to align their instructional objectives and outcomes with the 21st century skill and tool that will be the best fit thus achieving the greatest impact on student learning.

This study sought to explore how 21st century skills could be supported with Web 2.0 tools in such a way that student communication skills were enhanced, engagement in rigorous content was fostered, and motivation to learn was encouraged. It was apparent to both the student participants and the authors that all three aims of the study were met. An unsolicited result from this study was the realization of a flipped classroom, the presentation of content outside of class time so that instruction during class can be centered on application and practice of skills. The real power from this study was evident in how students took control of their learning and actively pursued ways to enhance their own learning experience; the teacher, while still a vital element in the classroom, could serve more as a facilitator and differentiate instructional support for each student based upon their individual needs.

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Appendix A

Assignment 1: VoiceThread

Los Saludos [Greetings]

Use a greeting before you begin to say your name, last name, where you are from, where you live and how old you are. Have fun.

Hola clase, [Hello class,]

Este es un video de los Saludos. [You will watch a video on greetings.]

Con sus parejas hablen de los saludos buenos días buenas tardes. [With your partners, talk about greetings.

Good morning, good afternoon.]

Hablen de su edad, su nombre, su apellido y donde viven. Tengan una conversación. [Talk about your age, your name your last name and where you live. Converse.]

Diviértanse adiós. [Enjoy have fun and good bye.]

Appendix B

Assignment 2: VoiceThread.

La Familia [The Family]

Listen to the video then answer the following questions:

¿Cuántos hijos tuvieron (had) tus Padres? [How many children did your parents have?]

¿Cómo se llama tu padre y tu madre? [What are your father and your mother's name?]

Ejemplo: Mi madre se llama...Mi padre se llama... [Example: My mothers name is... My fathers name is...]

¿Tienes tú un padrino o madrina? [Do you have a Godfather or a Godmother?]

¿Cómo se llama tu mascota y que es? [What is the name of your pet?]

Mi mascota se llama...[My pets name is...]

Nombra una diferencia entre tu familia y una familia hispana o latina? [Name a difference between your family and a Hispanic or Latin family?]

Appendix C

Assignment 3: VoiceThread.

Ensayo Personal [Personal Essay]

Escribe un ensayo personal en Español. El primer párrafo incluye tus datos personales. Tu nombre, apellido, la edad, donde vives etc. Escribe el mínimo de cinco oraciones. [Write a personal essay in Spanish. In the first paragraph include you personal information. Your name, last name, age, where you live. Write a minimum of five sentences.]

En el segundo párrafo escribe sobre tu familia. Menciona tus padres, hermanos, hijos, hermanastros o mascotas etc... Escribe el mínimo de cinco oraciones. [In the second paragraph write about your family. Talk about your parents, brothers or sisters, stepbrothers, children or pets etc...Write a minimum of five sentences.]

Mi madre se llama....[My mothers name is...]

Mi padre se llama.... [My fathers name is...]

Tengo un esposo, esposa, hijo etc.... [I have a spouse, son, etc...]

En el tercer párrafo escribe lo que te gusta. Escribe el mínimo de cuatro oraciones (sentences). [In the third paragraph talk about what you like. Write a minimum of four sentences.]

Me gusta... No me gusta [I like.... I do not like...]

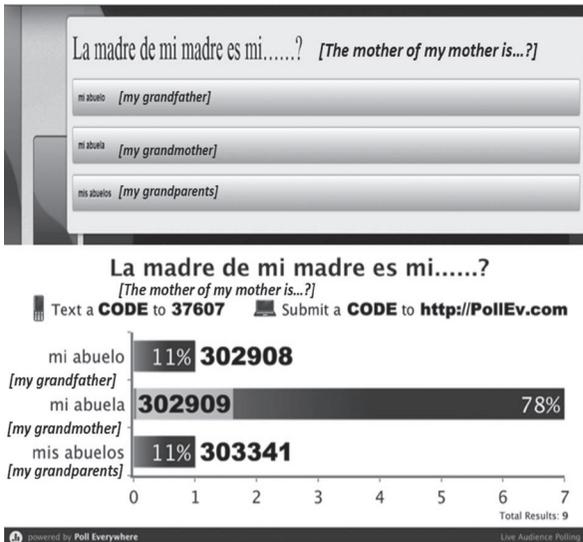
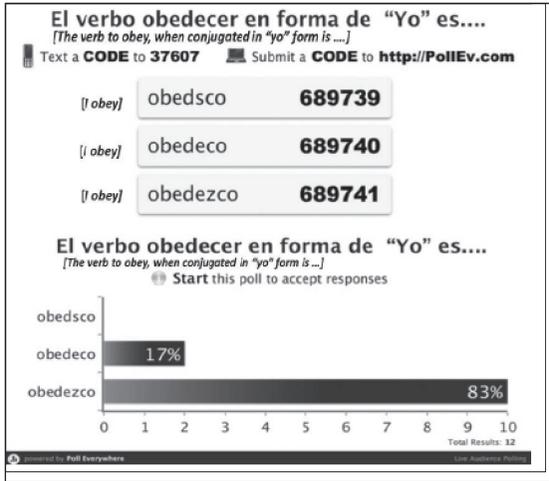
Me gusta mucho...[I like to ...very much]

Me gusta más.... [I like ___more.]

En el **ultimo párrafo** usa las palabras de los rasgos físicos de acuerdo a tú persona. Escribe el mínimo de cuatro oraciones. [On the last paragraph describe yourself using physical traits. For example, if you are tall, short, your color of eyes or any other physical trait you wish to list. Write a minimum of four sentences.]

Once you have completed writing your essay. Upload your assignment on VoiceThread using a Webcam and try not to read directly from your paper.

Appendix D



Appendix E

Final Project Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Introductions	Two introductions and two farewells are present.	There is one introduction and one farewell.	An introduction or a farewell is missing.	Introductions and farewells are missing.
Grammar	Fewer than five errors in sentence structure.	Fewer than four errors in sentence structure.	Fewer than three errors in sentence structure.	No sentence structure in presentation.
Vocabulary Content	Covers topic in depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent. Subject vocabulary is covered in target language. More than 5 vocabulary examples are mentioned reference chosen subject.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good. Subject vocabulary is covered in target language. Four or less vocabulary examples are mentioned reference chosen subject.	Includes essential information about the topic. Subject vocabulary is covered in target language. Three or less vocabulary examples are mentioned reference chosen subject.	Content is minimal OR there are many factual errors. Spanish subject vocabulary is not covered. Less than 2 examples are mentioned reference chosen subject.
Presentation	Well-rehearsed. Smooth delivery of presentation. Holds the audience attention.	Rehearsed with fairly smooth delivery that holds audience attention most of the time.	Delivery not smooth, but able to maintain interest of the audience most of the time.	Delivery not smooth and audience attention often lost.
Originality	Presentation shows a large amount of original thought. Ideas are creative and inventive.	Product shows some original thought. Work shows new ideas and insights.	Uses other people's ideas (Giving them credit), but there is little evidence of original thinking.	Uses other people's ideas, but does not give them credit.

4

Developing MultiSkills for 21st Century Teachers and Learners

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Abstract

Focused on ways to enhance learners' ability to function in the competitive global environment of 21st century citizens, this article offers classroom teachers of world languages, K-16, an understanding of the expectations outlined by The Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Additionally, it explains the opportunity for curricular impact, techniques for fostering P21 frameworks within the classroom, and ideas for connecting university and K-12 faculties around common outcomes. Comments from participants in a series of workshops and from a national leader in the P21 world languages initiative are included.

Background

Creating a vision for the appropriate knowledge required to be a successful, functioning member of society challenges educators in every age. Historic assumptions that more education inevitably leads to greater opportunities and greater economic success permeated the post World War II era in the United States and continued throughout the latter decades of the century as exponentially greater percentages of citizens earned degrees in the nation's institutions of higher education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Individual wealth grew substantially and the economic dominance of the United States was virtually unchallenged as the dissolution of the Soviet Union occurred and diminution in the influence of communism evolved. On the political front conventional

wisdom held that economic liberalization would lead to political liberalization and, eventually, to democracy which should make a safer and more stable global society.

Yet, as the 20th century drew to a close, this traditional belief noted by Bueno de Mesquita and Downs (2005) that “economic growth produces an educated and entrepreneurial middle class that, sooner or later, begins to demand control over its own fate” (p. 77) was challenged by the growing awareness that while China and Russia had both experienced significant economic growth, their governments had not been compelled to relax political control. In fact Bueno de Mesquita and Downs posit that “economic growth, rather than being a force for democratic change in tyrannical states, can sometimes be used to strengthen oppressive regimes” (p. 78). In reality, enhanced international understanding, multicultural tolerance, and greater global security were not forthcoming as the new century began. The 20th century’s commonly accepted understandings of what would lead to economic independence and national security were no longer sacrosanct.

The potential for a new world order coupled with a continuing realization that American students as products of the end of century educational system were not as prepared as they should be to meet the growing and differing demands of a global society served as powerful motivation for an initiative begun by groups external to education to assure that students experiencing 21st century classroom education would obtain instruction to serve them well as 21st century citizens. As Scherer (2009) reflects in her introductory remarks

Many of the questions about how schools should change are the ones educators have asked for years. . . . Other questions about teaching for the 21st century are new. . . . More information than ever is at students’ fingertips, but it takes skill to understand and connect it to prior learning. (p. 7)

Educators joined the chorus of those demanding reform by acknowledging, for example, that “The disciplines are no longer ends in themselves; they are the means to achieving much larger ends--genuine, valuable accomplishments. This vision of student accomplishments not only realigns schooling with real-world needs, but it also focuses the curriculum on the future” (Peel & McCary, 1997, p. 703). In their work published in a special edition focusing on the importance of international education in the new century, Sanders and Stewart (2004) conclude their call to action for education saying “It will take leadership at every level to ensure that our high school graduates have acquired the competencies they need for global citizenship in the 21st century” (p. 205). Ireland and Hitt, writing from the standpoint of promoting best business practices, insist that

Competition in the 21st century’s global economy will be complex, challenging, and filled with competitive opportunities and threats.... [They offer their opinion clearly]. . . . By examining appropriate and often innovative strategic leadership practices currently being used successfully by visionary organizations, it is possible to identify and understand practices that will be effective in the next century. This analysis is important, because

strategic leadership may prove to be one of the most critical issues facing organizations. (p. 63)

Peel and McCary (1997) reinforced the importance of thorough knowledge and understanding, saying that

“Requiring students to apply the knowledge they possess means that they must ‘know’ the content at a much deeper level. Academic rigor and quality are greatly enhanced by focusing the academic disciplines on producing significant student accomplishments.” (p. 703)

So, by 2003 when the news release announcing the publication of its initial report calling for educational reform, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills’ (P21) insistence that “The nation must do a better job of preparing students for life in the 21st century” (p. 1) was almost axiomatic. With such pervasive recognition of the importance of re-visioning education for 21st century students, it was not surprising to note that “only 42 percent of Americans believe that students are being taught the critical skills needed for success in the 21st century, either in school or out of school settings” (p. 1). It was clearly time for a change.

Multi-disciplinary opportunities through P21

The agent of change addressed in this article is a product of The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student at all levels, from any educational institution. Since the beginning of their efforts, the leaders of this movement, who are mostly from the corporate world, identified critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation as critical skills for any person studying and working today and in the future. Among the thirty-nine backers are Adobe Systems Inc., Crayola, Dell Inc., LEGO Group, Hewlett Packard, Apple Inc., Cisco Systems, Ford Motor Company, Intel Corporation, Verizon, the National Education Association (NEA), and the Walt Disney Company. These leaders see the P21 mission as one of building collaborative partnerships among education, business, government, and communities. As the United States continues to compete in a global economy that demands innovation, P21 offers tools and resources to help the U.S. education system keep up with students around the globe. Having identified the essentials of a framework for learning in the 21st century as (1) Core Subjects, (2) 21st Century Content, (3) Learning and Thinking Skills, (4) Information and Communications Technology, and (5) Life Skills, P21 suggests updated assessments that measure the five tenets of the framework through real-life tasks that go beyond standardized tests.

For the world language profession, the good news is the inclusion of foreign languages as one of the core subjects alongside English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. Additionally, the Framework offers five interdisciplinary themes, not often emphasized in schools today, that can be woven into the core subjects.

They are global awareness, (another opportunity for world languages to take a leadership role in P21); financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health and wellness awareness; and environmental literacy.

Essential to the P21 understanding is the preparation of a discipline-specific skills map targeted toward educators, administrators, and policy makers. These maps include lesson plans or scenarios for integrating 21st century skills into existing curricula, as well as expectations for student outcomes, along with models designed to help enhance student achievement at specified grade levels or, in the case of world languages, in proficiency ranges.

Following the model prescribed by the P21 organization, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), brought world language leaders together to create a World Languages (WL) Skills Map that reflects how the language profession can help students meet the eleven skill areas of communication, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy, flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skill, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility (Cutshall, 2009). In addition to the WL Skills Map, maps exist for English, social studies, science, geography, the arts, and mathematics (www.p21.org).

The WL Skills Map indicates at the top which skill area each page of the map represents, Life and Career Skills, Learning and Innovation Skills, or Information, Media, and Technology Skills (see Figure 1, next page). The next information provided on each page is the specific skill area from the twelve areas mentioned above. While other disciplines' maps divide student expectations by grade levels, the ACTFL task force chose to describe through proficiency ranges how novice, intermediate, and advanced language users could meet the expectation(s) of the skill. The map includes several examples of student production for each proficiency level and, with an appropriate icon, marks the relevant mode of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, or presentational) for each sample. The five interdisciplinary themes are also marked with icons for health literacy, civic literacy, financial literacy, global awareness, and environmental literacy as determined by the author(s) of the examples.

Opportunity for world languages curricular impact

Although the 21st century has not yet become an era when global engagement and international initiatives have motivated U.S. citizens to pursue mastery of languages other than English as many foreign language teachers may have anticipated, the goals for education outlined by P21 and articulated in the WL Skills Map provide language educators with a strong impetus for reinvigorating the classroom experience for today's students. This affirmation by P21 that world languages are a core subject has not always been the case when external bodies have attempted to influence educational reform.

As the skills promulgated through the P21 initiative are designed to encourage a deep understanding rather than cursory, shallow knowledge, they mesh well with a proficiency-based, Standards-focused WL curriculum (National Standards

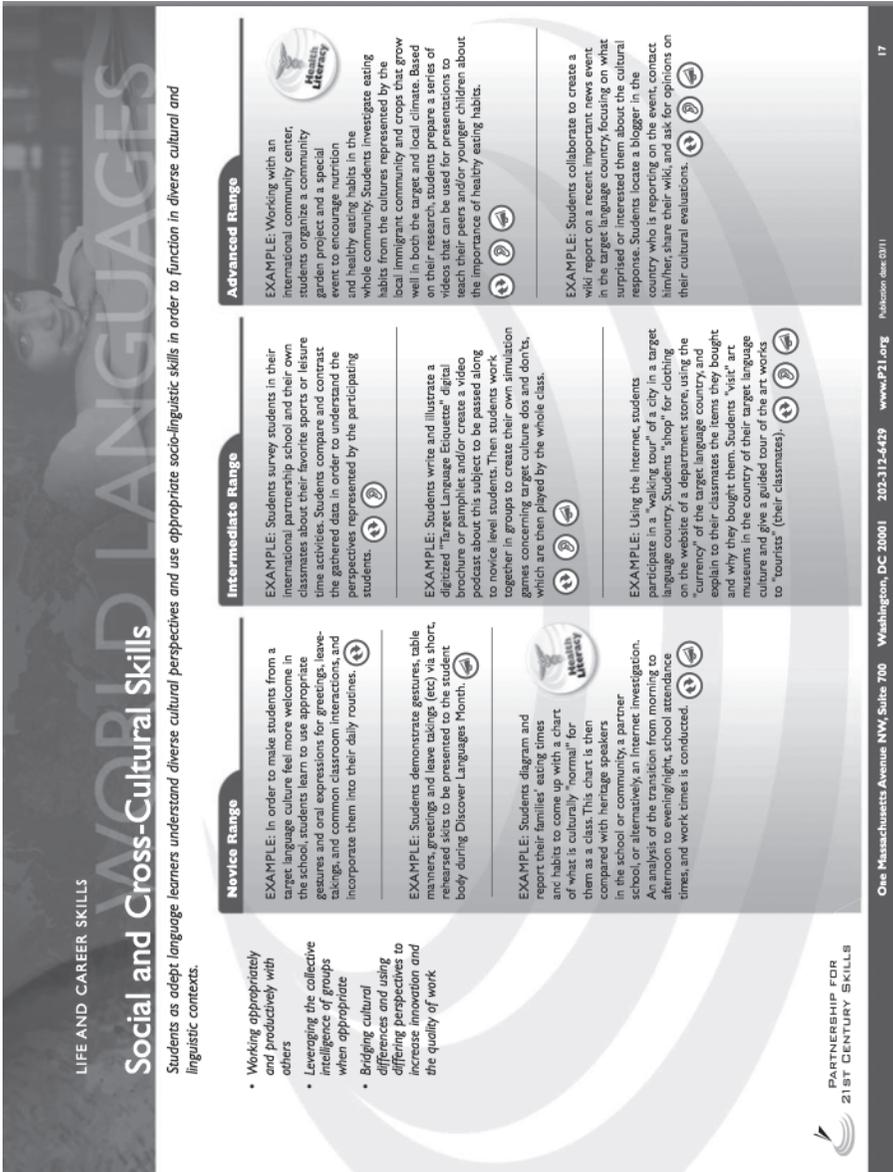


Figure 1. The P21 World Languages Skills Map (Thiesen et al., 2011)

in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999). However, if lesson plans and student outcome expectations evident in most WL classrooms and those of other academic disciplines had already been successful in producing the competent graduates who are the intended beneficiaries of the P21 challenge to educators, there would have been no motivation to create the Partnership nor for national educational organizations in the core subjects to develop discipline-specific skills maps.

The task force that created the WL Skills Map (2011) has accurately identified a number of shifts in the paradigm of language teaching since the mid-1990s that lead toward the outcomes expectations of P21. In their introduction to the WL Map, the authors reflect that the importance of assuring that students can use the languages they are studying to communicate with native speakers has taken precedence over the expectations in previous decades that resulted in students acquiring information about the language rather than in their learning to use the language in real world situations. In earlier decades WL instruction was delivered primarily in a teacher-centered class where the textbook provided the sequencing of content and the vast majority of activities that students were required to complete. Curriculum frameworks were created with the expectation that all students in a given course would receive the same instructional input from the teacher and that listening, speaking, reading and writing would be assessed as isolated skills. Since all students received the same input and instruction from the teacher and the textbook, it followed that testing would require all students to perform accurately on the same tests. While instructional expectations for the teaching of culture evolved significantly over the course of recent decades, culture remained too often an additive to the curriculum with cultural products receiving far more attention than practices and perspectives of the culture prior to the Standards era. Perhaps the most egregious reality in the earlier decades was that language usage was confined to classroom-based simulations that rarely extended beyond the school setting.

As the outcomes expectations for WL programs have evolved dramatically in the Standards era, WL teachers are well positioned to champion many of the goals that P21 has envisioned for graduates in the coming decades. Now as classroom teachers are expected to create learner-centered classrooms where enabling students to use the language they study in culturally authentic, real-world contexts is the goal of the program, students are empowered to use language in contexts of specific interest to them. Rather than requiring all students to perform on the same assessments, teachers offer situations and activities that teach cross-curricular content and enable students to perform on tasks related to their areas of interest. The goal of a course for the 21st century learner should be to use the language to share and communicate with audiences beyond the classroom.

Fostering P21 frameworks in the classroom

In order to facilitate teachers' understanding of P21 concepts so that they can create activities that foster the P21 expectations, faculty in the foreign language department at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock offered eight, six-hour

professional development workshop sessions on the Partnership for the 21st Century Skills and, in particular, the WL Skills Map. The intent of the sessions was to enable K-12 teachers to acquire knowledge of the frameworks, skills and themes identified by the P21 organization in order to develop meaningful, level-appropriate activities for students. To recruit workshop participants, they developed flyers announcing the workshop series that were distributed at state language conferences and through direct mail. K-12 teachers from across the state applied for 30 available positions in the workshops. Four sessions occurred during the fall semester and four more were scheduled in the spring.

Believing that the curricular implementation of P21 skills at the K-12 level would be better received at all levels of instruction if developed in partnership with the engagement of university faculty, the directors of the project invited faculty from the foreign language department to take leadership in the delivery of information at the individual sessions. The directors hoped that faculty would volunteer to lead sessions based either on their personal interest in a P21 topic or on their expertise. Six faculty and two faculty directors volunteered to instruct and to lead the discussions on the twelve skill areas. Some faculty volunteered to lead more than one session.

As preparation for the workshops on the university campus, a session was held with the faculty volunteers to explain the P21 objectives and the P21 WL Skills Map. The directors also studied the P21 website and used three DVDs, *21st Century Readiness for Every Student, Leadership and Learning: Sustainable Changes for 21st Century Learning*, and *The Role of PLCs in Advancing 21st Century Skills*, as background for assisting the faculty presenters on how to craft their presentations. The project directors planned the overall project organization and provided a PowerPoint template to each faculty member. While each workshop day was to be structured similarly, faculty members were free to design their own interpretation of the skill(s) assigned to them.

Connecting leaders and participants

The day long workshop format allowed teacher participants to learn the specifics of P21 via the presentations created by university faculty, to participate in discussions about the skills, and to have concentrated time to brainstorm, create sample lessons, strategies, and activities relevant to each of the P21 skills for their students. The project directors led the first session of the workshop series, presenting an overview of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and an overview of the P21 WL Skills Map to the participants. The three sessions that followed in the fall provided participants with background information on the skills of Think Creatively/Work Creatively, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving, Communication and Collaboration, Information Literacy, Media Literacy, and Technology. Since the frameworks, skills and interdisciplinary themes apply to all academic areas, the challenge in each session was to articulate how foreign language activities can help students achieve the intent of the P21 initiative. The schedule of each workshop day was similar as is indicated in the example illustrated in Figure 2 on the next page.

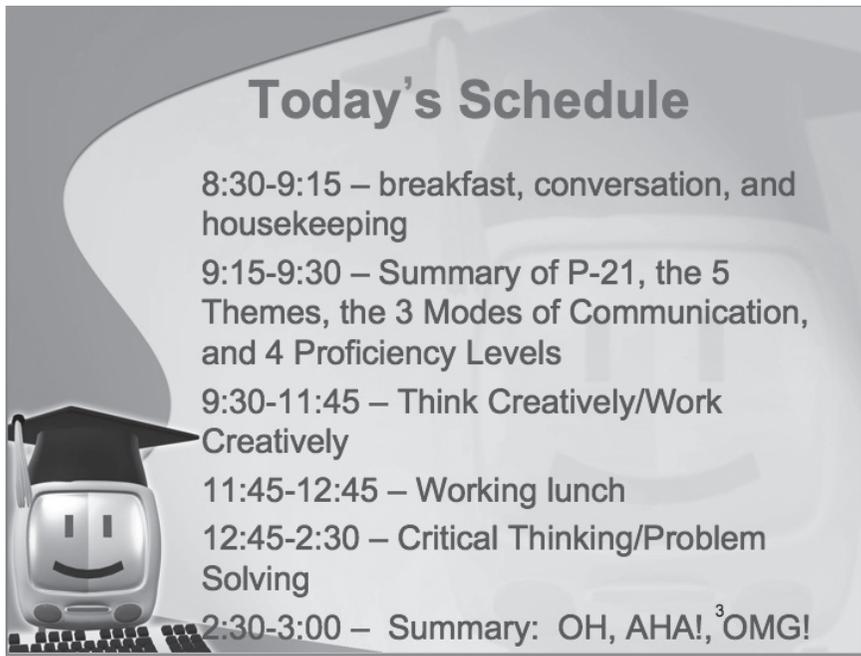


Figure 2. Sample Daily Schedule from PD Workshops at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock

One of the university faculty members who volunteered to lead workshop sessions was a new faculty member in the Department. He acknowledged that he was neither familiar with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the WL Skills Map nor was he familiar with the types of workshops for K-12 teachers that colleagues were planning for local elementary, middle, and high school WL teachers. When he volunteered to lead two of the workshops, this faculty member admitted that he did not know what would be involved, but that he was eager to participate in such a significant project and realized that it was an excellent opportunity to learn about 21st century skills and to make connections with teachers. Before volunteering to participate, he researched P21 and the WL Skills Map, met with colleagues to discuss the topics of the workshops, and investigated the P21 website. He described his initial reflection on the process of deciding to volunteer. “I learned that what P21 proposed was a method of teaching very different from anything I had experienced before. It was certainly a change from what had been taught to me in my graduate studies and what I had learned in previous teaching positions.”

Through his independent research of P21 he came to realize that it is along the same lines as the goal of translingual and transcultural competence set forth in 2007 by the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages. This committee proposed that language students should also learn

critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception. . . [further explaining that in this type of system the students] acquire a basic knowledge of the history, geography, culture, and literature of the society or societies whose language they are learning; the ability to understand and interpret its radio, television, and print media; and the capacity to do research in the language using parameters specific to the target culture. (p. 4)

Students are enabled to achieve the goals of this system through the framework, skills and interdisciplinary themes of P21. This faculty member, reflecting on his planning process for leading workshops, offered additional comments.

Eventually, I was able to choose two topics that I thought would be of interest to me personally and that I would be able to interpret effectively to the teacher participants: Information Literacy and Productivity and Accountability. It turned out that these were not the most stimulating topics for classroom application, nor were they topics with an abundance of resources readily accessed on the P21 website. It seemed to me that introducing these two into the foreign language classroom was not as straightforward or exciting as presenting Communication or Collaboration, for example. One can create many fun activities for the language classroom that teach good communication or collaboration skills, but creating captivating activities that teach students about information literacy or productivity and accountability presented more of a challenge. This perhaps could explain the comparatively smaller quantity of resources available for these topics on the P21 website.

When he realized that he could not depend on the P21 website for his presentation, he became concerned that he would not find enough useful material to share with teachers and thus would have difficulty getting the teachers to participate actively in the workshop. However, his fears concerning materials were quickly allayed. Simple website searches provided a great deal of information on both topics, including quotes, graphics, and presentations given by others. Searches of online videos also provided access to a number of video selections. However, none of the materials specifically related to the study of foreign languages. The materials on information literacy typically addressed the issue in its most general sense, and those on productivity and accountability largely dealt with the work place, particularly a business environment, or one's personal life. The challenge, then, was how to apply those materials to teaching in the foreign language classroom.

After sifting through the materials, I was able to choose items that could be presented in a way that allowed me to draw a connection to teaching foreign languages. I chose various quotes, including one from President Barack Obama on the importance of Information Literacy in today's world, and graphics, such as one showing the relationship between

Information Literacy and several other skills included in the map, specifically media literacy and critical thinking. Fortunately, the task of bridging the gap between the general materials and our specific topic of using the skills in the foreign language classroom was made much less difficult by the language teachers participating in the workshop. They had good ideas and plenty to say on the topics; several were already incorporating them into their classrooms in innovative ways.

Another faculty member who volunteered as a session leader, approached the process differently by first implementing the P21 Framework into her university level elementary and intermediate classes before planning the presentations she would share with project participants. When first approached with the idea to participate in the grant, this faculty member acknowledged that she was extremely hesitant because she was not a knowledgeable P21 teacher although she is a respected and highly qualified Senior Instructor of Spanish, teaching mostly lower level required language courses. Her concern emanated from a belief that she needed to experience P21 in the classroom before attempting to lead others to implementation of P21 skills in their classes. Even as she decided to revise her introductory course to include P21 skills and themes she was concerned about how to find class time in an already ambitious syllabus to embrace the necessary changes. As is common in university language programs with multiple course instructors, the program structure, organized largely by the sequence of content in a textbook, limits the instructor's flexibility in terms of choosing what to teach. Usage of a common university syllabus in lower level courses is not unlike the requirement placed on K-12 teachers to follow curriculum guidelines set forth in state frameworks or district expectations. It is also not uncommon for language teachers to feel pressure to provide students with all the content prescribed in the syllabus in order to assure that students are well prepared to move to the next class with another instructor who may employ different methodology and have different expectations for student performance. This instructor reflected on her initial engagement with P21.

Until I became involved with this project, I felt I had pushed the limits of creativity in my classrooms while still retaining the traditional focus of the introductory and intermediate courses. Once I decided to participate in the project, I began to examine my class and what I was expecting my students to do. Quickly, I realized that I needed to make changes to my approach. Planning for the following semester was very different after this realization. I changed the design of my courses. In this semester, I replaced quizzes and exams with student-designed, project-based assessments and self-directed student blogs. In the past, I chose a topic and assigned a project for the students to do based upon my idea. This semester, students were allowed to design their own projects based on their majors, their expertise or a special interests. I encouraged students to reach beyond the language classroom and to incorporate material

from other disciplines. The rubric used to assess student performance placed significant value on the evidence of such efforts.

The instructor recognized that introducing the content to students in this new way was a challenging process for both the instructor and the students. While any change can be daunting, the instructor realized that it was especially important to take into account and plan for student reaction to this change in outcome expectations since student performance on the new requirements would be a significant component of the course grade. The instructor recalled the process she developed.

I decided to provide students with the information that I was using in order to redesign the course. I provided them with copies of the WL Skills Map. The opposition was strong at first because students expected to be graded on the usual quizzes and exams. So, I let the students know that the P21 initiative was also new to me and that we would work together to accomplish the agreed upon goals. Though skeptical initially, several groups of students became incredibly engaged in the process and the products they created.

As a required part of the project development, students reported regularly on their progress and often commented that they had made connections between Spanish and other disciplines or with their chosen professions. For example, a small group of criminal justice majors created a training manual for law enforcement and presented it to the class. Another group of students who were on the baseball team created a presentation that was focused on recruiting Spanish-speaking baseball players to the university. A group of education majors created a brochure that introduced the school district to Spanish-speaking parents. This project actually led to the rebirth of the university's Spanish Club and an ESL tutoring program where students chose to volunteer approximately 25 hours per week in an elementary school in the university district. This instructor's classroom experience and student performance then motivated her participation as a workshop presenter.

With one semester of P21 practice, I felt more knowledgeable and confident about what to present to project participants. The P21 topics I chose were Creativity and Innovation as well as Initiative and Self-Direction. At first, I wondered if one could really teach someone to be creative or to take initiative. I decided to research the topics. Relying heavily on the P21 website and other educational sites, I began to understand the Framework more fully, and I slowly came to understand that if the audience has an open mind to new ways of visioning course structure and outcome expectations for students, that yes, it could be possible to teach teachers to promote these skills in the language classroom and beyond.

To lead the presentation of Creativity and Innovation (CI) she began by defining the topic and explaining the hallmarks of these criteria according to the

WL Skills Map to project participants. Teachers discussed the topic and how it related to their classrooms. Next, they analyzed the skills map and the sample novice, intermediate and advanced proficiency level activities it included. The teachers debated the pros and cons of the ideas and made suggestions for change in some of the printed CI activities. Not surprisingly, a discussion ensued where teachers discussed the likely roadblocks to P21 implementation at their schools. A common statement was “well, this is a great idea, but I can’t do that at my school”. When asked to elaborate, teachers explained that the required course structure, school rules, or inability to collaborate with colleagues would hinder P21 implementation. The instructor’s task was to steer the conversation back to finding ways to work within the system in order to explore creative avenues to develop the language skills students will need in the future as envisioned in the WL Skills map. Following her presentation and a time for participant exploration of the topic, the instructor challenged teachers to apply their new knowledge by creating their own activities to include in their lesson plans. Their task was to develop a novice or intermediate project, connected to a unit they were teaching, that embraced the CI characteristics as prescribed in the WL Skills map. In addition they were asked to specify the mode of communication (interpretive, interpersonal or presentational) and P21 interdisciplinary theme to which the activity or project related.

Project implementation

Of the eight planned workshop sessions, four were held in the fall and four additional workshop sessions were offered during the spring semester. When participants returned for the first spring semester workshop in late January, they had engaged seven of the 12 skills. Each participant was expected to bring the activities they had created during the fall semester for each of the skills and to share how they had used the information from the first sessions to change classroom instruction to meet the expectations of the P21 skills. In order to encourage participants to be intentional about developing and implementing level appropriate activities, a competition was held to select the best novice and the best intermediate activity or project for each skill. All participants read and rated all activities submitted and “best of”, “runner-up” and “honorable mention” awards were presented for each skill.

The first theme for spring workshops was Flexibility and Adaptability. In the subsequent spring sessions, presentations were offered on Initiative and Self-direction, Social and Cross-cultural skills, Productivity and Accountability, and, the last workshop in late April engaged participants with Leadership and Responsibility. The evaluation and award system utilized after the first four sessions had been well received and was, therefore, replicated at the end of the spring semester as one component of the overall project evaluation.

To provide enrichment during the series of workshops, participants also received four books, *21st Century Skills: Rethinking How Students Learn*, by Bellanca and Brandt (eds.); *Teaching & Assessing 21st Century Skills*, by Marzano and Heflebower; *Creating a Digital-rich Classroom: Teaching & Learning in a Web 2.0 World*, by Ormiston; and *Enriched Learning Projects: A Practical Pathway to 21st Century Skills* by Bellanca. Although none of these is specifically focused on world language instruction, the texts were used for providing context for P21 change, for ideas about teaching and assessing P21 skills, for encouraging

technology integration, and for promoting standards-based and project-based learning to address the P21 skills respectively.

Reflections on the project impact and value of P21

Inasmuch as this project was one of the earliest extended initiatives to disseminate the WL Skills Map for classroom implementation, the project directors were eager to obtain responses from participants regarding their evaluation of the value of the project and its goals for their classes and their students. To assist in project evaluation, the project directors invited Toni Theisen from Loveland (CO) High School and chair of the ACTFL 21st Century Skills Map committee in 2010, to come to campus to review the workshop processes and outcomes. She attended the eighth workshop session and had the opportunity to interview several of the participants in depth. In her consultant's report to the directors, she cited several quotes from workshop participants. There were comments such as, "I got to bounce off ideas with many experienced teachers and this empowered me to be more of a risk-taker when breaking away from the book and finding online sources that engaged students." Another teacher commented that "allowing myself more flexibility" helped her understand she didn't always have to micro-manage learning. Another teacher said, "I now understand how to let learning happen." Still another added, "I do not need to know everything. I can just design lessons and let the students make meaning in their own ways with my guidance, but not my control". And finally, "I now have a platform to stand on to justify my use of technology because of all my knowledge from these workshops," said one teacher. Theisen summarized the value of the workshops as follows, "The strength of this series of workshops is that there is follow through with the learning and many occasions to apply it, not only in their classes but also to share what they now know and can do with colleagues in world languages and other content areas."

Project participants indicated to the directors that they felt better empowered to encourage their students to develop the skills identified by P21 and that they were as a result more willing to adjust their course requirements. It is clear, however, that a significant shift to using P21 frameworks, skills and themes as the guiding principle and primary measure of student success require much thoughtful planning not only in terms of the student projects but also in order to engage students in a different type of educational endeavor.

The university faculty were also invited to evaluate the project and to reflect on their participation. The new university faculty member stated that he valued most participating in the teachers' discussions and hearing their previous and new ideas about how to include the P21 skills into the classroom. He felt that it was apparent that they were invested in their students' futures, stating that "moving foreign language teaching forward and meeting the demands of the twenty first century are clearly important to them. In the workshops they showed an eagerness to learn from one another, as well as to help each other."

He noted again the connection between his engagement in the P21 workshop project and the report of the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages remarking that it states as a priority the promotion of "alliances between K-12

educators and college and university faculty members to strengthen language learning at all levels and to foster collaboration” (p. 8). He further cited agreement by Randolph Pope (2008) in his response to the Ad Hoc Committee’s article. Pope compares foreign language departments to bubbles and stresses the necessity for exploration beyond our own bubble, which could occur through relationships with local K-12 schools (p. 25). This new faculty member recognized additional benefits.

This series of workshops did promote teamwork among our department and local K-12 teachers, and my participation proved to be a rewarding educational endeavor for me. I learned how teachers nationwide are addressing the P21 skills in their classrooms, and not just in the teaching of foreign languages. The experience allowed me not only to meet many of the area’s language teachers, but also to hear about the innovative things they are doing in their classes and learn from them. The workshops informed me about the type of preparation the students at my university are getting in the local high schools, which ultimately affects the way I teach on a daily basis.

The Spanish instructor commented in her summary about the results of her attempts to utilize P21 in her elementary courses and possible changes for future semesters. She stated that she would modify several aspects of the project component for future classes. One change that she believes would be most helpful to student success is to require that students use the WL Skills Map more explicitly when planning their projects. The instructor did not require students to specify the skill or the appropriate mode of communication that they were concentrating on in her pilot initiative although some students did so. She recognized that the projects produced by the students who were specific were more reflective of the guidelines and of better quality. She, therefore, inferred that students may have worked more efficiently and their product may have been more focused if this specificity had been a more integral part of the process. Additionally, the faculty member would have liked to work more closely with each group to provide more guidance during project preparation. However, class time was too limited to allow for teaching the P21 components in detail and extensive in-class collaboration among team members and the instructor while the instructor also assured that the traditional course content was completed. She does believe that continuing to apply the WL Skills Map in projects for subsequent courses would become much easier for students as they acquire both greater familiarity with the P21 expectations and at the same time come to recognize that such student-centered coursework that values individual initiative is more authentic for real world success. She also believes that more communication across departmental lines among faculty both at the university level and in the K-12 environment will result in better student outcomes. She stated that she strongly believes that students need to understand how subjects and skills are not isolated in the real world. Teachers at all levels of education must strive to help students understand the multidimensional and interconnected world in which the students will be expected to function upon

graduation, and they must develop expectations for student performance that reflect this reality.

Conclusions and Future Opportunities

Based upon experiences of both the project presenters from the university and the project participants in the K-12 environment, it is clear that course expectations in traditional programs can be modified to embrace the P21 philosophy. To fully embrace the challenge of a student-centered classroom, the idea of what a classroom should look and feel like needs to be re-imagined inasmuch as a student-centered classroom that focuses on project-based assessments is not going to be quiet and organized all of the time. Students need to be permitted to use current technologies, prohibited in many educational settings (e.g. smartphones, tablets), to find relevant information and conduct authentic work through active communication and collaboration. This type of interaction will allow students to personalize their experience, build capacity to think critically and creatively, and make connections beyond the classroom while using the target language.

To implement P21 effectively students need to be well informed on the goals of P21 and how the Framework, WL Skills Map and interdisciplinary themes affect the traditional language classroom. Teachers must be able to articulate these concepts to their students and reflect the outcome expectations in their course syllabi in order for students to develop the skills they will need to accomplish these goals. It is clear that students will most easily accept such efforts if there is a shared vision among world language colleagues and they find similar requirements in multiple WL courses. One approach to effecting the needed curricular modifications would be to imbed project-based assessments that align with both the Standards and P21. New motivation to consider these reforms including project-based assessments may occur as world language professionals engage in the challenge of the Common Core State Standards mandate (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010) which, unlike P21, does not embrace world languages as a core discipline but which does offer additional external support to the knowledge and skills that competent students of world languages acquire.

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5

Effective Chinese and Japanese Character Instruction Using Etymological CALL Approach

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Abstract

In recent years, the number of native-English-speaking students learning Chinese and Japanese has been increasing, but many of them find it very challenging to master these two languages' writing systems of characters, which greatly differ from the English alphabet. Characters are individual and pictographic in shape; they are used like Latin roots in English. Each character has a distinct meaning and identity as opposed to only a phonetic significance. In order to be considered highly literate in Chinese and Japanese, a learner must master approximately 3,000 of these characters. Doing so is challenging, especially through rote memorization or simple mnemonic techniques alone. However, a close look at these characters reveals that most are made up of a smaller number of minimum meaning units (approximately 200) with historical and cultural information underlying each of them. These units can be divided into four categories, each of which is described in this paper in terms of how the learning of these basic units of meaning can make the learning of all the characters much more meaningful and fun. With this goal in mind, a set of multimedia materials for teaching and learning of Japanese characters has been developed using CALL technology. This technology allows learners to see the shape of each *Kanji* character combined with the pronunciation. The cultural and historical information related to each character is also shown to enable students to understand the meaning of each character. Animation is

used to demonstrate the stroke order for writing each of the characters. . The detailed descriptions of each function of our program are presented followed by a discussion of the significance and effectiveness of this approach, which can easily be adapted to instruction for Chinese characters.

Introduction

The Japanese language learning boom started in the 1980s in the United States as well as in the Europe due to a strong tidal wave of Japanese investment in those geographic areas. During the following decade a large number of Japanese programs were established at the K-16 level. Following the decline of the Japanese economy in the 1990s, the rise of the Chinese economy started, and, as a result, Chinese has been one of the fastest growing foreign languages in the United States and in Europe, particularly in the past decade. According to a survey conducted by Furman, Goldberg, and Natalia (2010), Chinese is the third fastest growing foreign language taught in U.S. colleges and universities, and Japanese and Chinese are sixth and seventh respectively based on fall 2009 language course enrollments in U.S. institutions of higher education. Despite the popularity of Chinese and Japanese, most learners of these languages face a major obstacle soon after they start learning them. That is, they soon discover that learning the writing systems, called *Hanzi* in Chinese and *Kanji* in Japanese is a difficult challenge. These writing systems do not consist of a written alphabet but are instead made up of individual characters, any of which has a certain form or shape, pronunciation, and meaning. The problem that students frequently encounter in learning these characters is to master the large number of characters to be literate in these languages. Equating the sound and meaning with the form of the characters is also very difficult. Because of the necessity to master this difficult writing system along with the difficulty in achieving a high level of speaking skill, these two languages are classified as the most difficult foreign languages for English-speaking learners, according to the Foreign Service Institute (Liskin-Gasparro, 1982). In order to help students of Chinese and Japanese learn the characters more effectively and meaningfully with ease and enjoyment, the authors have developed a new approach for teaching characters that uses multimedia technology. This etymological approach includes cultural aspects of the language in ways that allow students to easily visualize and understand how the characters are formed. This paper presents this approach in detail, preceded by a review of the literature, followed by a discussion of this approach.

Characteristics of Chinese and Japanese Characters

Writing systems in the world can be put into three categories: logographic, syllabic, or alphabetic (DeFrancis, 1989). Logographic writing systems represent morphemes or meaningful units. A representative example of a logographic writing system is Chinese. Syllabary, on the other hand, represents spoken syllables; the Japanese *Kana* system is a typical example. The third writing system, alphabetic, maps onto phonemes; Italian or English are good examples of this (Perfetti &

Dunlap, 2008). For example, *teacher* in English is represented as 先生 in both Chinese and Japanese (logography) and せんせい *sensee* in Japanese kana.

There are a large numbers of Chinese characters. In fact, 中華字海 *Chinese Word Ocean* (1994), one of the most comprehensive Chinese character dictionaries, contains more than 85,000 different characters, and *Dai Kan-Wa Jiten* (Morohashi, Kamata & Yoneyama, 1999), one of the most comprehensive character dictionaries in Japanese, has approximately 10,000 different characters. Realistically speaking, however, for the Chinese and Japanese people a good mastery of approximately 2,000 of the most frequently used characters makes them literate in the sense that this number accounts for more than 98% of characters used in today's written materials such as newspapers, textbooks, magazines, and stories (Moser, 2012; Tomizawa, 2006). These numbers are still extremely challenging for the Indo-European language speaking learners, who are used to reading and writing their languages with less than 30 different graphemes.

In addition, Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters are mostly divided into the following four major categories:

(a) Pictographic characters

Some of the characters under this category are 山 “mountain”, 日 “the sun”, and 木 “tree.” All have a specific meaning by depicting an image of what they represent in the real world. They can be used as both radicals and characters. Radicals are called *bushu* and refer to minimum units of meanings of Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters.

(b) Simple ideographic characters

Some of the characters under this category are 上 “above” and 下 “under.” As is the case for (a), these can be used as radicals as well as characters by themselves with the same meaning. They represent an abstract image of the world, which cannot be described by shapes like those in (a) above, which are more concrete representations of the world.

(c) Semantic compound ideographs

Some of the characters under this category are 明 “bright” and 峠 “summit.” They consist of more than one pictographic or simple ideographic word/radical. The first character for “bright” is a combination of “the sun” on the left side and “the moon” on the other side for the meaning of “bright.” The symbolism shown in the character is of two celestial bodies put together at the same time, making the world “brighter.” Similarly, the meaning of the second character “summit” is made by putting a mountain on the left side and an image of an up point and a down point of the road in the mountain on the right side. Each of the components for these characters has a specific fixed meaning, thus they are called “building blocks.” With just about 200 of these, one can make more than 10,000 different characters.

(d) Phonologic compounds ideographs

Some characters under this category are 効 “effect”, 校 “school”, and 絞 “to wring.” The formation of these characters is basically the same as those in (c), but the difference is that one component of each character shows its pronunciation and the other depicts the meaning of the character. In the examples above, 交

represents the pronunciation. A significant fact is that 80% of all characters fall under these two categories of (c) and (d) (Meng, Shu, & Zhou, 2000). Only 30% of the commonly used Kanji characters in Japanese called *joyo-kanji* characters are silently different from Chinese characters currently used in Taiwan and Hong Kong (Kojima, 2003). This is similar to the word “chocolate” in French and English. The spelling and meaning are the same, but the pronunciation is different since they are two different languages. Thus, this paper deals with Chinese and Japanese characters as the same. It should be pointed out here that there are two differences in some cases between the characters of the two languages. One such difference is that some of the same characters have different meanings between the two languages. A good example would be 子 which means “son” in Chinese while it means “child” in Japanese. The other difference is that some of the radicals which are building blocks for making characters have been simplified in both languages although they are not necessarily the same radicals in the languages. An exception to this is the simplification of characters used in Taiwan and Hong Kong as far as the Chinese language is concerned.

Learning Chinese Characters and Japanese Kanji

Since the Japanese language adapted Chinese characters from China, the Japanese and Chinese languages use very similar characters, and both languages face similar challenges in language teaching. Due to the visual complexity of the characters, the large number of characters to be memorized, and the ambiguous relationship among shape, sound and meaning of the characters, Chinese language learners have difficulty remembering all of the characters (Tse, Marton, Ki, & Loh, 2007). For example, the English word, “parent” is represented as 親 *oya* in traditional Chinese. As seen, it has sixteen strokes and does not show any sound representation. For learners of Japanese, difficulty stems from visual similarities between characters, the multiple meanings of *Kanji* characters, and multiple readings of *Kanji* characters in addition to the reasons indicated for Chinese learners (Mori & Mori, 2010). For example, three different words may contain the same *Kanji* 手 *te* “a hand”; 握手 *akushu* “shaking hands”, 土手 *dote* “an embankment”, and 上手 *jouzu* “skillful.” The meanings of the *Kanji* 手 in each of the three words is largely different.

Most Chinese/Japanese language programs at the college level in the U.S. require students to learn approximately 500 characters in four years, and, after graduation, they must continue studying at least 1,500 more to be considered literate in either or both languages. Traditional instruction of Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters shares core components based on popular texts in both languages, such as *Integrated Chinese* (Liu, Yao, Bi, Ge, & Shi, 2009) in Chinese and *Nakama* (Hatasa, Hatasa & Makino, 2009; 2011) in Japanese. Both texts (a) introduce four major groupings of character formation such as pictographic, simple ideographic, semantic compound ideographic, and phonological compounds ideographic characters, (b) teach major radical meanings, (c) teach stroke orders of the characters, and (d) teach sounds of the characters through a phonetic based writing system, such as Pinyin in Chinese and *Kana* in Japanese, (e) teach

meanings of the characters, and (f) provide practice in writing the characters with an accompanying workbook. However, with the challenge of learning characters, many students struggle with learning the language and lose motivation to learn characters (Tse, et al., 2007). In order to promote learning characters, various strategies have been introduced by teachers such as using contexts, games, computers, and so on (Shimizu & Green, 2002). However, based on the results of a large survey given to 251 second language Japanese teachers conducted by Shimizu and Green (2002), rote learning strategies for reading and copying target *Kanji* characters were most frequently used among all teachers because of the teachers' own experiences from when they were children.

Some research has indicated that efficient word recognition skills lead to successful second/foreign language reading (Chikamatsu, 2003; Koda, 1992; Segalowitz & Hebert, 1990). Therefore, learning Chinese characters successfully can be a crucial component to improve a learner's language proficiency. However, when the language that second/foreign language learners are learning is vastly different from their first language such as English vs. Japanese or Chinese, word reading becomes more difficult than when their first language and the second/foreign language are similar, such as English and Spanish (Koda & Zehler, 2008). For learners of Japanese or Chinese whose first language is vastly different from the target language, it can take more effort and time to improve their word recognition skills. Therefore, it is important for teachers of Chinese and Japanese languages to create effective instructional materials and methods for learners of Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters.

Importance of language learning and culture

Omaggio (2001) pointed out the importance of teaching culture in language classrooms because cultural aspects are embedded into the language. Likewise, *the Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (1996) include five categories, communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities. The culture category consists of three important aspects, (a) perspectives, (b) products and (c) practices. The following are standards of the culture category:

- Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied
- Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Makino (2003) indicated that *the Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (1996) see perspectives as the main item of the category, and, therefore, the connections between perspectives and practices as well as perspectives and products have more priority than the connection between practices and products. Therefore, it is important to teach cultural perspectives. However, Omaggio (2001) notes that one of the issues in teaching culture is that language teachers have limited time to teach the language and underestimate the importance of culture in their language class; therefore, they tend to teach culture later after all the grammar is introduced. Another issue is that teachers do not want to entertain

student reactions toward the culture of the target language. Fortunately, Chinese characters include historical and cultural value, and therefore; it is possible to teach Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters and culture at the same time. For instance, the *Kanji* 男 “man” consists of two radicals ; one is “rice field” 田 and the other is “power” 力, and the logic is “*a person who works very hard in the rice field is an adult male called “man.”*” This role of man used to be the case when this *Kanji* was created over one thousand years ago, and its essence still exists in today’s China and Japan.

Rationale of the development of the multimedia materials for teaching of Chinese and *Kanji* characters

As stated earlier, it is extremely challenging to teach such a large number of complex Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters effectively and meaningfully or to learn them with ease. The traditional way of teaching deals with each character as a whole word such as “love” 愛. Rote memorization is basically the way to learn and master *Kanji* over a long period of time. This approach, on the other hand, teaches any character by dividing it into several radicals and explains the logic of the meaning of the characters based on the historic as well as cultural meaning of the *radical* used in it. This is called an etymologically-based approach. In this way, each character can be learned more meaningfully because the learners can see clearly how a given character is composed from the view point of its history and cultural significance. No matter how complicated a character may appear, this approach enables learners to see each character as a combination of simple radicals, thereby eliminating the frustration of learning by just rote memorization.

In fact, it is believed that language and culture are inseparable. A well-known and widely accepted principle of “linguistic relativity” claims that the language is a reflection of its culture, and this is also called the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Whorf and Carroll, 1956). This hypothesis further states that language influences thought. Seelye (1985) states that no effective communication takes place without knowledge of the target culture. Lange and Paige (2003) stated “We argue, then, that culture is the core of language learning/acquisition” (p. xii). All the researchers claimed the importance of integration of culture into the second language teaching and learning in the classroom.

Furthermore, this radical-based teaching and learning are further enhanced by a graphic/image representation of each *radical* through the use of multi-media programs because they are more visually meaningful and enjoyable. It is a widely accepted belief that enjoyment in learning plays a key role in mastery of a large number of learning materials (Gentile & Lalley, 2003). The etymological approach consists of historical information, cultural information, and visual information such as drawings and thus, this etymological explanation of each *Kanji* character requires good drawings or clip art which show the reason or logic for the formation of each character in an effective way or even in color. Teaching materials created this way cannot be presented as effectively in book form. The use of computer technology can make learning easy and effective (Kern, 2006; Prathibha, 2010). The effectiveness, as well as efficiency, of utilizing computer technology for teaching

foreign languages has been widely discussed in the literature (Kern, 2006).

Due to technological developments, CALL can currently fill three roles: (a) a tutor role, in which computers can provide instruction, feedback, and testing, (b) a tool role, in which computers provide access to written, sound, and visual materials, and (c) a medium role, in which computers mediate interpersonal communication, distance learning, etc. (Kern, 2006). CALL makes a variety of teaching and learning opportunities now possible. Van Aacken (1996) found that both higher and lower language proficiency groups improved their character test scores using CALL, especially lower proficiency learners who enjoyed using the computer to improve more. In addition, Tsukuba University in Japan has implemented Computer Assisted Testing in character ability since 1992, and the system appears to be beneficial for learners to find their strengths and weaknesses and for teachers to find differences of *Kanji* learning strategies between non-Chinese character background learners and those with a Chinese character background (Kano, 1995). Takita and Mori (1995) also found that a character program developed by Macquarie University, which presents pictures and sounds on the computer, was effective in learning *Kanji*. In their study 51% of students were able to remember more than 90% of the required *Kanji* by using this program, whereas only 47% of students who did not use the program remembered more than 90%. While these results originate from only one study, they suggest that character learning via CALL could be more effective statistically than learning through printed materials. Learners easily access ample information in their target language and can be motivated by efficient and enjoyable materials through computer technology. Therefore, it may not too much to say that CALL may be an effective method to promote the learning of Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters. This effective instruction with CALL has a positive impact on *Kanji* learning. With this in mind, innovative CALL-based materials were developed for teaching and learning Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters.

It should be noted that the following description of the multimedia teaching material is made specifically for teaching of Japanese not for Chinese, but it could be easily applied to the production of similar materials for Chinese.

Presentation of the Multimedia Production

The Japanese program at Ball State University uses the *Genki* textbooks (Banno, Ikeda, Ohno, Shinagawa, & Tokashiki, 2011) for beginner language courses and the *Nakama* textbooks (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2009;2011) for intermediate and advanced language courses. The number of listed *Kanji* characters in *Nakama* 1 and 2 textbooks (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2009;2011) is 368. The *Genki* 1 and *Genki* 2 textbooks (Banno, Ikeda, Ohno, Shinagawa, & Tokashiki, 2011) have 317. A majority of *Kanji* characters in both textbooks are the same. When this project started, 369 *Kanji* characters from the texts were selected, based on the radical or component that had a logical or an etymological explanation. Each *Kanji* character is made of one basic radical or a combination of a radical and one or more components. 151 radical and components were chosen for this project which were needed for their individual image. Since not all the radical and com-

ponents are available in the general word processor, each font image needed to be created (see Figure 1) by using Adobe Illustrator software. Upon creating each radical or component, the *Kyokasho* font was elected for use. The reason that *Kyokasho* was selected is that this font is regularly used in grade-school textbooks in Japan in order to show the correct handwriting style. Each radical and component has its own unique meaning. Showing the meanings by drawn images is helpful for students to understand an etymological explanation in an effective way because many of the radicals are representations of actual things and people such as yarn, a mountain, and a hand as shown below from left to right. Therefore, clip art (see Figure 1) was also produced for each of them.



Figure 1. Example Radical or Component Font Images and Clip Art (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)

In order to compose a historically and culturally meaningful explanation for each *Kanji* character, extensive research on each character from an etymological point of view was done. Research on 144 *Kanji* characters out of 369 *Kanji* on the original list was completed for this server-based web program. Some characters necessitate an explanation which deviates from the etymologically-based materials because of their ambiguous or abstract description. However, the number of such characters is few.

In this server-based web program, each *Kanji* page has (a) two readings of the *Kanji* (On-reading and Kun-reading) with audio files by a native speaker, (b) the *Kanji* meaning in English, (c) its radical, (d) the order of the writing strokes, (e) a logical or an etymological explanation, and (f) cultural notes (see Figure 2). The information in (e) and (f) will appear step-by-step for better understanding of the meaning of the *Kanji*. This program has three different functions to search each *Kanji* page. Those search functions are a phonetic reading/*Kanji* meaning function, a radical shape function, and a list by a textbook chapter function (see Figure 3). Depending on the learners' previous knowledge of the *Kanji*, they should be able to find the particular *Kanji* with one of the three functions. The following example shows the etymological explanation of Japanese *Kanji* character 安.

- (a) two readings of the *Kanji*: アン *ann* / やすい *yasui*
- (b) the *Kanji* meaning in English: "inexpensive; cheap"
- (c) its radical: 宀 *u-kannmuri*

	音読み Chinese Reading	訓読み Japanese Reading	意味 Meaning	部首 Radical	画数 Stroke
	アン	やす(い)	inexpensive; cheap	宀	6
例 Example	安い、安らぎ、安心、安全				
書き方 Stroke Order					







roof

Cultural Note:
In a chauvinistic society like China and Japan, female members are expected to play a subservient role in a household traditionally.



woman

Logic: The work of female members in a household doesn't cost anything.

Figure 2. Kanji Information Page with Readings, Meanings, Radical, Stroke Order, Etymological Explanation, and Cultural Note (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)

- (d) the number and order of the writing strokes: 6
- (e) a logical or an etymological explanation: “In a chauvinistic society like Japan, female members are expected to play a subservient role in a household traditionally.”
- (f) cultural notes: “The work of female members in a household doesn't cost anything.”

漢字 KANJI

検索 Search

読み方
Reading

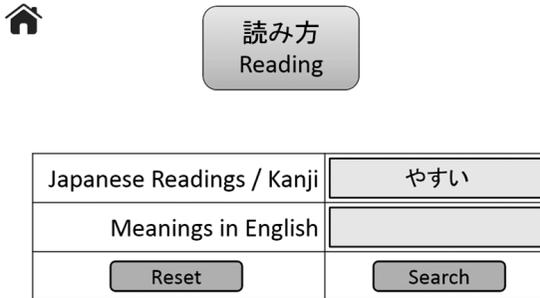
形
Shape

教科書
Textbook

Figure 3. Search Home Page with Three Different Functions (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)

Phonetic Reading/*Kanji* Meaning Function

If learners know the pronunciation of the *Kanji*, they can type the phonetic reading in *Hiragana* in a search box (see Figure 4). This function is similar to a phonic-based dictionary for English speakers, who can find the correct spelling by entering the word as it is spoken. Learners are also able to search for the particular *Kanji* by entering the English meaning of the *Kanji*. When learners type one of those options and click the search button, it navigates to the *Kanji* information page (see Figure 2).



🏠	読み方 Reading
Japanese Readings / Kanji	やすい
Meanings in English	
Reset	Search

Figure 4. Function 1: Reading/Meaning Function (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)

Radical Shape Function

This search function helps learners to search for the *Kanji* by choosing the intensified radical in the particular *Kanji* from the list of all radicals (see Figure 5, next page). The radicals were categorized by stroke order so that they are easier to find. Clicking the intensified radical navigates the learner to the *Kanji* list page (see Figure 6, next page) where all selected *Kanji* for this project are displayed by their radicals. After choosing the particular *Kanji* from the *Kanji* list, the learner is taken to the *Kanji* information page (see Figure 2).

List by a Textbook Chapter Function

The last search function is especially for the *Nakama* (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2009; 2011) and *Genki* (Banno, Ikeda, Ohno, Shinagawa, & Tokashiki, 2011) textbook users. Learners who do not know the reading/meaning of *Kanji* or the radical will be able to look for the *Kanji* by simply clicking the *Kanji* from a *Kanji* list for the textbook chapters (see Figure 7, p. 82). This step takes them to the *Kanji* information page of the program (see Figure 2).



形
Shape

Click on the parts that are in the kanji you are looking for.

Stroke #	部首 Radical									
1	一	乙	丨	丿						
2	二	亠	イ	八	儿	へ	リ	力	十	冂
3	口	土	宀	夕	夕	彳	尸	山	广	士
4	心	手	斗	方	日	月	木	止	气	灬
5	生	田	疒	白	目	矢	石	禾	ネ	ネ
6	竹	米	糸	羊	色	自	行			
7	見	言	貝	走	車	里	赤			
8	金	門	雨	青	食	長	隹			

Figure 5. Function 2: Radical Shape Function (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)



漢字リスト
Kanji List

Radical	3						
口	口	右	古	台	合	句	和
土	土	圧	在	型	基	地	坂
宀	安	家	寒	定	客	室	寝
夕	夕	外	多	夜	夢		
夕	冬	夏	変				

Figure 6. List of All Kanji for This Project (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)

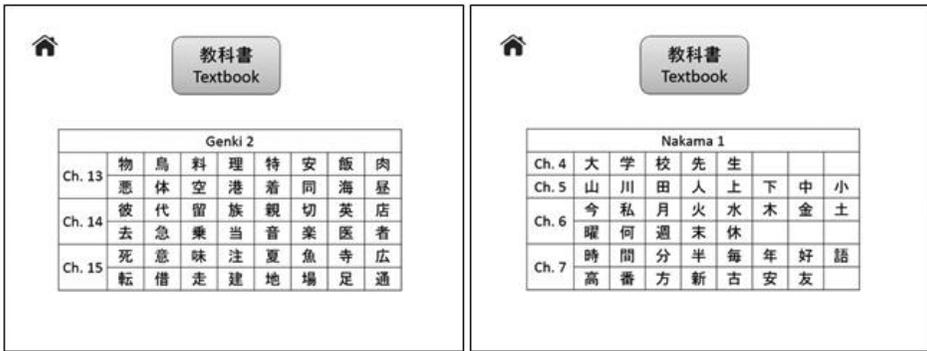


Figure 7. Function 3: Nakama and Genki Textbook *Kanji* List (created by the authors for a project entitled *Development of multi-media materials for teaching Japanese kanji writing systems* sponsored by a Creative Teaching Grant 2012-2013 at Ball State University.)

Discussion

As mentioned previously, learning the required large number of characters to become literate is challenging for learners of Chinese and Japanese and even for native speakers. In fact, many students quit learning Japanese when faced with the challenge of learning hundreds of characters, while hardly any students who have been learning Japanese characters through these materials where the authors of this article teach, have given up studying them. On the contrary, they enjoy learning them as our recent survey shows (Tomizawa, Matsumoto & Endo, 2013). It can be said that this approach to teaching Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters through the multimedia materials has potential to affect character teaching and learning in positive ways. First, incorporating visually interesting instructional materials such as clip art, drawings, images and culturally-based information to convey the etymological explanation for each character is an interesting way to teach and learn them. The traditional way of teaching characters through repetitious writing of each one alone is not only boring but also difficult (Takebe, 1993). This approach is considered a major shift in the teaching of characters (Heisig, 2001). As stated earlier, language is a reflection of its culture (Whorf & Carroll, 1956) and therefore, they are not separable. In fact, all Chinese characters represent the way the Chinese people saw and felt about their living world and depict their cultural and historical values. Such information is also helpful for learners to memorize characters (Ishida, Nishino, & Yamazaki, 1998; Wilder & Ingram, 1974). Therefore, the etymological approach could have great benefit in teaching and learning.

The other potential is that having materials online will allow learners to have easy access to them, making the teaching and learning of characters more efficient than traditional materials such as reference books, an overhead projector, or a blackboard in the classroom do. (In this sense, the printed version of these materials should be used as supplementary materials to the digital version.) In addition to the effectiveness of this program, it has three significant impacts.

First of all, these digital materials consistently and logically present characters with cultural background information, forming a well-researched etymological approach to teach them. Other materials for teaching characters using a radical based approach instead of a rote memorization approach are available in Chinese (Wilder and Ingram, 1974) and in Japanese (Miller, 1994). However, many approaches lack one or more of the following aspects for teaching characters: (a) a consistent etymological explanation of radicals for all characters; (b) a clear explanation of radicals using simple language or drawings; and (c) the cultural and historical basis for how radicals are combined to make compound characters. The materials described herein meet all of these criteria, and for that reason, they are considered easier for students to learn Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters using them. Most materials available today are either too simple and lack consistency in their explanations or too complicated in the form of thick books, and they do not enable students to learn interactively, effectively and efficiently.

Second, these digital materials have audio-visual aids to make character explanations easier to understand and to enable interactive practice by utilizing computer technology. The use of drawings and images to explain character formation and meaning through a step-by-step approach is more informative than rote memorization approaches. The materials have been designed so that they can be used independently, enabling students to practice and review as much as necessary to succeed. Computer technology has become a new trend for education in language learning (Gunduz, 2005; Prathibha, 2010), and students are already used to it and ask for it. This trend calls for new pedagogies and delivery systems for instruction and content, and these teaching materials allow for the upgrade from print to digital information.

Lastly, the literature related to methods of Chinese character teaching shows basically two beliefs: one is that teaching and learning Chinese characters are very difficult, and, thus, a strong devotion to learning them is essential in terms of time, and the other is the importance of knowing the meaning of radicals, which are “building blocks.” The same thing can be said for teaching Japanese characters. What is required to learn characters is basically rote memorization, which may be done with materials such as flash cards and practice writing them over and over. However, if teaching methods and materials are made so that the teaching and learning of the characters are easier (through the use of visual images and technology), meaningful (good logical etymological explanations), and fun (active learning instead of passive) as outlined in the previous sections of this article, much better learning is expected to take place. A majority of students who have learned Japanese *Kanji* hold a positive view of learning under this etymological approach (Tomizawa, Matsumoto & Endo, 2013), yet additional experimental research should be conducted to prove the effectiveness of this approach on student learning. From the point of technology use, however, our multimedia approach provides very efficient ways to learn the characters. This approach has (a) easy access to the character the learner wants to find out under the search function, (b) easy access to discover the reading, pronunciation, and stroke order of each character, and (c) a meaningful etymological explanation. All of these can be done

through one multimedia approach, which is what today's students are so used to and comfortable with compared with using traditional paper-based reference materials or workbooks. In this sense alone this approach is considered innovative and meaningful approach.

Conclusion

As was mentioned previously in this article, Chinese characters were introduced to Japan around the third century by Japanese Buddhist monks, political leaders, and scholars. Although some characters underwent change, a large number still maintain their original shape in today's modern Japanese with similar original meanings (Heisig, 2001). In this sense, it may not be too much to say that Chinese characters and Japanese characters are in a loose sense the same. Thus the approach used for the development of the multimedia materials described in this article for teaching and learning Japanese characters could be easily adopted for the development of similar materials for Chinese characters. The teacher's role is to make the students' learning process clearer, easier, meaningful, effective, and fun. The approach presented in this article meets these aspects of character teaching and learning, which otherwise can be very difficult and frustrating as Wilder and Ingram (1974) claim regarding the case of Chinese character teaching and learning. It is hoped that this approach accomplishes two things: one is a successful learning outcome, which needs to be measured through experimental research in the near future, and the other is for learners to develop a positive feeling toward the learning of Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters so that there is no need to write an article entitled "Why Chinese Is So Damn Hard." (Moser, 2012). This is an era in which using multimedia approaches to teaching and learning in almost any subject, including foreign and second language education is commonplace, and this trend will continue to grow in the future. It is expected that this multimedia approach developed for teaching Japanese *Kanji* characters will be a part of this trend and a help to learners. However, these materials created in this approach need some improvements. One is that the materials need to be expanded for both learning Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters. Another is development of a self-operated exercise of writing characters on the computer screen with automatic feedback on the learner's work to show deviations from standard forms of the written characters. The last improvement involves development of different kinds of questions regarding character recognition, reading/pronunciation, and meaning so that learners can check their knowledge of the character easily. It is possible that these additional functions are to be developed in the near future. Such innovative and interactive learning materials can facilitate learning Chinese and Japanese *Kanji* characters.

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6

Tasks and Focus on Form: Connections in the US and Europe

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Introduction

Long (1991), among others (Long & Robinson, 1998; Norris & Ortega, 2000), believes that language teaching can essentially—if simplified to an extreme—be broken down into one of three major types: meaning-focused, form-focused, or a fusion of the two. At one end of the spectrum, meaning-focused instruction posits that exposure to input and meaningful language use will ultimately lead to acquisition. At the other end, form-focused instruction, or what Long (1991) calls focus on forms, “assumes that the target L2 forms can and need to be taught one by one in a sequence externally orchestrated according to linguistic complexity” (Norris & Ortega, 2000, p. 160) while prompting learners to pay attention to grammatical features. The fusion of the two, or what Long calls focus on form, takes place by briefly shifting learners’ attention to linguistic code features within an otherwise meaning-focused lesson. Focus on form refers “only to those form-focused activities that arise during, and embedded in, meaning-based lessons [when] meaning and use [are] already evident to the learner at the time that attention is drawn to the linguistic feature” (Long, 1997, p. 10).

While the authors suspect that few contemporary educators would argue for a return to an extreme focus on forms-type of grammar teaching reminiscent of grammar translation, there is evidence that suggests that an uncompromising meaning-focused orientation has had its limitations as well. According to Swain (1991), results from meaning-focused Canadian immersion programs have at times produced students with significant limitations even after years of instruction.

In their meta-analysis of 49 studies, Norris and Ortega (2000) found the greatest amount of support for the middle ground, or focus on form, with an order of effectiveness of explicit focus on form being greater than explicit focus on forms, followed by implicit focus on form over implicit focus on forms. Moreover, numerous other studies have examined the impact of enhanced input as a means of drawing learners' attention to form while engaged in an otherwise meaning-focused activity, such as tasks, with positive results (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Gascoigne, 2006; Leow, 2001; Rosa & O'Neill, 1999; White, 1998).

White (1998), for example, examined the effect of typographical enhancement on the acquisition of the third-person singular possessive among francophone learners of English. The target treatment included a package comprised of readings and meaning-focused activities wherein the target structures were typographically enhanced through bold type, italics, underlined words, and text enlargement. The control group received the same materials, only without the enhancements. Posttest scores from the treatment group were higher than those of the control group, leading White to conclude that "the typographical enhancement was salient enough to attract [students'] attention to the target forms without distracting them as they read" (p. 103).

As a reaction to less-than-expected successes stemming from some immersion and bilingual education programs, studies of content-based instruction were conducted "showing how the forms of a language could be taught through a specific content, such as social sciences, mathematics, history, and psychology" (Grim, 2008, p. 322). In a 2008 study, Grim integrated focus on form into content-enriched materials supported by targeted input enhancements (bold type, color, italics) along with grammatical explanations from the instructor. She measured the impact of the focus on form treatment on students' acquisition of the comparative and superlative form of adjectives in French. Again, the results showed the greatest gain for a planned focus on form over the meaning-focus (no enhancement) condition, as well as over a third incidental (or reactive, in this case) focus on form treatment wherein the instructor responded to questions and problems initiated by the students. It should be noted that all three treatments shared a common input flood as well.

Another type of focus on form technique that seeks to increase the number of form-meaning connections is the use of structured input, or input processing instruction (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; VanPatten & Sanz, 1995; VanPatten & Wong, 2004). Wong (2005) states that input processing "pushes students to pay attention to form" (p. 70) by using structured activities that "alter any incorrect strategies [students] may be using to process input so that they can make form-meaning connections correctly and more efficiently" (p. 63).

The goal of processing instruction is to point learners' attention toward target forms during processing rather than during production. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) examined the effectiveness of processing instruction on the acquisition of object pronouns among English-speaking students of Spanish. In this study, one group of students received traditional explicit explanations and engaged in both mechanical and meaningful practice. Another group engaged in processing

instruction through explanations followed by activities wherein students selected a drawing to indicate that they understood the argument structure. A third group of students received no instruction on the target structure. Students in the processing instruction group outperformed students in the other two groups on the interpretation task, and no difference was found on the production task between the two treatments in spite of the fact that students in the traditional instruction group had opportunities to practice producing the target structure, while those in the processing group did not.

Tasks as a Vehicle for Focus on Form

Results from these studies suggest that increasing the salience of a grammatical feature existing in the input within a meaning-focused endeavor increases the likelihood of it being noticed and subsequently used by the student (Sharwood Smith, 2000). While input enhancements and processing instruction procedures are examples of effective focus on form techniques, the use of tasks can be a powerful vehicle for their implementation. Indeed, for many, focus on form is a fundamental methodological principle of task-based language instruction (Brandl, 2008; Doughty & Long, 2003; Ellis, 2003, 2009; Robinson, 2011). In fact, for Ellis (2009) “the only characteristic common among all task-based approaches is the inclusion of a focus on form” (p. 225). Moreover, advocates of task-based language teaching “do not view attention to form as an *optional* element of task-based language teaching, but as *necessary* to ensure ‘noticing,’ which Schmidt (1994) viewed as a requisite for acquisition to take place” (p. 232, emphasis added). Indeed, for Robinson (2011) tasks can foster form-function-meaning mappings by providing opportunities for noticing the gap between a learner’s production and focus on form input (p. 2). Robinson goes on to state

the interaction [that] task work promotes is important because it not only provides one way in which input can be made comprehensible but additionally serves as a context for attending to problematic forms in the input and output during task work. Such learner-driven attention to form, contingent on negotiation of meaning, can speed form-meaning relations and prompt interlanguage change in ways that respect each learner’s own developmental trajectory [...]. This could be achieved by interventions that prompt focus on form that overtly draws students’ attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication. (p. 11)

Clearly, focus on form techniques are an essential part of task-based language teaching, just as tasks are an ideal environment for cultivating focus on form.

Task-based Language Teaching

While many different definitions of task exist in the second language acquisition literature, one of the more straightforward descriptions comes from Bygate, Skehan, & Swain (2001), who define a task as “an activity which requires learners to use language, with an emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective” (p.

11). Task-based language teaching is best described as an approach to language teaching—“it cannot be said to constitute a distinct ‘method’” (Ellis, 2009, p. 222).

According to Long (1997), advantages of the task-based approach are:

1. It offers the opportunity for ‘natural’ learning inside the classroom.
2. It emphasizes meaning over form but can also cater for learning form.
3. It affords learners a rich input of target language.
4. It is intrinsically motivating.
5. It is compatible with a learner-oriented educational philosophy but also allows for teacher input and direction.
6. It caters to the development of communicative fluency while not neglecting accuracy.
7. It can be used alongside a more traditional approach (p. 242).

For Ellis (2009), “there is no single task-based teaching approach” (p. 221), and many of the misunderstandings about task-based language teaching “derive in part from the tendency of its critics to view it as monolithic, rather than quite variable” (p. 225). Because of the real-world variability of task-based language teaching among educators, this paper does not make a distinction between task-based (where context is specified in terms of tasks) and task-supported (which uses a structural syllabus with a final task stage) types of language teaching. Even Ellis (2009) believes that “a case can be made for both” (p. 224).

To illustrate the variability in the application of tasks, Andon and Eckerth (2009) conducted case studies of four experienced language teachers and found that they did “not follow ‘official’ task-based language teaching-related pedagogic recommendations in a slavish way. Far from subscribing to a pre-specified approach to language teaching, all four teachers experiment[ed] with different elements of task-based language teaching, reject[ed] some of them, embrace[d] others, and combine[d] all of them with other pedagogical elements” (p. 305). This should not be surprising given that the “goal of theory and research in second language acquisition is not to direct teachers how to teach, but rather to advance a number of ‘provisional specifications’ that teachers can then try out, adopting them to their own particular teaching contexts” (Ellis, 2003, p. x). Nevertheless, Ellis (2009) believes that there are certain criteria for task-based language teaching. In addition to having tasks as the primary unit of design:

1. The primary focus should be on meaning.
2. There should be some kind of gap (i.e., a need to convey information, to express an opinion, or to infer meaning).
3. Learners should largely have to rely on their own resources (linguistic and non linguistic) in order to complete the activity.
4. There is a clearly defined outcome other than the use of language (i.e., the language serves as the means for achieving the outcome, not as an end in its own right. (p. 223)

Ellis (2001) offers the following principles to help ameliorate problems that may arise in the implementation of task-based language teaching:

1. The tasks must be tailored to the proficiency levels of the students (e.g., if the students have limited proficiency, tasks should initially be of the input-providing, rather than the output-prompting kind).
2. Tasks need to be trailed to ensure that they result in appropriate L2 use and revised in the light of experience.
3. For task-based language teaching to work, teachers need a clear understanding of what a task is.
4. Teachers and students need to be made aware of the purpose and rationale for performing tasks (e.g., they need to understand that tasks cater to incidental learning of the kind that will facilitate their communicative skills).
5. Ideally, the teachers involved in teaching a task-based course must be involved in the development of the task materials (p. 241)

Ellis' final recommendation that teachers should be involved in developing their own task materials may be overlooked by many language educators given the prolific nature of so many commercially-available programs. Indeed, most programs include an overabundance of content and numerous ancillaries such as textbooks, workbooks, activities manuals, audio CDs, CD-ROMs, websites, supersites, test-banks, to name a few of the most common. Typically, there is more material included in any given program than one could ever reasonably use, even without adding one's own supplementary materials to the equation.

Following a brief review of several commercially-available post-secondary programs in French; however, we shall see that Ellis' 2001 recommendation remains important today. Whether we realize it or not, we may still be well served by developing additional task oriented materials for our courses, in spite of the myriad ancillaries and content that accompany many of our textbooks.

A Global Phenomenon

According to Andon and Eckerth (2009), task-based second language pedagogy has outlived its infancy and has become a widespread approach in some countries. It has developed into a powerful research and pedagogical instrument, and (with respect to textbook production) it can even be considered an economic force. While there are numerous lines of "task-based work in the applied linguistics literature and a flurry of commercially published textbook materials" (Long, 1997, p. 4), there may be structural impediments to task-based language teaching in some parts of the world. For example, there are education systems that emphasize knowledge-learning over skill development, and as such, "a task-based approach to language teaching is not readily compatible with such a philosophy" (Ellis, 2009, p. 242). Carless (2004), for example, studied the use of task-based language teaching in elementary schools in Hong Kong. By using classroom observations, interviews, and an attitude scale, he found that these teachers had a poor understanding of task and that tasks were used for practice rather than communication.

While pervasive, Adams (2009) describes the implementation of task-based language teaching on a world-wide scale as "inconsistent" (p. 354). Some countries and education systems have embraced tasks while others, such as those described

by Carless (2004), embrace tasks in theory rather than practice. Still others, such as cultures that view learning as teacher-centered rather than collaborative, reject the notion of task-based approaches in their entirety (Widdowson, 1993). Educators (and researchers) in the U.S. may be quite familiar with the notion of tasks—either as an occasional tool or as a full-fledged approach, but we are not alone in our discussion of tasks and, in fact, may not be as far along as we think when compared to others. The Council of Europe (COE), for example, has embraced the notion of task as part of an action-oriented approach recommended for use across Europe (or at least among the 47 member states) at all levels of instruction, in all modern languages, in the shape of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (COE, 2001).

Tasks in Post-secondary Materials in the U.S.

The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* (Standards), first published in 1996, have impacted the foreign language community in the U.S. much like the Common European Framework (discussed below) has in Europe. In fact, according to Leloup and Ponterio (1997), the Standards are “one of the most far-reaching and encompassing documents for our profession” (p. 43). The Standards represent a major effort to set goals for language education across the U.S. and across instructional levels. The framework of “interrelated goals has helped states institute standards for learning, helped teachers set learning goals, and helped students achieve them” (Magnan, Murphy, Sahakyan, & Kim, 2002, p. 170). In a 2011 survey, Phillips and Abbott found that since their unveiling in 1996, the Standards have impacted content in post-secondary methods courses, professional development, curriculum development, and assessment.

The Standards are content standards defining what students should know and be able to do in the five goal areas (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities). They are “not, however, a curriculum guide [nor are they] tied to any particular instructional method” (Leloup & Ponterio, 1997, p. 44). Still, because the Standards focus on using the language appropriately in real life with real people, the notion of language use informs the document. By extension, the idea of language use within the shape of tasks is “underscored by performance indicators that, in turn, are illustrated by sample tasks” (Leloup & Ponterio, 1997, p. 45).

Given the importance of tasks in both the professional literature and as a result of the Standards’ promotion of meaningful language use, a sample of 18 beginning post-secondary textbook programs published between 1996 and 2012 were reviewed in order to gauge the presence of tasks in post-secondary French materials in the U.S. In cases where multiple editions were available, only one was considered. In most cases the tasks, while including a focus on form component, did not follow a task-based syllabus, but instead used tasks as occasional situated exercises, or in Ellis’ terms, were task-supported. In fact, only one program, a first-edition 2012 program mentioned a desire to follow “a functional/task-based syllabus [to provide] learners with authentic language presented in spoken and written texts” (Ariew & Dupuy, 2012, p. xv). In the preface of *Français Monde*, the

authors go on to state that the program offers “task-based communicative activities [to] engage pairs or small groups in using their critical skills together with their newly developed expressive ability in various learning modalities” (p. xv).

A second program, the 5th edition of *Allons-y: Le français par étapes* states in its preface that “interaction is based on tasks to be accomplished and on effective linguistic functioning in the types of situations encountered in real life (Bragger & Rice, 2000, p. IG-3). A third program, *Motifs: In Introduction to French*, never mentions the word task in the preface or in any introductory information for instructors or students; however, it is apparent that the authors were committed to the spirit of tasks, even if they do not call on them by name, “you will learn to negotiate various transactions: how to order in a café, buy a plane ticket, rent an apartment, give directions, or go shopping” (Jansma & Kassen, 2007, p. xi).

This very simple survey of 18 popular programs is far from definitive—it did not consider every post-secondary beginning French program available, nor did it consider every edition. Nevertheless, it does provide a small glimpse into the application of tasks in post-secondary materials in the U.S. Interestingly, in spite of numerous discussions of tasks, and the so called “flurry of commercially-available published materials” (Long, 1997, p. 4), tasks, or task-based syllabi, may be more prevalent in theory than in practice, and educators may be well served by creating their own instead of relying solely on published program materials.

The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe, founded in 1949 by 10 original member states, has now grown to 47. This increasingly influential intergovernmental organization focuses on matters of human rights, media, legal cooperation, social and economic issues, health, education, culture, heritage, sport, youth, local and regional government, and the environment. (Fulcher, 2004). Language policy, consequently, permeates many of the Council’s core objectives. Given the growing need for communication skills across language boundaries, as well as increased personal mobility, access to information, and the desire for mutual understanding and tolerance the promotion of language learning has been a major aspiration of the Council since the 1950s (Bailey, Devitt, Gremmo, Heyworth, Hopkins, Jones, Makosch, Riley, Stoks, & Trim, 2002).

To this end, the Council published the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (Framework) in 2001. The Framework is not a policy document, but rather a planning and calibrating instrument, as well as a means of encouraging communication and providing a common language for discussing and describing language learning. It has since become the standard reference document for teaching and testing languages in Europe (Fulcher, 2004).

As a descriptive, rather than prescriptive tool, the Common European Framework describes language proficiency at six levels, each associated with a set of descriptors: A1 and A2 for the Basic User, B1 and B2 for the Independent User, and C1 and C2 for the Proficient User, as well as three “plus” levels (A2+, B1+, and B2+). According to the Council of Europe (2012), the Framework “makes

it possible to compare tests and examinations across languages [and] provides a basis for recognizing language qualifications, thus facilitating educational and occupational mobility” (p. 1).

While the document itself is purely descriptive, it is also designed to impact the development of teaching and learning materials. In fact, the 2002 User’s Guide for the Framework contains chapters designed specifically for those engaged in the production and selection of teaching materials. But, is it possible that the Framework is more than a taxonomy? Could the Framework also be more prescriptive than it claims to be? Drawing so heavily on theories of communicative competence and language use in order to describe what a language user should know and be able to do (Bachman, 1990; Fulcher, 2004; Milanovic, 2002; North 2004), the Framework “can also be considered, implicitly at least, as a theory of language development” (Alderson, 2004, p. 2). In fact, an “action-orientation has marked the Council of Europe approach since the early 1970s [wherein] a complete view of language use and the language user must find a place [not only] for the whole person, but for whole person acting in a social context, as a ‘social agent’” (Bailly, Devitt, Gremmo, Heyworth, Hopkins, Jones, Makosch, Riley, Stoks & Trim 2002, p. 13). Communicative contexts, themes, tasks, and purposes all accompany the Framework’s scales of language proficiency (COE, 2012). Yet it is the notion of task that gives shape to the action-oriented approach and dominates chapter seven of the Framework. For Bérard (2010) tasks are situated “*au centre de l’apprentissage*” [at the center of learning] (p. 21). According to Denyer (2010),

le CECR associe très clairement la perspective qu’il qualifie d’ <<actionnelle>> à la notion de <<tâche>> [. . .] l’approche adoptée se centre sur l’action dans la mesure où elle considère les usagers et les apprenants de langues comme des acteurs sociaux, c’est-à-dire comme les membres d’une société qui ont des tâches à accomplir (pas seulement langagières). En d’autres termes, le CECR justifie l’action par un renvoi aux pratiques sociales, lesquelles sont des tâches (et pas des exercices). (p. 9)

[the CEF associates very clearly the perspective that it qualifies as “action” to the notion of “task” [. . .] the adopted approach centers on action in so far as it considers language users and learners as social actors, that is to say, as members of a society who have tasks to complete (not only language tasks). In other words, the CEF justifies action by a return to social practices that are tasks (and not exercises).]

The Framework distinguishes between three types of tasks:

1. Real-life, target, or rehearsal tasks, chosen on the basis of learners’ needs outside the classroom, or learning environment.
2. Communicative, pedagogic tasks, which have their basis in the social and interactive nature and immediacy of the classroom, where learners engage in a willing suspension of disbelief and accept the use of the target language. Such communicative pedagogic tasks have identifiable outcomes.

3. Pre-communicative pedagogic tasks, which are exercises focusing specifically on decontextualized practice of forms. (Bailly, et al., 2002, p. 130)

Each of which may be employed independently, or in succession as building blocks moving from pre-communicative, to communicative, to target tasks. Although this is true,

les tâches proposées dans la classe ne sont pas tout à fait identique à celles de la vie car elles n'ont pas d'enjeu réel, la plupart du temps elles sont simulées. Par ailleurs, l'objectif dans une tâche est double: c'est non seulement la tâche elle-même qui est visée mais également la correction de la langue utilisée pour la réaliser. (Bérard, 2010, p. 24)

[tasks proposed in class are not entirely identical to those in life because they don't have a real stake, most often they are simulated. Moreover, the objective of a task is double: it's not only the task itself but also the correction of the language used to realize it.]

The notion of “task” is not new to language teachers, but when considered as an approach—rather than an isolated exercise—it has the potential of involving language learners in a creative act or in the co-construction within a social context (Bérard, 2010).

To help educators better employ tasks in the classroom and more fully involve learners in the “creative act,” the Framework's users guide asks language teachers to consider a recent language lesson that they have given and engage in their own meta-task, or auto-reflection via the following steps:

1. List some of the tasks that your students had to perform in this lesson.
2. For each task list the texts that they had to process.
3. Look at one of these texts in detail and examine in what ways it was similar to, and in what ways it was different from
 - a. texts used in the real world; and
 - b. texts used in a content subject lesson
4. Did the tasks involve real communication, even with emphasis on language forms?
5. Did any of the tasks focus completely on language forms?
6. What were the overall aims and objectives of the lesson? How did they compare with those of the content subject lesson? (Bailly et al., 2002, p. 89)

Moreover, when selecting a textbook or materials, educators are asked to consider the following questions:

1. Is there a wide range of task types?
2. Will your learners find these task types relevant, interesting, and stimulating?
3. Do the task types allow adequate variations of learner role in communication?
4. Do the task types encourage development of learner competence and strategies as well as language competences? (Bailly et al., 2002, p. 231).

The Frameworks' users guide, therefore, provides detailed support for educators seeking to use tasks as a vehicle for meaningful communication with a focus on form whether the activity or lesson is teacher created or the result of materials adoption.

Conclusion

Given the tremendous amount of professional literature devoted to tasks, either as a vehicle for focus on form or as a subject in its own right, it was surprising to find so little mention or use of tasks in the 18 commercially-available, post-secondary French materials reviewed. Indeed, only three out of the 18 post-secondary French textbooks reviewed and published in the U.S. between 1996 and 2012, alleged some allegiance to tasks in their preface or guidelines for instructors, either by claiming to have a full-fledged functional/task-based syllabus or through actual examples of tasks throughout the program. The tremendous variability between what we say about tasks and what we do in terms of the actual success of these applications—at least as represented in many post-secondary French textbook programs— is disappointing.

One recommendation stemming from this admittedly anecdotal investigation is that, instead of taking the introductory descriptions of commercially-available materials at face value, language educators in the U.S. (in French or any other language) might be well served by borrowing the Common European Framework of Reference Guide for User's six-step auto-reflection tasks and four materials selection questions presented above. While originally created for users of the Common European Framework, both of the above lists can be easily applied to any language teaching environment within which tasks with a focus on form are desired. The materials selection questions can help teachers determine if what a program package claims to do--and what it actually accomplishes-- are in alignment. The six-step auto-reflection tasks, on the other hand, can help us to execute tasks more effectively—either those of our own creation, or those supplied through adopted materials—as well as help us to maximize the power of focus on form techniques within a task activity.

By sharing materials, techniques, and guidance as evidenced in the Standards (in the U.S.) and the Frameworks (in Europe), we can move one step closer to our goals of multitasks, multiskills, and multiconnections.

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7

Service-Learning for Students of Intermediate Spanish: Examining Multiple Roles of Foreign Language Study

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Abstract

Service-learning, as a form of experiential education, places students in real-life contexts not only for enhancing language skills and cultural understanding but also for performing multiple tasks that provide avenues for developing numerous academic and civic skills. It creates connections across disciplines and brings together people of diverse backgrounds. In this respect, service-learning projects can be particularly beneficial for students in intermediate language courses, many of whom do not continue on to advanced language programs. Focusing on the goals of foreign language study for general education, this paper examines the rationale for and practical issues related to designing and implementing service-learning projects for students of intermediate Spanish. Based on data collected from reflection writings and interviews from students in a third-semester Spanish language course, the paper also highlights student-learning outcomes as they relate to language, culture, personal and interpersonal development, and diversity learning desired for an increasingly multicultural and pluralistic world. Finally, the paper provides practical handouts that can be used to facilitate the coordination of community partnership, service tasks, and reflection appropriate for students at the intermediate level.

Introduction

With a growing interest in the civic purposes of higher education, there has been a surge of academic service-learning across disciplines throughout the nation since the mid-1990s (Saltmarsh & Zlotkowski, 2011). According to Campus

Compact (2012), which is the national higher education association committed to promoting public and community service by integrating civic and community-based learning into the curriculum, the 2011 survey results of its 1,200 member colleges and universities indicate that 94% of the respondents offered service-learning (SL) courses. The survey outcomes note that on average, in 2011, 69 SL courses were offered per campus with six to seven percent of its faculty teaching them, which is much more than in previous years. The continual upward trend of incorporating SL pedagogy into academic courses reflects recognition of valuable student learning outcomes for college education. These outcomes, however, do not arise simply by putting students in community contexts. Successful SL experience requires quality engagement, reflection, and reciprocity among all parties. A frequently cited definition of SL in higher education has been offered by Bringle and Hatcher (1996): “We view service learning as a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility” (p. 222).

In their influential book, *Where’s the Learning in Service-Learning?*, Eyler and Giles (1999) shared the results of national research projects that delineate areas of student learning gains. These include: 1) personal and interpersonal development (e.g., diversity learning, working with others, leadership, and connection to the community); 2) understanding and applying knowledge (e.g., motivation to work harder, understanding complex social issues, and application of subject matter and experience); 3) engagement, curiosity, and reflective practice (e.g., becoming more curious about issues encountered in the community and connecting learning to personal experience); 4) critical thinking and problem solving; 5) perspective transformation (e.g., new perspectives on social issues and belief in social justice); and 6) citizenship (e.g., participation in community by developing values, knowledge, skills, efficacy, and commitment). Subsets of these learning outcomes continue to be affirmed in SL courses across disciplines. Indeed, in a recent publication of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, Kuh (2008) reviewed data from the National Survey of Student Engagement and identified SL or community-based learning (CBL) as one of the “high impact educational experiences” for student success.

Interest in SL for those who teach and study foreign languages has also witnessed growth. A steady number of presentations at national and regional conferences dedicated to teaching of foreign languages (e.g., AATSP and ACTFL) and publications in academic journals (e.g., *Foreign Language Annals*, *Hispania*, etc.) reveals relevance of SL pedagogy for second language learners. Indeed, practitioners of SL view the pedagogy as an effective tool for meeting the National Standards of Foreign Language Education as stipulated by ACTFL (Grim, 2010; Hale, 1999; Hertzler, 2012; Lear & Abbott, 2008; Weldon & Trautman, 2003). In particular, among the Five Cs of the Standards (i.e., Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), SL has been identified as particularly valuable for meeting the Communities standard: helping students to participate in multilingual communities at home and abroad (Hellebrandt et al.,

2004; Pellettieri, 2011). Furthermore, some have offered SL or CBL as a useful pedagogy for addressing some of the concerns raised in the Modern Language Association (MLA) report (2007), "Foreign Language and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World" (Jorge, 2010; Pellettieri & Varona, 2008). The MLA report, for example, calls for a refiguring of foreign language departments to make translingual and transcultural competence a major learning goal, in which students deepen their understanding of others' perspectives in order to communicate in and contribute to a pluralistic democracy.

In the case of Spanish, the growing Hispanic presence in the United States has provided language teachers and students with more community engagement opportunities than other languages. 2010 Census figures indicate that over fifty million people (i.e., 16% of the population) living in the country are Hispanic. Although high concentrations of Spanish-speaking communities are still most common in coastal states, the Southwest, and large cities, visible Hispanic presence can also be seen in many small cities in Central States. In higher education, figures from 2009 reveal that 852,781 out of a total of 1,682,627 students taking non-English language courses were enrolled in Spanish (Furman et al., 2010). This means that Spanish has come to represent over fifty percent of the total student population enrolled in foreign language courses in the nation. As a result, a significant portion of literature available on SL for foreign languages has been from Spanish.

A successful SL experience can generate numerous positive learning outcomes for students in Spanish. Among the learning gains observed in the literature are: stronger motivation to use Spanish and self-confidence in doing so; sense of fulfillment; development of empathy and intercultural sensitivity; reduction of stereotypes; connection with the Other; positive attitudes toward the language and culture; increased sense of solidarity and closeness with classmates, instructor, and community; greater awareness of social and political issues; and greater willingness to communicate in Spanish outside of the classroom (Abbot & Lear, 2010; Bloom, 2008; Caldwell, 2007; Hellebrandt et al., 2004; Jorge et al., 2008; Long, 2003; Morris, 2001; Nelson & Scott, 2008; Pak, 2007; Pellettieri, 2011; Zapata, 2011). Although these studies demonstrate that benefits of SL can be observed at all levels of Spanish, the majority of the literature deals with advanced learners of Spanish. There is a relatively small number of studies that have investigated the impact of SL for students in lower division language programs. This calls for more research into the design and the effectiveness of SL with intermediate learners.

The aim of this paper is to examine SL in the context of the intermediate Spanish classroom as it relates to the study of foreign language for general education purposes. As a form of experiential education, SL extends learning beyond the confines of the traditional classroom and can create powerful connections across disciplines, bringing together people of diverse backgrounds. In this respect, SL projects can be particularly beneficial for students in intermediate language courses, many of whom enroll to fulfill a general education requirement and do not continue on to advanced language programs. The paper describes the rationale for and the design, delivery, student learning gains and limitations of a SL component in a third-semester Spanish language course. The course was offered during Spring 2012 at a public university, located in a small city in the Midwest with a relatively small Hispanic population.

The Role of Intermediate Language Classroom and Service-Learning

The intermediate-level language classroom presents unique challenges for foreign language teachers in higher education. Unlike the first-year language courses, students who enroll in the intermediate courses come with varying degrees of language proficiency and prior language learning experience. Unlike the advanced level language and content courses, students in the second-year language classroom may not demonstrate as strong an interest in or effort for acquiring language and cultural skills as those who are pursuing a minor or major in the foreign language. They come to the language classroom with divergent educational goals, needs, and motivation levels. Classroom activities geared to prepare students to handle the language skills needed for upper-level courses may not adequately address the needs and interests of those students who enroll primarily to fulfill a language requirement for another major or as a part of the general education curriculum. Indeed, this conflicting agenda has led faculty and students to view the intermediate language curriculum as “the ugly stepsister” (Rivas, 2000, p. 342), and “tangle of divergences,” that lack satisfaction and reward (Jurasek, 1996, p. 22). Such a concern is understandable, as many intermediate language students do not go on to upper-level language study.

According to figures from 2009 for enrollment in languages other than English in the United States, the majority of language students are found in lower division language programs; in the case of Spanish enrollment, less than one quarter of students take advanced classes (Furman et al., 2010). Given the enrollment reality, a number of studies have examined the role of lower division language programs in light of goals for general education: preparing students for participation in a multicultural, pluralistic, and interdependent world. Jurasek (1996) calls for “a different kind of content rigor, one in the spirit of general education and not just foreign language learning” (p. 23). In particular, he suggests giving more instructional time to inquiry education in addition to linguistic development. Mecarty (2006) also acknowledges that the intermediate language curriculum faces “a great deal of confusion” as to the goals for instruction and stresses the need to incorporate culturally relevant course content that connects with students (p. 54). The author recommends a better utilization of the guidelines offered by the National Standards of Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century to improve the curriculum. Pellettieri and Varona (2008) argue that “[d]eveloping language proficiency can no longer be our only, or even our primary goal; teaching language as a means to personal transformation must be equally as prominent in our mission” (p. 16). They offer community-based learning (CBL) as a way to engage students affectively and cognitively in real-life contexts with off-campus community members. Through such experiential-learning, students gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the target language and the lives of the speakers of the language within their community and beyond. In places that offer limited exposure to racial or ethnic diversity, Calvin and Rider (2004) provide an example of a language requirement revision that has integrated common goals of general education and multicultural studies at Indiana State University. Emphasis is

placed on cultural critical thinking and metacognitive reflection (e.g., the use of student learning journals) for developing “communicative competency, cultural awareness, sensitivity to diversity, and a holistic application of strategies and skills for lifelong learning” (p. 11). In sum, these studies highlight the need to revisit the goals of the intermediate language classroom in order to make them more relevant to general education goals.

Faculty and student perceptions about foreign language requirements can further provide insight for better meeting the needs of lower division students. In a survey of liberal arts faculty and administrators, Wilkerson (2006) noted that faculty members in other disciplines, who play a vital role in advising students, recognized benefits of studying foreign languages. However, many of these faculty members believed that language study is limited to grammar and vocabulary instruction. Their omission of reference to cultural learning led the author to suggest more inclusion of out-of-class work, such as service-learning, which can expose students to elements of culture in the language courses that are part of the core curriculum. In a study that examined perceptions and attitudes of incoming college students toward foreign language study and language requirements, Price and Gascoigne (2006) noticed that more than half of the 155 students in the sample supported language study for reasons such as “gaining cultural understanding, broadening their personal horizons, and improving communication skills” (p. 391). In this respect, the authors highlight the importance of promoting cultural competence and understanding. Similarly, a systematic evaluation of the foreign language requirement at Duke University has revealed the need for greater attention to developing cultural knowledge and understanding and better communicating to the students that “we are teaching them much more than language skills” (Walther, 2009, p. 132).

In sum, the intermediate language curriculum has faced a conflict of agendas. While some have viewed it as a bridge course to the upper-level program, the majority of students in the intermediate program do not continue on to minor or major in the foreign language. If the intermediate course is the last foreign language course students may take in their lifetime, what do language teachers hope that students retain from their classroom experience? While developing language proficiency is important, there is a clear call for delivering course content in ways that promote the goals of general education. The literature discussed here encourages teaching practices that help students foster an understanding of their place in a multicultural and pluralistic world. Language students “must be equipped to deal with real-world opportunities for interaction and intercultural communication” (Mecarty, 2006, p. 58). SL, then, has a place in the intermediate language classroom. Indeed, a valued outcome of SL pedagogy has been students’ personal and interpersonal development, especially as it relates to learning about diversity and working with others.

Yoon, Martin, and Murphy (2012) conducted a study on the impact of service-based pedagogy on students’ learning about diversity. Their pre- and post-community service surveys (involving 106 students in one type of communication course with an SL component) indicate that service experiences not only improved

students' perceived knowledge about diversity but also significantly increased their level of comfort in interacting with populations different from their own. Dunlap, Scoggin, Green, and Davi (2007) studied the effects of SL experience on students' understanding of privilege, especially by white students. Given that SL tends to place students in situations where they interact with parts of society that may contrast drastically with their own life circumstances, they can learn about racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic privileges when supported by a critical reflection process. The authors further stress that "[u]nderstanding one's own identity, including dimensions such as privilege and lack thereof, race, culture, etc., can be important to an accurate conception of oneself and crucial to functioning in a diverse and ever-changing world" (p. 19).

Additionally, in a study that evaluated students' reflective writing, Wilson (2011) contends that SL promotes a development of students' empathy with others, which she considers to be as a critical part of personal development and "a component of the general education goals for undergraduates in the USA" (p. 208). SL can especially be useful for teaching about multicultural perspectives in places that lack racial or ethnic diversity. For example, by having students work as tutors with second language learners of English, Fitzgerald (2009) asserts that those from homogeneous ethnic and racial backgrounds can learn about diversity through community-based partnerships, which offer "a perfect real world context for putting into practice lessons about language, race, immigrants, and ideology" (p. 218).

Finally, in the case of Spanish, effective SL programs have had an impact on developing positive attitudes toward the target language and culture. Among many studies that have investigated the effects of SL on students' cultural understanding, Zapata (2011) examined students enrolled in intermediate Spanish courses at the University of Alberta, Canada. Students were enrolled in two different sets of courses: a regular fourth-semester course for low-intermediate students and a course for high-intermediate students who planned to minor or major in Spanish. The SL component of both sets of classes was voluntary, and students either completed SL projects or cultural presentation projects (e.g., Spanish American/Spanish music, politics, history, food, etc.). The results of the study demonstrated that students in the high-intermediate group developed more positive attitudes toward the language and culture than those in the low-intermediate group. However, students who worked on SL projects at both levels showed superior gains to those who worked on cultural presentation projects. Zapata posits that the lower outcomes for cultural presentation projects may be due to their factual approach to culture. The author observes that "this kind of presentation, though created to introduce learners to authentic material through the critical analysis of cultural values and artifacts" may provide students with "facts about the target culture, but not with opportunities to achieve a deeper cultural understanding" (Zapata, p. 940). Thus, SL can offer powerful learning opportunities for personal and interpersonal development. By developing relationships with community partners from diverse backgrounds, students can learn empathy with others, increase their understanding of diversity and privilege, and develop positive attitudes toward the target language and culture.

A Service-Learning Project in Spanish 201 at Ball State University

In her survey of K-16 language teachers in Ohio, Hertzler (2012) noted that major hurdles to SL were not lack of interest or belief in the potential value of SL but rather “not knowing where to begin and how to create meaningful and doable projects” (p. 26). Indeed, with a growing interest and support for SL pedagogy at conferences, many questions are directed toward implementation issues and how to receive support from the administration. Thus, this paper offers the details of the journey of a teacher planning and incorporating SL into an intermediate Spanish course for the first time.

Initial Hesitations and the Plunge

Although I had witnessed transformative student learning outcomes through SL projects in numerous upper-level courses, I had been hesitant to try it in an intermediate-level course. All of my previous ventures in SL work were with advanced-level students who were either minoring or majoring in Spanish and who welcomed a hands-on experience to connect with native speakers in the community. I wasn't sure if students who were taking a class primarily to complete a language requirement would be as accountable for delivering quality service to community members. Developing a meaningful relationship with the community is a necessary component for a successful SL experience, and building relationships takes time. I questioned whether this group of students would make the kind of time commitment that I had grown accustomed to with upper-level students. Furthermore, an important part of SL is critical reflection that connects students' experience in the community to learning objectives of the course. In my previous SL seminars, students submitted 10-11 weekly reflection journal entries, each 400-600 words in Spanish. Reflecting on the events that take place in the community naturally requires students to make ample use of the past tense, the subjunctive mood, and some indirect discourse, which more advanced language learners tend to manage better. Intermediate students, in contrast, come with limited writing and speaking practice in the target language. I was concerned with quality of the reflection component. Nevertheless, three events catapulted me into the experiment.

First, I became a participant in the Diversity Associates Program at my university, which brings together faculty members from diverse disciplines to incorporate more inclusive teaching practices into our own courses and disciplines. I had the privilege of working with those who were willing to risk implementing new ideas to enhance diversity learning in the classroom. But more importantly, the participation in the program for the particular year meant that I would produce a video of my own teaching practice in one course.

Second, a waiter working at a local Mexican restaurant contacted me. He had recently gotten married to a student who knew about my SL involvement with the local Hispanic community. One of the pleasures of doing community service projects is the formation of lasting relationships with students and individual community members. This Latino was a recently arrived immigrant seeking opportunities for *intercambio* [exchange] with students (e.g., students offering

English/computer tutoring to meet specific needs of the community members, who in return would provide students with Spanish language practice and cultural exchange). The word got out, and several of his coworkers at the restaurant and other Spanish-speaking community members (both new and old to this collaboration) also wanted to sign up. I had to find students to work with them.

Third, I was scheduled to teach Spanish 201 the following semester, and I thought seriously about what I could do differently to make the class more relevant for the majority of students in the class who would not continue on to upper-level Spanish courses. If the course were the last Spanish class they took in their lifetime, what would I want my students to remember? What would encourage them to engage with native speakers? If I desire my students to become more effective participants in our increasingly diverse and interdependent world, what kind of “high impact educational experiences” (Kuh, 2008) could I provide? It made sense to experiment with SL.

The University and Students in the Course

During the spring semester of 2012, a “community-centered experiential learning component” was incorporated into one section of Spanish 201 at Ball State University. The university is located in a place with limited racial and ethnic diversity. According to the 2010 U.S. Census figures, Delaware County in the state of Indiana has a population of 117,671, with 90% of the county population being white, and those of Hispanic or Latino origin constituting only 1.9% (6.2% for the state). The overall minority population of the university also remains small at 10.9% (and 2.5% for Latino students) of the total undergraduate enrollment (around 16,000 students total for the academic year 2010-2011).

Spanish 201 is a typical three-credit-hour, third-semester college Spanish language course. For a textbook, the instructors of SP201 currently use the last third (Chapters 11-15) of *Dos Mundos* (Terrell et al., 2010), which offers thematic units on travel, health, shopping, family and the future. Major grammatical concepts introduced include the formal and informal commands, the subjunctive mood, and the perfect tenses. For teaching of culture, beyond the cultural content offered in the textbook, instructors may show movies and/or require cultural presentations.

The 23 students who completed the course were majors from diverse disciplines such as telecommunications, journalism, nursing, architecture, political science, education, speech pathology, geology, and so forth. Only one student indicated her desire to double major in Spanish. Many of the students took the class to complete the language requirement for their majors or were interested in receiving credits for the first-year Spanish courses (those whose placement test scores allowed them to enroll in SP201 and, upon receiving a passing grade in the course, earn credit for the prior courses). Students who signed up for the course did not know beforehand that they would be required to complete a SL component. In case some students might not be able to fulfill community service work outside the campus, they were given other options that would allow contact with Latino students on campus (e.g., attending weekly Latino student organization meetings/activities).

Preparations for Service Placement

In his *Service-Learning Course Design Handbook*, Howard (2001) delineates three necessary criteria for academic SL: 1) enhanced academic learning; 2) relevant and meaningful service with the community; and 3) purposeful civic learning. A successful SL experience depends on factors such as quality of service placement, reciprocity, quality of reflection activities, quality feedback from professor and community partners, commitment to service, accountability, among others.

Prior to the beginning of the semester, the instructor met with two community partners who were willing to help with the coordination needs for the SL project. Unlike colleges and universities with a community service office that handles the placement and scheduling needs for community SL projects (e.g., Santa Clara University), some language instructors may not be able to receive a systematic institutional support for finding service placements that guarantee opportunities to work with Spanish-speaking community members. Given the small Hispanic population in Muncie, Indiana, in past years the author had to be creative and determined to find Hispanic community partners: she consulted with Hispanic colleagues, contacted several non-profit institutions (e.g., churches, social service agencies, public schools, etc.), attended community events (e.g., a community English class for immigrants and a monthly Spanish Mass offered by a local church), and talked to waiters at a local Mexican restaurant. Eventually the author befriended a few *señoras* who in turn led her to other potential community partners. These prior contacts set the groundwork for the community partnerships for this particular class.

At the preparation meeting, the community partners and the instructor discussed interests, needs, accountability, and logistic issues. These community partners in turn provided pertinent information about other community members who wanted to participate. The instructor then prepared a table for community partners that listed: 1) area of interest in working with students (e.g., studying for GED and getting citizenship, school-related help for the children, opening e-mail accounts, learning to surf the internet, English conversation skills for specific purposes such as making an appointment at a clinic, communicating with teachers of their children, etc.); 2) best meeting times and days; 3) possible public meeting places, given the location and transportation options; 4) contact information and best time and method to communicate (e.g., one employee at the local restaurant did not have a phone and thus asked to have his friend contacted). The instructor also informed the community partners about the possibility of not being able to honor their participation if their available meeting times could not be matched with students' schedules. One week before students were matched with community partners, the instructor gave each interested community member a phone call to verify and confirm their interest, commitment, expected start and end dates, meeting place and time/date, what to do if they could not meet with the students, and so forth. In particular, the instructor stressed their role as ambassadors to the students who may not have had any meaningful contact with native speakers of Spanish in the community.

At the end of the first week of classes, students received information on community partners and possible service tasks. Then, students provided their part

of the information: (1) transportation situation (e.g., if they felt comfortable using their own vehicle to get to the service site); (2) possible meeting times and days; (3) preference for working with a classmate or alone; (4) preferences for which specific community member they would like to work with; (5) any concerns they may have regarding the assignment; and (6) confidentiality agreement to protect the identity and any information obtained in the course of service that might cause harm to the person (e.g., immigration status). The instructor also stressed their role as ambassadors to the community members who may not have had any meaningful contact with non-Latinos outside their work.

The meetings always took place at public places to ensure security for all parties. Most of the community partners working at the Mexican restaurant did not own a vehicle; students met with them at a coffee shop located across from the restaurant. Another place was a public library nearby the homes of two families serving as community partners. A local Head Start, a non-profit organization committed to providing quality school readiness support for young children from families of low-income status, also provided a classroom in their building. Finally, one community partner, who had visited the campus before, volunteered to meet at the university's main library.

The Assignment

The goal of the assignment was to provide students with opportunities for face-to-face encounters with Latino community members on and off campus. Students would perform service tasks, through which they could document personal stories and reflect on the experiences of minority members of the community (see Appendix A for detailed instructions handout). The assignment constituted 15% of the course grade and was evaluated based on quality of service (number of hours, preparedness, community partner response, individual contribution to teamwork), quality of reflection journals written after each meeting, and a final reflection essay. Appendix B provides the Spanish language handout of evaluation criteria distributed to the students.

Most students chose to work with a classmate, which facilitated transportation needs and lessened their initial fear of having to meet with a Spanish speaker for the first time. It also made it easier to share ideas and seek resources as most students had no experience working with a Hispanic community member. Furthermore, it reduced the number of community partners needed for the class (i.e., less coordination time). Students were required to spend a minimum of eight to ten contact hours. Although this is substantially less service time than many of the successful SL courses mentioned in the literature, the instructor felt this was adequate given the coordination demands and the percentage of course grade assigned to the SL project.

By the second week of the semester, service assignments were confirmed, and students had to make the first phone call to set up their initial meeting with the community partner. In preparation, the class practiced potential Spanish conversation scenarios (See Appendix A, "First phone call" and "First meeting" sections). Due to schedule conflicts (e.g., some students worked 20-30 hours per

week in addition to taking a full load of classes), four students chose to remain on campus and attend weekly meetings organized by the Latino student group. Another four students worked with several mothers whose children attended Head Start; eight students worked with waiters at a local Mexican restaurant; and five students tutored elementary and high school children of two families as well as one of the mothers. Due to inevitable communication delays and two community partners dropping their commitment for various personal reasons, two students were left unable to complete the assignment. After discussing their interests and potential relevance to their majors (journalism and telecommunications), these students decided to interview several Latino students on campus on issues related to diversity and create a short video to share in the class.

The Reflection Component

The reflection component is central to SL pedagogy. It guides students to connect their service experience with the learning objectives of the course. Reflection fosters growth and learning in a multitude of ways: it serves as a platform for exchanging relevant information among students, faculty, and the community; leads students to develop critical thinking skills by identifying, examining, and responding to major issues related to the SL experience; provides a safe space for dealing with emotions that arise from the experience; and serves as an assessment tool to document the student learning process and outcomes (Ash et al., 2005; Correia & Blesicher, 2008; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher et al., 2004; Molee et al., 2010).

Types of reflection activities may include discussions with peers, faculty, and community partners, journals, logs, papers, interviews, presentations, portfolios, and so forth. Hatcher, Bringle, and Muthiah (2004) stress that “good reflection is regular, structured, and clarifies students’ values” (p. 44). Thus, the instructor needs to structure the reflection component appropriately to meet the needs of the course, class size, nature of service and students’ backgrounds. Good reflection requires not only accountability (e.g., discussing the relevance of reflective activities, course grade, and evaluation criteria) but also some training. Correia and Bleicher (2008) view reflection as a teachable skill set that requires nurturing “students’ ability to make reflections that are meaningful and educative” (p. 41). In this respect, providing ongoing reflection opportunities and receiving instructor feedback in a timely manner are critical to student learning. Furthermore, in the context of foreign language study, reflection activities generate opportunities for meaningful language use in addition to their direct contact with off-campus community members.

For SP201, 15-20 minutes (i.e., 10-15%) of class time were set aside each week to share student experiences (e.g., *¿Qué hicieron y qué pasó durante la reunión? ¿Cómo se sintieron y por qué? ¿Qué van a hacer la próxima semana?* [What did you do and what happened during the meeting? How did you feel and why? What do you plan to do next week?]). The class also solved problems together (e.g., changing meeting places and partner work and addressing communication issues), shared

resources (e.g., web sources for basic English conversation lessons), and discussed any pertinent topics that arose (e.g., immigration history and laws, underrepresented minority students and their access to education, diversity on campus, etc.). Although most of the discussion dealing with this assignment was conducted in Spanish, the instructor took the liberty of handling some complex topics in English (e.g., the history of immigration groups and laws in the U.S.) given their intermediate language level.

After each meeting with their community partner, students submitted a folder containing their recent journal entry, a log sheet that documented their activity and hours, and any resources they used at their meetings. A list of guiding questions in Spanish was provided to facilitate their journal writing. These questions led students to describe and process their community experience (Appendix B): What happened during the week? What did you and the community partner do together? What did you talk about? How do you feel about the experience? Did you gain any new information about the community partner and his/her situation, Spanish language and culture, or yourself? What are your plans for the next meeting? Do you have any needs?

Since students at this level were learning the past tense and being introduced to the subjunctive mood for the first time, they received explicit language support with sample expressions and sentences in Spanish that they could imitate. Given their minimal prior writing practice in Spanish, students were required to write only 100-130 words in Spanish, although several chose to write much more. They also had the option to include another paragraph in English to express what they wanted to say but could not express in Spanish. The journals were evaluated based on quantity of text written in Spanish, quality of reflection content, and quality of Spanish (e.g., variety of vocabulary, appropriate usage of verbs and other grammatical concepts covered in the class). If the overall quality of a journal entry was poor, students were given the option of submitting revisions, and most took advantage of this. When students completed their SL project, they also submitted a final reflection essay of 250-300 words in Spanish and another 100-150 words in English. Students were also asked to share recommendations for future students and the instructor as a way to improve the project.

In addition to these methods of reflection, 10 out of 23 students shared their experiences via interviews that were videotaped with permission. Participation in this aspect of the project was voluntary. One community partner also volunteered to share her thoughts on the project. The University provided technical support related to obtaining the consent forms, filming, and post-semester editing of the video. A brief list of possible interview questions was shared beforehand. These questions dealt with students' reasons for taking the class, their prior experience with the use of Spanish outside of the classroom with native speakers, initial reaction to the assignment, and gains from and challenges of the assignment. The video interviews were conducted in English, each lasting five to fifteen minutes. The student comments can be viewed in a video that describes the project (see www.bsu.edu/institutionaldiversity and click on For Faculty and Staff menu). There are two versions of the video: the shorter version of six minutes and a longer version of 22 minutes with more in-depth student responses.

Students' Voices and Learning Outcomes

"If we stereotype and judge people in our minds before actually getting to know them, that is our fault, not theirs. We have to learn to appreciate the differences in one another, and embrace what makes us unique." (A student in SP201)

The ultimate goal of the assignment was to provide students with an authentic learning environment that would deepen their knowledge and understanding of our increasingly pluralistic and multicultural society. Intentional effort was made to create opportunities for face-to-face encounters and to reflect on the experiences of minority members of the community, especially as determined by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Below are students' voices on their SL experience as expressed in written journals and final reflection essays (marked with **W**) or interviews (marked with **I**).

Out of 23 students in the class, 17 students participated in service projects with off-campus community members, and six students worked on non-service community-learning projects on campus (i.e., they attended weekly Latino student organization meetings/events or worked on a video project to interview Latino students on campus). The quotes are from 16 students who completed the service component and who consented to sharing their reflections. Students' comments are organized according to themes and learning outcomes as they relate to personal and interpersonal development. The quotes from reflection writings that were in Spanish have been translated into English.

Lack of prior contact with native speakers and initial fear. Most students reported that they had little prior experience working or even talking with native speakers outside of the classroom: "This has been my first real exposure with the Hispanic community" (W, Subject 12). "When we were told we had to do a community project... initially I was nervous... I wasn't too keen on meeting someone who may or may not speak English" (I-Subject 15). "I have never really been in contact with anyone outside of my Spanish teacher in high school... I didn't think I could do it; I was scared" (I, Subject 2).

Development of empathy and reduction of negative stereotypes. Face-to-face encounters and listening to personal stories allowed students to develop a better understanding of the lives of their community partners: "Through [community partner], I learned how difficult it is to become a citizen of the United States and how difficult the process is" (W, Subject 9). "I learned just how hard it is to try to learn a new language when you come into a new country not knowing it all" (I, Subject 2). "This project has helped me to put myself in someone else's shoes... I can't imagine moving to a different country where I can't even communicate with the majority of people" (W, Subject 11). "This semester I have learned to have more concern for others, and I have learned to understand why others are in the position they are, rather than stereotyping them initially" (W, Subject 4).

Development of positive relationships. The collaborative nature of SL pedagogy has led students to form positive relationships: "We have better relationships with our community partner. We also have better relationships among people in the class because we talked about the community project every Thursday" (W, Subject 1). "I will definitely remember my partner" (I, Subject 8). "I gained a new friend. Me and my partner, we want to still keep in touch" (I, Subject 2). "I enjoyed meeting [community partner]... I don't get a lot of contact

with people outside of the university even, and... we got to meet, a couple people through her that I wouldn't have met without it" (I, Subject 15).

Increase in motivation level and self-confidence. By using Spanish in real-world situations with community partners and beginning to take a personal interest in them, several students reported an increase in their confidence with regard to Spanish and motivation to engage with native speakers: "This project has upped my confidence in my Spanish ability and my ability to talk to new people..." (W, Subject 3). "Most of all I have a greater ability to speak Spanish than I did before and it just inspires me more in the future to utilize it" (I, Subject 5). "This project helped me step outside of my box. I am very shy and I would never have met such nice people if it were not for this project" (W, Subject 6). "I gained more confidence in my Spanish speaking abilities now that I have had a chance to use them in the real world" (W, Subject 7).

Development of cultural understanding and self-awareness. As students developed personal relationships with their community partners, they not only gained cultural information but also developed humility by becoming more self-reflective about their unfamiliarity in many terrains: "I discovered that I do not know much about the Latino culture... from this project I learned that just how unaware I am of... like the world around me" (I, Subject 16). "By participating in this community project, I discovered a lot of new things about myself...this project made me realize that I need to open up more to people" (W, Subject 1). "When [classmate] and I were helping [community partner] with her studying for the test [citizenship] we both realized that we as Americans knew very little of the information that she was required to know" (W, Subject 10).

Discovery of socioeconomic disparities and privilege. Most of the community partners were working-class immigrants with limited education and resources. As such, students were able to witness lives that contrasted drastically with their own, which led them to look at social inequalities and the concept of privilege: "Getting to know [community partner] has been practically life-changing for me... [It] has made me reflect on my own life. I hear her story about how she has to travel to... use her food stamps... and I see that I am worried about getting the latest gadget" (W, Subject 14). "[T]he project has helped me truly understand the economic struggles of the Latino community" (W, Subject 13).

View of others as someone "like me." As students developed friendships with community partners, they began to see others sharing the same basic human values: "By conversing with [community partners], I learned that we are very similar people. In some aspects, the only thing that made us different was that we spoke different languages. But by knowing a little bit of each other's native tongue, we all connected and could share" (W, Subject 6). "The project has shown me the community really needs to come together... and stop segregating itself... We are all human beings and need each other in order to survive" (W, Subject 14).

Power of human contact and active learning in the real world. Despite the initial hesitations about the project, in their final reflection essays, most students welcomed the opportunity to engage in a hands-on project with people in their community: "Reading about something and witnessing something are two completely different learning mechanisms, and I feel that the latter is a much more effective method of getting the point across" (W, Subject 4). "Speaking with native Spanish speakers is a more insightful and practical method for learning

Spanish than only studying Spanish from a textbook” (W, Subject 5). “I suggest the professor continue assigning this community project... It gives students an opportunity to use what they have learned in the real world” (W, Subject 7).

Further interest in service-learning. The majority of students in the class were supportive of SL and its impact on their learning: “This semester, I fell in love with the Spanish language even more because I had the opportunity to practically use it every week. This project gave us a special opportunity to get to know both our community and the Spanish language better” (W, Subject 5). “Community projects are a good thing. They promote many values that are important in life like communication, diversity, kindness, and having an open mind” (W, Subject 11). “If another opportunity comes up like this in another one of my classes, then I will be very happy” (W, Subject 3).

In sum, students’ reflections demonstrate an overwhelmingly positive response to SL. Many students claimed that they had a transformative experience. Their voices give evidence to some aspects of personal and interpersonal development and diversity learning, which are important goals of foreign language education in addition to developing language proficiency. Despite the initial reluctance and fear expressed by some students, these student reflections reveal that SL can be an effective teaching tool for developing empathy with others, reducing negative stereotypes, building positive relationships, strengthening motivation and self-confidence, enhancing cultural understanding and self-awareness, discovering social inequality and privilege, and experiencing the benefit of having positive interactions with people from diverse backgrounds. It also enhanced their ability to use Spanish in real-life contexts. For example, one student who initially did not want to do the project wrote in her final reflection essay:

I learned so much from [community partner] and I am just more comfortable speaking Spanish with her... [U]p until now, I just wanted to change the culture of the Latinos. I thought, ‘well, they come here... they should expand their range of cultures to include ours.’ However, now I just think it would be better if I learned their culture. I would be a better-rounded person, and speaking two languages will only improve my intellectual abilities. I found it interesting speaking to [community partner] in Spanish; I enjoyed it (W, Subject 16).

Overall, the majority of students enrolled in this third-semester Spanish language course demonstrated gains in personal and interpersonal development and diversity learning. Students’ comments reflect the kind of personal learning and growth that is a part of the goals of general education.

Future Directions

Given the fact that this was the author’s first time incorporating SL pedagogy into an intermediate Spanish course, there is room for improvement. In their final reflection essays, several students stated that the assignment took a lot of time: not just meeting time with the community partner but also the time it took to prepare for each session, to get to the service site, and to write journal entries in Spanish. A few students also asked for more class time to work in groups in order to share ideas. Considering how much time students spent outside of the classroom with native speakers of Spanish and the amount of their written reflection in the target

language, the percentage of course grade for the assignment could be raised from 15% to at least 25 to 30%.

The instructor can also incorporate more course materials directly related to the assignment. Specifically, the instructor can take the liberty of omitting some of the cultural readings from the course textbook and incorporate more materials pertinent to working with Hispanic communities in the U.S. For example, there are numerous online Spanish language newspapers published in this country that deal with issues facing many different immigrant communities from the Spanish-speaking world. Also, discussions on the assignment-related issues could be incorporated into final oral interviews for the course (e.g., role plays of actual situations that arose during meetings with community partners). Additionally, the instructor may consider dedicating one entire class period in the middle of the semester for students to make informal presentations on the progress of their SL projects as a platform for sharing ideas to support each other and better connecting their community experience to the learning goals of the assignment.

The instructor can simplify community partnerships and thus, coordination needs. Since the goal of the assignment was to ensure face-to-face contact with native speakers, the initial community partnership extended to many different types of service tasks, people, and places. However, the author learned that it is possible for the class to work with just five or six community members who desire more than a one-hour meeting per week. A group of students can meet with the same community partner at different times and offer different types of services (e.g., the community partner working toward a GED needs to learn many subject areas). This would also help students to share ideas, resources, and reflections during class discussion time.

Furthermore, the instructor may need to stress several times, before and during the project, the importance of focusing on people and listening to their stories more than getting it “right” with their service tasks. For example, some students in the class felt stressed not knowing “exactly” what to do for meeting the needs of their community partner (which can take time to discern). They wanted step-by-step instructions for everything without first getting to know their community partners. Such concerns were also reflected in some of the journal entries; some focused strictly on what they did or could not do about their service tasks, without mentioning anything about what they had learned about their community partners. The instructor had to keep prompting students so that they would not miss the point of the assignment. It may also become necessary to discuss with students the inevitable feeling of uncertainty and ambiguity that comes from going beyond the comforts of a typical classroom and how to cope with unpredictable situations that arise. This discomfort, however, when combined with critical reflection activities in class, can be used to generate learning and growth (e.g., “a failure” can become a great learning moment); it can sensitize students to a greater awareness of the complexity of immigrant life.

Conclusion

The intermediate language classroom faces divergent goals and needs of students, many of whom do not continue on to upper-division courses. Some students move on to minor or major in the foreign language; however, many stop their language study at the intermediate level. While the goals of developing language proficiency cannot be neglected in a language classroom, foreign language programs must also examine how to best align their teaching practices to serve the needs of students who enroll for general education. This paper has presented the rationale for incorporating SL into the intermediate language classroom as an effective tool for fostering personal and interpersonal development and diversity learning for higher education. A well-structured SL program can provide students with an authentic learning environment, in which experience and enhanced understanding lead to a more effective participation in the community. As demonstrated by students' voices from one intermediate Spanish course, the collaborative environment of SL, the formation of positive relationships with community members whose lives drastically differ from their own, and critical reflection opportunities can help students to develop empathy with others, reduce negative stereotypes, strengthen motivation and self-confidence, enhance cultural understanding and self-awareness, discover social inequality and privilege, and experience the benefit of having positive interactions with people from diverse backgrounds.

If the intermediate language course is the last Spanish class that students ever take, what do language instructors want them to retain from their classroom experience? How can the course content be delivered in a way that will encourage them to have positive interactions with native speakers who can be found not just in study abroad contexts but also right within their own local community? What kind of teaching practices would deepen students' understanding of an increasingly diverse, pluralistic, and interdependent world? When SL is supported by quality engagement, reflection, and reciprocity among all parties involved, it can become a powerful teaching tool, by means of which the students and the instructor can discover new terrains in our diverse, interdependent world.

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Appendix A

Sample Assignment Instructions for Students

Español 201 - Proyecto de comunidad [Spanish 201 – Community Project] – 15% of course grade

According to 2010 census, over 16% of the U.S. population is Hispanic (that is more than 50 million people). **26%** of the nation's population 6 years of age or under is Hispanic– consider the demographic changes that will take place in 20 years! In the state of Indiana, 6% of the population is Hispanic (8% of K-12 grade age is Hispanic).

An important goal of studying Spanish is to better prepare ourselves as participants in and contributors to an increasingly pluralistic and multicultural society. The goal of this assignment is to have **direct contact** with Latino community members

on and off campus. We will work on service projects with local Hispanic immigrant families and/or participate in Latino student organizations on campus in order to **document personal stories and reflect** on the experiences of minority members of the community. Specific service tasks and events, meeting times and places are provided for you to sign up.

1. Meeting requirement: min 8-10 hours of contact during the semester.
2. Select your service preferences #1, #2, #3 from the list provided. Make sure you can meet with the community partner within the indicated time range and at the place once a week.
3. Decide if you want to work alone or with a classmate. Partner work is recommended.
4. Grade will be based on preparedness (reliability, creativity, total service hours), quality of **weekly reflection** journals, and final reflection essay.
5. **Important dates:**
 - Semana 1* – service assignment preferences
 - Semana 2* – service assignment and first phone call to the community partner or first attendance at Latino Student Union meeting
 - Semana 3* - first meeting with the community partner
 - By April 15 or earlier – completion of the last session.
6. **After each session** – submit a *Diario* [journal] that begins with the following information:
 - *Fecha/hora de la reunión* [meeting date/time]: Ej., *Martes, 24 de enero, 10:30am*
 - *Lugar de la reunión* [meeting place]: Ej., *Head Start*
 - *Duración de la reunión* [length of meeting]: Ej., *60 minutos*.
 - *Mi pareja de comunidad* [my community partner]:
 - *Nuestra meta de servicio* [our service goal]:
 - *Documentación (Incluir una copia de los materiales usados)* [include any materials used with the community partner]
 - Follow the prompt questions for *diarios* – see the evaluation sheet.
7. **First phone call** - Call your community partner and confirm your first meeting (you may have to make several calls to get through so plan early). If you feel nervous about speaking in Spanish, remember that you will have studied more Spanish than your community partners will have studied English!
 - a. Present yourself with proper greetings and confirm the first meeting – the day, time, and place.
 - b. Give your contact information.
 - c. Talk about your physical traits (to recognize each other when you meet for the first time).
 - d. End the conversation cordially.

8. First meeting

- a. Get to know each other (prepare a list of questions to get to know your community partner – e.g., you can recycle the oral interview questions for the class!)
- b. Fill out contact information sheet and the meeting dates/times for the semester.
- c. Listen to your community partner's interests and needs.
- d. Confirm the next meeting date, time, & place.
- e. If there is time, do one activity (prepare for English conversation practice, reading...etc.).

9. Weekly meetings

- a. Be flexible – unexpected events happen and meetings can be canceled or changed.
- b. Always call your community partner and confirm before each meeting.
- c. Meet at public places (e.g., libraries, coffee shops, Head Start parent room...etc.)
- d. Prepare a plan for each meeting (e.g., conversation questions, websites to explore, practice sheets...etc.).
- e. Listen to the needs of your community partner and get to know his/her stories.
- f. Evaluate constantly, "Is this a good service?"
- g. Consult with me and the classmates if you need help or have any difficulty.
- h. Use the *USTED* form with older adults.
- i. Enjoy getting to know your community member and be prepared to share with the class what you learned about him/her.

10. Last meeting - interview the community members (at the end) and include the findings into your last *diario*.

- a. *¿Qué aspecto de las reuniones le fue más beneficioso?* [What was the most beneficial aspect of the project?]
- b. *¿Cree que fueron suficientes las horas de contacto? ¿Tiene algunas sugerencias para el futuro?* [Do you believe that the contact hours were sufficient? Do you have any suggestions for the future?]

Appendix B

Sample Evaluation Criteria for SL Project

*Español 201 La evaluación del proyecto de comunidad*1. **Servicio** ____/40 pts.

- *Número de horas de participación, responsabilidad, creatividad*
- *Contribución al equipo* [individual contribution if teamwork]

2. **Diarios** ____/60 pts.

- *La cantidad* – ‘suficiente texto (____/20) [quantity of text]
- *La calidad* – *contenido* (____/20) [quality of content]

Preguntas para el diario - escribir de 100-130 palabras en español:

- *¿Qué pasó durante la semana? ¿Qué hicieron juntos? ¿De qué hablaron?*
- *Ej., Esta semana, María y yo nos reunimos a las tres el martes en la Biblioteca Kennedy. María no habla mucho inglés y por eso hablamos mucho en español. Ella es de Texas. Nos organizamos y hablamos de los planes...*
- *¿Cómo te sientes con tu experiencia hasta ahora? ¿Qué aprendiste de la situación? ¿Y algo de la cultura hispana y el español? ¿Y de ti mismo/a?*
- *Ej., Estaba muy nervioso/a al principio porque...*
- *Es interesante que + subjuntivo*
- *Ojalá que + subjuntivo*
- *¿Cuáles son tus planes para la próxima reunión? ¿Qué necesidades tiene tu pareja de comunidad y tienes tú?*
- *Ej., El plan para la próxima sesión es practicar la conversación en inglés sobre el vocabulario de la escuela. María quiere aprender más... También voy a ayudarla con la pronunciación de... Espero que ella/él + subjuntivo... Le recomiendo que + subjuntivo...*

Opcional – another paragraph in English – what you wanted to say but could not express in Spanish

- *La calidad* – *español* (*variedad de vocabulario, conjugaciones verbales y gramática*) (____/20) [quality of Spanish – variety of vocabulary and grammar]

3. **La reflexión final** ____/50 ptsa. *Un ensayo de 250-300 palabras en español*

- ⇒ *¿Qué hiciste?*
- ⇒ *¿Qué tipo de relaciones has podido formar con los compañeros de la clase, con la comunidad latina en el campus, con los latinos fuera del campus...? [What kind of relationships were you able to form among classmates and with the Latino community on and off campus?]*

- ⇒ *¿Qué aprendiste – de ti mismo/a, de la vida de algunos latinos que conociste, del español o de diversidad?* [What did you learn about yourself, about the life of some of the Latino community members you met, about Spanish, and about diversity?]
- ⇒ *¿Qué quieres/esperas que pase en nuestra comunidad (ej., tu pareja de comunidad, nuestra comunidad dentro y fuera del campus... etc.)* [What do you want to see happen in our community?]
- ⇒ *En tu opinión, ¿qué es un buen servicio y un mal servicio?* [In your opinion, what is a good service and a bad service?]
- ⇒ *¿Qué les recomiendas a los estudiantes de futuro que hagan o no hagan?* [What do you recommend for future students?]
- ⇒ *¿Qué le sugieres a la profesora que haga o no haga en el futuro?* [What do you suggest for your professor for future?]
- *Un párrafo en inglés (100-150 palabras)* [a paragraph in English]
 - ⇒ What did you discover/learn that you would not have if we did not do this project?
 - ⇒ Leo Tolstoy observed, “Everybody thinks of changing humanity, and nobody thinks of changing himself.” What causes transformation within us? Is there anything you learned about yourself this semester?

8

Innovative Approaches to Teaching Literature in the World Language Classroom

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Reading any type of text in a second language (L2) can be a daunting task for an L2 learner. Arnold (2009) even states that learners often regard reading in the FL as “laborious, unpleasant, and ultimately unsuccessful” (p. 340). Although learners may not choose to read in the L2 on their own, foreign language (FL) teachers and learners have access to a number of tasks that can assist learners in enjoying the process of reading in a FL. Research indicates that scaffolding activities, pre-reading activities, and post-reading activities contribute to successful reading in the target language (TL) by L2 learners (Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Shrum & Glisan, 2011; Silberstein, 1994). As students advance in their FL study, they will be required to read more and more in the TL. Sometimes by the second year of FL study, students are required to begin reading literature written in the TL, which can be an even more daunting task than reading a short text during the first year of study. The purpose of this article is to extend the results of research that explain how teachers can assist learners in the reading process by providing general and specific instructions for activities L2 learners can engage in while reading literature in the L2.

Based on empirical research studies in L2 teaching and learning that deal with reading and on studies in general education that deal with reading, the author presents activities FL students can participate in while they are reading a text and after they finish reading a text in order to allow maximum input in the TL about each work of literature they read. This article presents several innovative and motivating ideas for teaching literature in the FL classroom, and although examples are given for German and English literary works, these activities can be easily adapted to other languages.

Since 1996 with the advent of the *Standards for Foreign Languages Learning* (SFL) developed by the National Standards for Foreign Languages Project, FL educators have had standards with clear explanations and benchmarks in the areas of Communications, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. These standards do not contain specific methods for teaching FLs. They provide statements that describe what FL learners should be able to do according to age and grade as well as and examples of activities that target each standard (NSFELP, 2006; Arens & Swaffar, 2000).

In 2007 the Modern Language Association (MLA) Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages issued a report that advocates for a broader approach to teaching FLs “in which language, culture, and literature are taught as a continuous whole” (MLA, 2007). The report advocates for a curricular approach to teaching FLs that combines language and content, develops students’ basic knowledge of literature of TL cultures, and facilitates comprehension of literary works written in the TL.

Since January 2012 the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has published reading proficiency ratings for languages which include detailed descriptions for all levels and sub-levels of proficiency. These proficiency guidelines provide clear goals that describe what learners should know and be able to do in terms of reading. Using the SFL and Reading Proficiency Guidelines, teachers and administrators can set course objectives to describe what learners are able to read and how they interact with and understand different types of written text.

The approaches to working with literary works in this article focus on different types of learners and are based on theories of second language acquisition (SLA), ACTFL’s SFL, and the report by the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages (MLA, 2007; NSFLEP, 2006; Saville-Troike, 2011). Because not all learners learn the same way or process what they read the same way, different types of activities are suggested to meet the diverse learning needs. These tasks will include innovative pre-reading and post-reading activities, and activities to help students maintain momentum once they have started reading. The author has used all of these activities on several occasions and has found that learners are able to become more engaged in reading literary works when they are actively involved in applying what they read to different contexts.

Following a brief review of relevant background literature, various ways of making the introduction of a new text interesting for students will be presented. Then ways of continuing students’ interest while reading a text at home will be presented. Finally, a number of ways of working with a text once students have finished reading it will be explained. To this end, the following five topics will be presented and described: (1) the importance of using literary texts as part of the FL curriculum, (2) the significance of first encounters with literary texts, (3) maintaining momentum while reading and studying literary texts, (4) developing the highlights in literary texts, and (5) working with the endings of literary texts. Overall, a number of different activity ideas will be introduced and explained, and several examples will be presented. These activities are of interest to teachers of all

languages and all levels in preparing activities to use while working with literary texts and in making them more accessible to their students.

Brief Review of Relevant Background Literature

To provide a theoretical foundation for innovative approaches to teaching literature, this section focuses on research in three areas: the history of the role of reading in FL learning, reading theory in SLA, and the importance of teaching literature in the FL classroom.

The History of the Role of Reading in FL Learning

Since the beginning of formal language instruction with the Grammar-Translation Method, the importance of reading in the TL has been emphasized (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Shrum & Glisan, 2010). Since that time, various methods and approaches to FL teaching emphasize or de-emphasize the purpose of reading in class or as homework (Krashen, 2004; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Omaggio Hadley, 2001). In the early 20th century, researchers did not believe that reading comprehension should be taught. Further, learners were considered to be able to understand what they read once they could decode words in a text (Smith, 1986). However, even though many learners could recognize words they read, they were still not able to comprehend the meaning of the text (Smith, 1986). Since the mid-1970s, researchers have strategies to assist learners in reading texts in the FL.

Research in schema theory leads FL teachers to design activities that allow students to improve their reading abilities by providing ways for them to read texts that contain elements in the TL they do not already know (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Silberstein, 1994). Even in 1985, Krashen asserted in his *Input Hypothesis* that learners need to receive input (which in this case is written input) that is only one level above their current interlanguage level in the TL in order for the input to be comprehensible so learners can internalize the input. Krashen asserts that if input is comprehensible, and if learners receive enough of it, the necessary grammar and vocabulary is provided for successful SLA.

Most recently, ACTFL published its Reading Proficiency Guidelines that state that “[r]eading is an interpretive skill” and that “[r]eading comprehension is based largely on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text, and the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts” (ACTFL, 2012, p. 20). These Guidelines further explain that by describing the tasks that readers are able to complete with different types of texts and under different types of circumstances, L2 readers are able to demonstrate reading proficiency in their L2. The Reading Proficiency Guidelines describe how readers understand written texts but do not describe how reading skills develop, how a learner learns to read in the TL, and what the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity of reading are. Instead, they are intended to describe what readers are able to understand from what they read. These Guidelines apply only to reading in the L2 that is either *interpretive* (reading books, essays, reports, etc.) or *interpersonal* (reading instant messages, texts, e-mails, etc.) (ACTFL, 2012).

Reading Theory in SLA

Shrum and Glisan (2010) explain five important variables that facilitate reading comprehension and interpretation of a text in the TL. These variables relate to reader-based and text-based factors based on empirical research. The first variable is *topic familiarity* or background knowledge. When FL learners are able to work with a text in the TL that contains a topic with which they are already familiar in the L1, they are more likely to be open to understanding the text in the TL. Topic familiarity may also reduce anxiety about reading in the TL. Similarly, when students are provided with context for a text along with the opportunity to reflect on their knowledge of the topic about which they will be reading and about their own prior knowledge about the topic, there is a better chance that they will feel more comfortable reading the text and will feel less anxiety about reading something in a FL. When learners are able to associate new knowledge with existing knowledge, they are able to make sense of a text more quickly and with less effort.

The second variable, *use of short-term or working memory*, refers to the learner's ability to keep information in his or her short-term or working memory while processing a text for comprehension. Just and Carpenter (1992) explain that working memory stores individual words, phrases, meaning of words, and grammatical or thematic structures for later use while it also accesses word meaning while processing the syntactic nature of a phrase. They point out that learners with a large working memory are able to process greater amounts of syntactic structures while also processing context and background knowledge. FL teachers can make up for differences among students who may have difficulty with understanding written texts due to having a small working memory by providing prereading activities that focus on context, background knowledge, comprehension, and new vocabulary and allowing them to view the text prior to reading.

The third variable, *strategies in comprehending and interpreting a text*, deals with strategies a learner employs while seeking to understand and interpret a text in TL. Shrum and Glisan (2010) mention that native speakers (NSs) often make use of the strategies of skimming for main ideas, scanning for details, using background knowledge, and predicting what might come next in a written text. Successful readers in the TL also make use of these same strategies. Empirical evidence indicates that direct strategy training in reading will directly increase learners' comfort and success in reading in the TL (Shrum & Glisan, 2010).

The purpose for reading or nature of the reading task is the fourth variable that affects comprehension on the part of the learner. Learners are generally required to read *extensively* for pleasure or to quickly find information or *intensively* to find specific details and discover particular themes in a text. FL teachers can guide their students through the reading process by giving them purposes for reading, whether they are reading from a certain point of view (from the view of a child, etc.), giving a reason for reading that reflects a real-world task (reading classified advertisements to find a suitable part-time job), or assigning tasks to complete based on reading (asking students to plan a dinner party after reading a restaurant menu).

The fifth variable, *level of anxiety of the reader*, describes the negative effect higher levels of anxiety can have on a learner's comprehension of a text. Anxiety may stem from new vocabulary words, unfamiliar grammatical structures, and new cultural content. Some learners feel they must understand every single word, every grammatical structure, and all content in a text to be able to comprehend its meaning. Teachers can assist learners in lowering their FL reading anxiety by providing texts that contain familiar information, teaching reading strategies, and assessing students' comfort levels after reading texts that are simple to understand. From there, teachers can assign progressively more difficult texts along with activities that focus on comprehension rather than on understanding every word in a text.

In sum, process-oriented instruction encourages teachers to use prereading activities to activate learners' background knowledge of and personal information about a topic prior to reading about it. Comprehension activities allow learners to demonstrate what they understand while reading, and post-reading activities guide learners to analyze what they have read (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Interactive reading processing models are described as text- and reader-driven and rely on bottom-up or top-down strategies. Bottom-down strategies are text-driven and include word recognition (cognates and words learners already know) and decoding, while top-up strategies are reader-driven and include activating learners' schemata and beliefs (Omaggio Hadley, 2001). Of interest to teachers is that all of these strategies and variables do not depend on a learner's proficiency in the TL and that what is most important in reading in the TL is for learners to activate their background knowledge prior to reading, employ more *top-down* (background-driven) strategies than *bottom-up* (text-driven), and complete activities that are appropriate to their proficiency level (Swaffar & Arens, 2005).

The Importance of Teaching Literature in the FL Classroom

FL teachers use literary texts in class for a number of reasons. Among the most common are that literature in the TL provides learners with authentic material, input in the TL, cultural enrichment, language enrichment, personal involvement, motivation for continued language learning, content knowledge, language proficiency, and the knowledge of important literary works in the TL (ACTFL, 2012; Barrette, Paesani, & Vinall, 2010; Krashen, 2004; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Silberstein, 1994). In beginning FL classes, students are often required to read short paragraphs that may or may not be authentic and that are almost never literary in nature. In intermediate classes, students are introduced to literary works in the TL that are short in length and fairly easy to follow and understand. In advanced classes, students may take entire courses dedicated to studying certain movements in literature in the FL and certain authors.

Even though teaching literature is of great importance in FL study, Silberstein (1994) cautions teachers of advanced classes that they should avoid the presentation of literature merely for teaching literary appreciation because students "needn't be burdened with the apparatus of literary criticism" (p. 88). Along these lines,

Byrnes and Kord (2002) and Paesani and Allen (2012) agree that merging the learning of the FL with literary content rather than teaching FL literature on its own is the best approach to advanced level courses. Further, Byrnes (2008) explained that difficulties for teachers and students often arise when studying literary texts because prior to the study of literature in the FL, students' language learning focused on the "real world" rather than the imagined world created when reading a work of literature.

With the ideas of why teaching literature is important in learning a FL and the caution of researchers who have experience teaching literature and language, the activities presented in this article for working with literature in the classroom focus on integrating language and literature for a more comprehensive and enjoyable learning experience.

The Significance of First Encounters with a Text

The first time students come in contact with a written text that they will be required to read in class or at home, there is an opportunity for rich input in the TL that will motivate students to read the text. With planning, teachers can instill an enthusiasm for the reading, the result of which may be that learners actually do the reading assignment and learn something from what they read. Activities listed in this section fall under Shrum and Glisan's (2010) FL reading categories of topic familiarity, holding information in short-term memory, the purpose for reading, and the level of anxiety of the reader.

This section describes nine ways teachers can make the first encounter with a text memorable and meaningful. The key to making learners' first encounter with a text memorable is to plan activities that ensure that all learners are actively involved and participating. All of these suggested activities can be adapted to meet the teaching and learning needs of the teacher and students and to students' level of proficiency although some activities are more suited to certain proficiency levels than others.

Using the Title and Cover Design of a Book

The teacher could display the title of the book and ask students to speculate in writing what they expect the themes of the text to be based solely on its title. They would then read their speculation in a small group and compare theirs with their classmates' speculations. The teacher would record student responses to use in a follow-up activity after students have read part of the text or the entire text and compare their responses with the actual text. This activity would be best suited for intermediate and advanced learners who are able to write in sentences or paragraphs and possibly hypothesize to some degree using the TL.

If there is background information about the title of a text, the teacher could provide the students with this information (i.e., if the title comes from song lyrics or a proverb in TL) and explain what its origin and meaning is. Through this explanation, students might then be asked to speculate how the title might tie in to the story.

Often, a well-known literary work will be published a number of times, and several intriguing cover designs may be available. Using a cover design, the teacher could ask guiding questions to have students speculate about the book, its content, plot, characters, and mood. In a large class, a teacher could give one different cover design for each small group. Students would work together using guiding questions to predict the plot of the book. Groups would then share what they discussed and compare their ideas with other groups in the class. Some guiding questions to use could be: (1) What do you think the story is about? (2) Who might the main character be? Describe this person. (3) What is the overall mood of the story? Light? Happy? Dark? Sad? Why?

One example from an advanced German course could be to introduce the short story *Die Verwandlung* (*Metamorphosis*) by Franz Kafka. The teacher could display the title and ask students to write for two minutes as much as they can about the title and its possible definitions and meaning and have students share their responses. Then the teacher could provide students with information about the title, for example, the conventional translation of Kafka's *Die Verwandlung* is *The Metamorphosis*, but the German word has a more everyday sense of "transformation" or "change." The English word "metamorphosis" is more formal than the German word and might seem to link the Kafka's German story to a great work of classical antiquity, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which is a series of stories where mythical characters are turned into plants and animals for misbehaving. The teacher could then explain that Kafka's title does not specify who or what is being transformed. Most students in advanced German courses seem to have some prior knowledge of this story and know that a man is transformed into a bug. The teacher could explain that while the main character's transformation into a bug is certainly central as a plot element in the story, the title is intended to invite the reader to consider additional ways the main character and the other characters are transformed throughout the course of the story.

The teacher could also tell students that the story was first published in 1915 and that the main character's name is Gregor Samsa. This name appears to have been derived partly from a literary work Kafka had studied. The hero of *The Story of Young Renate Fuchs*, written by German-Jewish novelist Jakob Wassermann (1873–1934), is named Gregor Samsa. In addition, the main character's family name Samsa is similar to Kafka's family name in its play of vowels and consonants. There are five letters in each name. The S in the word Samsa has the same position as the K in the word Kafka, and the A is in the second and fifth positions in both words. The main character Gregor Samsa appears to be based upon Kafka himself, even though nothing has ever been published by Kafka to confirm this notion. Information about Kafka's life suggests that Samsa does reflect Kafka's own life. Like Samsa in the story, Kafka suffered from insomnia and feared that he was repulsive and a burden to his family. Also like Samsa, during this time in Kafka's life, his sister was his caretaker. Although this information may not have much to do with students' overall comprehension of the story itself, it may pique some students' interest in the author thereby improving the chance that they will read the story.

Setting the Mood

To set the mood of a story before students begin reading it, the teacher could use a guided activity. He or she could ask students to close their eyes and imagine a picture of the beginning of the literary work by first setting the scene for them. Using a lot of descriptive adjectives to paint a picture in their minds of the opening scene, invite the class to become part of the scene. Then the teacher would ask each student to write as much as they can for about three minutes about the scene he or she imagines. The teacher would then ask for three or more volunteers to read what they wrote. An alternative follow-up activity could be to ask students to stand up and talk with at least three different classmates about the scene they imagine then ask for volunteers to share what they learned from their classmates' ideas.

Using the example of *Die Verwandlung*, the teacher could explain that Kafka often delivers an unexpected impact just before the end of each very long sentence. He achieved this by using syntactic structures that require that the participle be positioned at the end of the sentence thereby not revealing the verb until the end. For example, in the opening sentence of the story, it is the final word, *verwandelt* (transformed), that indicates transformation: "*Als Gregor Samsa eines Morgens aus unruhigen Träumen erwachte, fand er sich in seinem Bett zu einem ungeheueren Ungeziefer **verwandelt***" (As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself **transformed** in his bed into a gigantic insect-like creature.).

Another example could be that after examining the first sentence of the story together as a class, the teacher could ask students to close their eyes and imagine a picture based on the first sentence of the story. The teacher would ask questions to help them consider what the place might look like. The teacher could ask: "Is it bright? Dark? Big? Little? Upstairs? Downstairs?" Then he or she would ask: "How would you describe the room? Is it cluttered? Bare? What colors are there? What furniture? What does the furniture look like? What time of day is it? How do you know? What was the weather like outside?" While students still have their eyes closed, read the students the first two paragraphs of the story out loud. Then ask students to open their eyes and write as much as they can for three minutes about the mood of the opening paragraphs of the story. The teacher can follow-up by having students read what they wrote in small groups or as a class. Then ask students if they think this mood will continue throughout the story and why they feel that way.

Visual Prompts

Another way to pique student interest in a text is to use photos or pictures from magazines to elicit student response to the central situation or theme they will encounter in a literary work. This type of activity can work for learners of all proficiency levels. For beginners, learners could be asked to describe pictures in terms of color, emotional state, clothing, profession, location, etc. For intermediate and advanced learners, an example of this approach could be in introducing a short story by Roald Dahl, "The Hitchhiker." Students might see photos of several different people and asked if they would give a ride to this person if he or she were

hitchhiking. This activity allows students to consider their own attitudes toward hitchhikers and prepares them to read with interest and anticipation. By providing historical context of when the story was originally published (1977), the teacher can explain how hitchhiking was viewed then and compare it to how it is viewed now and can lead a lively discussion about why or why not someone should be picked up while hitchhiking.

Using the Theme

Themes of literary works are already key parts of discussions about the works. Teachers can use a major theme in a text to explore with a class even before they begin reading. An example is Somerset Maughn's novel "The Moon and Sixpence" where the main character suddenly and without explanation walks out on his wife, children, home, and job. Ask students to imagine that they have decided to abandon their current life situation and write a few sentences about the situation addressing these questions: How would they do it? Would they plan it in advance? What preparations would they make? Would they tell anyone? What would they take? Where would they go? What kind of new life would they try to build?

Then the teacher would ask students to write a short note they would leave someone they would never see again. The teacher collects the notes then has each student choose a different note to read. Students read the note and write down how they felt reading the note. The teacher would then follow up with a general discussion about how students felt when they were writing and reading the notes. Then begin reading the story together as a class. Read just enough to increase students' interest in the story together in class.

Key Words and Key Sentences

The teacher could select a few key words from the first part of a story that are integral to the introduction. He or she would introduce these words to students then ask them to write about a possible beginning to the story using the words. A related idea is to select a few key sentences from the opening part of a text instead of words and ask students to use the sentences to create an image of a central character, his or her personality, habits, etc., then share their images with the class. Students' written work for this activity would be saved and read again after the first part of a story has been read and discussed in class so students could compare their ideas prior to reading the opening section to their ideas after reading.

Questionnaires

The teacher could create and give students questionnaires to complete to determine their attitude about issues raised by the central themes in a text. For example, in Kafka's *Die Verwandlung*, students would be asked to consider what they would do if they were told they were dying and had one day to live. Students would complete a questionnaire that would focus on what they would eat their last day, whom they would contact, what they would do, what the topic of their final words of wisdom would be, how they would change their will, etc. After students

complete questionnaires on their own, they would compare notes with another student and try to convince the student that their answer was best. The entire class would then present their ideas and what they discussed and try to come to a consensus about what might be most logical for each topic represented on the questionnaire.

Biographical Information

Before starting to read a new literary work, the teacher might present information about the author using background information as a starting point. He or she could present photos, objects, place names, and anything that is relevant to the author's life then ask the students to speculate about the meaning of the items. The teacher would explain information about the author's life in a way that would provide insights into the text and pique students' interest so they would look forward to reading it.

Sealing a Time Capsule

After all students have read the opening section of a text, the teacher would give each student a small index card on which to record his or her predictions about likely events that will occur as the story unfolds. He or she would then collect the cards, seal them all in a time capsule (or just an envelope), and open after reading and discussing the entire text to how accurate their predictions were.

Writing a Prequel (or Chapter 0)

In the past decade, prequels to movies and books have been more and more popular. After reminding students of a few prequels in the past decade, the teacher would ask students to write two or three paragraphs that might appear immediately *before* the first section of the work they have just encountered. Student would share these in small groups and choose one student in the group to read his or her prequel to the class.

Maintaining Momentum

Once students have begun reading a text and have a good grasp of the first part of the plot and characters, the activities the teacher assigns should encourage students to continue reading. Students often lose interest if they are only assigned to read and have no guidance to assist them in making meaning of what they are reading. This section will discuss ways teachers can guide student comprehension and make the most of highlights in a literary work to hold students' interest while reading (Barrette, Paesani, & Vinall, 2010).

Guiding Student Comprehension

Once students start of comprehending a story, the teacher could send comprehension questions and activities home with students to complete while reading the next section then review answers in class to ensure that all students understand what they are reading and are able follow the plot. If students do not understand what they are reading, they will most likely have little desire to continue reading. Students

could write on-going diaries in which they record a summary of what they read and their reactions to what they read. This activity would help to ensure comprehension throughout the entire text. The teacher would read and comment on the diary entries at different times during the reading process.

Activities that focus on specific aspects of the contact can be used to holding students' interest while reading. Students can be asked to read for the main idea, read for specific details, draw inferences, use syntactic and lexical clues to assist in making meaning, use visual and lexical clues to assist in making meaning, make predictions (making inferences from details), and employ strategies for extensive or intensive reading.

Exploiting Highlights

Making good use of highlights in a literary work is another great way of maintaining student interest during the reading process. The teacher can identify highlights that might be of most interest to the students then introduce them to authentic ways of describing highlights. One example could be to have students imagine that the text is being made into a TV series. The teacher would display and explain a sample of a summary from a TV Guide or Info section on DVR in English and in the TL. The teacher would then ask students to write a very brief account of one scene for that series that would entice TV viewers to watch it. Students should choose actors to play main characters, a composer to write the theme song, a pop star to sing the theme song, and a director.

Another authentic format is to use to exploit highlights is newspaper articles. The teacher would provide samples of articles from two or three well-known newspapers in the TL and talk about news writing. Students would then be asked to write about the events of the text in article form. The teacher could provide a headline for a prompt and a maximum number of words.

Many cultures have some type of advice columnist, such as *Dear Abby*. The teacher could display a couple of examples in English then introduce students to one in the TL and explain that people who are seeking advice send an e-mail to the person in hopes of a reply to solve their problem. Students would write a letter asking advice from the perspective of a character in the story. The teacher would collect letters then give each student one of the letters to read and write a response to. Following that activity, the teacher would return the letter and response to the original writer and ask if they felt the response provided good advice.

If a character in a story dies, a teacher could introduce students to epitaphs, eulogies, or obituaries in the TL then ask students to write one of their own based on the character. Another activity could be to write a thank you card, get well card, sympathy card, birthday card, etc., to a character in the story from the perspective of another character.

Endings

Teachers put forth much effort to ensure that students understand what they read, but often they put the reading aside once they have finished covering the plot,

themes, and characters. There is still much to be gained by continuing to work with the text once students have a solid understanding of it. Doing so can assist students in deepening their understanding of the text and in improving their proficiency in the TL. Students could be asked to create a cover design for current publication of the book, even if the book was written many years ago. Along these lines, students could be asked to design a book jacket for the book which would include a blurb about the text, a short biography of the author's life, quotes from famous authors, and a cover design.

Another activity might be to have students to create a collage explaining the plot, characters, major themes, settings, and their feelings about a story then having them present it to the class. Unsealing the time capsule that was started after reading the first section and reading students' predictions about what would happen in the story. Compare their predictions with what actually took place.

Students could be asked to write, direct, and produce a short movie trailer to advertise an upcoming movie version of the book rewritten for screen. They would also create an IMDB (International Movie Database) web page for this movie. Students should include the title, the year, the producer, actors, composer of the score, a brief summary of the movie and how it differs from the book, a spoiler alert, a rating out of five stars, and a movie rating. First show students two IMDB entries of popular movies or TV series first then ask students to work together in pairs to create the web page.

Conclusion

Because reading important works of literature is an essential part of learning a FL and its culture and because developing students' proficiency in the TL is a necessary element of successful FL learning, using activities to allow students to get to know a text well and interact with it will facilitate these goals. As teachers try multiple approaches to work with literary texts in the classroom, they will learn which work best for their students and will make literature in the TL more accessible and possibly even more enjoyable for learners.

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