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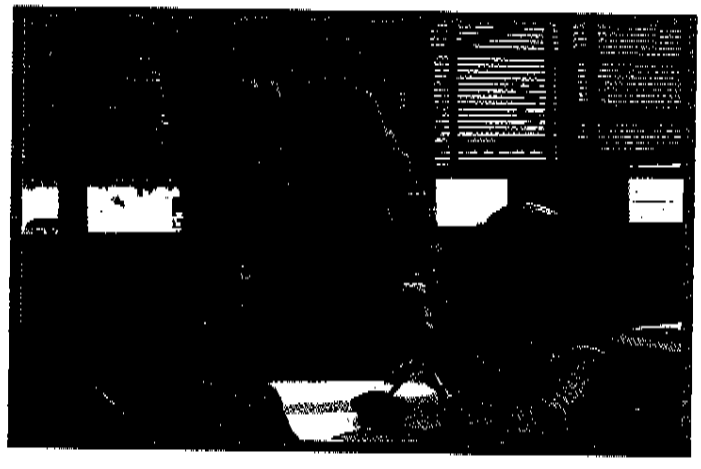

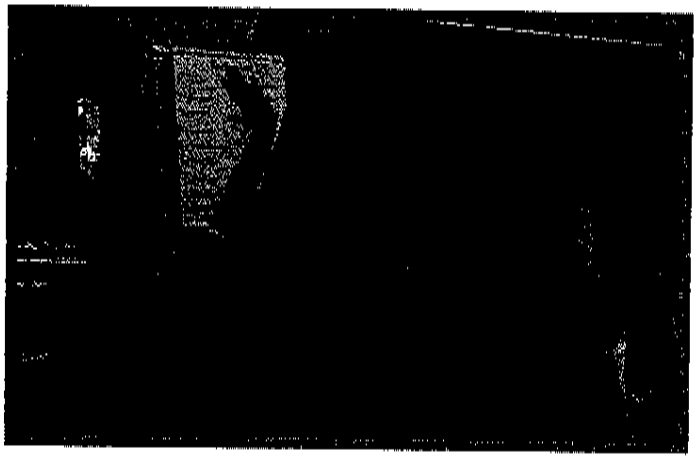

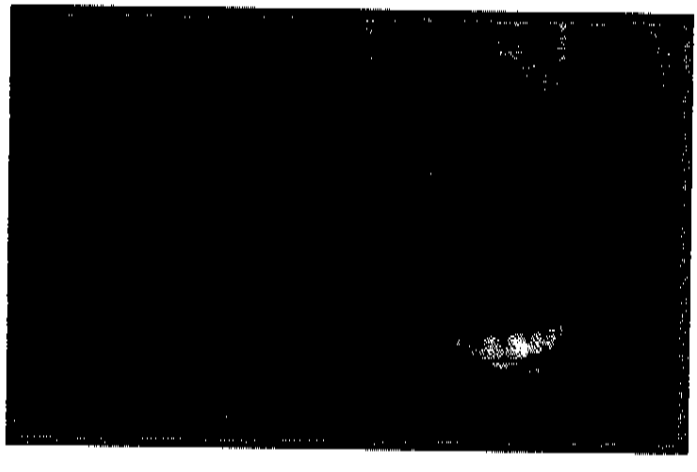

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Cathy Yoder
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995 Westwood Square
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(407) 365-2350

Manuscripts

Send manuscript to:
Betty Green
Volusia County Public Schools
729 Loomis Ave.
P.O. Box 2410
Daytona, FL 32114
or e-mail to
bngreen@mail.volusia.k12.fl.us

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Reviews

Send reviews to:
Lisa Nalbone
University of Central Florida
Modern Languages and Literatures
CNH 511F
4000 Central Florida Blvd.
Orlando, FL 32816-1348
or email to
nalbone@mail.ucf.edu

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ARTICLES

Call for 2007 Conference Proceedings Papers

REVIEW

Editor's Acknowledgement

We are celebrating the fourth publication of the Florida Foreign Language Journal and the editor thanks the Editorial Review Board and the FFLA, Inc., for making the Journal possible. A very special thank you goes to the Carine Strebel, (Assistant-to-the-Editor), Simone Basilio (Technical Editor), and Kathy Yoder for their dedication and hard work. The Journal provides a springboard for foreign language professionals to discuss classroom activities and research of importance to the profession. In this publication you will read about an Information Gap Activity that can easily be modified and implemented in the classroom by Past president of ACTFL, Paul A. García from the University of Illinois, and Todd A. Hernández from the University of Kansas. Rebecca Blankenship from Brandon Senior High School offers us a creative activity on Mobile Phones that will stimulate you and your students by redirecting a commonly used technology for language learning. Jeffra Flaiz from the University of South Florida reminds us that foreign language teachers and ESOL teachers alike have critical knowledge of cultural differences of students which they can utilize to serve English learners' integration in the school, as well as to further content teachers' and administrators' understanding of this part of the student population. The Blueprint by written by Karen Verkler from the University of Central Florida is an in-depth response to policy that informs the readership about avenues to certification and re-certification). Finally, Ramón Anthony Madrigal from Florida College has written a book review of interest on the topic of Age in L2 acquisition and teaching.

There is still a lack of interest in offering foreign languages in the United States. The emphasis in most schools are on subject areas like math, social studies, science and language arts, and yet, if we keep up with research on learning, and how the brain works, we discover that the facts are clear that students who take a second or third language in school do better in other subject areas because they are able to connect cross-disciplines. In short, they are better prepared to compete in the modern world in a multitude of professions or academics as they enter college, university, or the business world. People who speak more than one language view the world with a wider lens than the ones who do not. As foreign language educators we need to ask ourselves why only eight percent of college students take a foreign language. What can language educators do to promote languages in the nation's schools and colleges and universities? What will it take to significantly increase the numbers of students in the foreign language classes in the United States?

A few years ago FFLA and OMSLE introduced a small video called "The World Has Many Voices", a short video collage with many well known language educators discussing why it is important to learn a foreign language, and how American businesses are losing considerable amounts of money to the countries they do business with because they do not know the "language of the clients". The information in that video is still real today, only the loss in dollars has no doubt greatly increased, and we are still lacking behind. Every foreign language teacher needs to promote the importance of foreign language learning and ensure that coming generations of American students will be linguistically able to "speak the languages of their clients".

Betty Nielsen Green

FFLJ, Editor, 2007

President's Corner

Greetings FFLA members and Colleagues,

Five years ago the Florida Foreign Language Association embarked upon the task of creating a professional journal for our association. At that time, it seemed a timely and necessary step, even though it would be demanding. The idea of the FFLAJ was first conceived and proposed by Dr. Phil Crant the then, FFLAN editor. Phil followed through, realized his dream, and brought the membership their professional journal. It was planned as a forum for all World Language educators, K-12 teachers, administrators, community college and university teachers and foreign language education majors. It was to be universal in scope, including pedagogical issues as well as strategies and successes from the perspective of our FFLA membership. Presently, the task of editor is in the very able hands of Dr. Betty Green. This journal offers all of the FFLA membership a place to contribute to, and enhance the professional development of other World Language colleagues, as well as enhancing their own. It provides a much sought after medium for exchange among the Florida World Language professional community and has become one of the many benefits of FFLA membership.

During the 2006-2007 year the FFLA has been very active. Becky Youngman, Past President, was the official FFLA delegate at the annual JNCL –NCLIS Legislative Days in Washington, DC, May 3-5, 2007. Becky joined 80 delegates as they met with their representatives and lawmakers, specifically, Representative Ron Klein of Boca Raton and the legislative aids for Congressman Robert Wexler and Senators Bill Nelson and Mel Martinez. A detailed report appears in the Summer FFLAN. Also a group of FFLA members traveled to China and will be presenting a session, "The China Experience" at the FFLA Conference.

This year, we have worked very diligently to present a conference that would provide support to the 'whole teacher": mind, body and spirit. In the midst of these challenging times when budgets and support for your World Language programs are disappearing, we have sought to provide a positive experience that could carry you throughout the year. We have sought out a broad spectrum of expertise. Dr. Linda Karges- Bone will address the inner workings of the brain and how it impacts teaching and learning. Ellen Shrager will address the major issues that we each face on a daily basis- dealing with parents, dealing with our administration and motivating reluctant learners. She will also be presenting a workshop for reluctant technology novices: 'Who's afraid of Technology"?

Jo Jo Lowe has been brought back to FFLA, once again. Both she and Tom Alsop will provide insights into lesson planning and delivery.

We have also incorporated new ideas into the FFLA Conference Schedule. WE are offering 30 minute Mini-Sessions for the first time, for those topics, which require a shorter time frame. We will also offer morning rejuvenations, which are physical activities, in the hopes of promoting the importance of maintaining good health. Teachers will be able to attend an introduction to a new language, to experience what their students experience by attending a 'Try a New Language' session in Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, German and French on Friday afternoon.

Looking forward, I will pass on the FFLA torch of leadership to my very accomplished and able colleague, Jan Kucerik of Pinellas County with my deepest thanks for her support and collaboration during my presidency. My wish for her is to have a positive and fulfilling experience as FFLA President in the coming year, to be supported by the FFLA Board and to be able to expand the scope, influence and diversity of the association. To this end, I offer my continued support to Jan, throughout her term of office.

Sincerely,

Margie Guerzon Fox

President FFLA 2007

Mission Statement

The Florida Foreign Language Journal is the official academic organ of the Florida Foreign Language Association. Its objective is to serve as a vehicle for expression by teachers, students and the general public who have an interest in furthering the instruction and knowledge of foreign languages. The journal seeks articles, reviews, notes and comments concerning any aspect of foreign language acquisition. In an era where educational funding is often limited, where foreign, immigrant, and migrant students seek instructional equity, and a where greater number of students are desirous of learning a foreign language, it seems imperative to have such a journal. The journal reaches out especially to those already teaching foreign languages as well as those who are preparing for such a career. The demands on teachers are overwhelming today. There is a plethora of methodological approaches, technical apparatuses, and multi-faceted textbooks available, amidst a variety of instructions with diverse milieus and attitudes toward foreign language instruction. Such an environment creates a daunting challenge to practitioners of foreign language instruction.

The goal of FFLJ is a modest one; it is to serve as a sounding board and a reference point for those who teach and learn foreign languages. It is hoped that the journal will help foreign language enthusiasts and professionals form a community that shares its concerns, discoveries, and successes of issues in the foreign language domain. It is further hoped that our voices will become more numerous and ring more loudly as we proceed through what promises to be a century of challenge and opportunity for foreign languages. Our emphasis will be on fostering better learning conditions and results for our students and teachers. FFLJ urges all readers and participants to become ardent advocates to further and safeguard foreign language practices.

Manuscript Guidelines

The Florida Foreign Language Association, Inc. is proud to announce the development of its fifth professional issue of the Florida Foreign Language Journal (FFLJ). All foreign/second language educators, school administrators, community college and university instructors, and foreign language education majors benefit from this local journal.

Although it is universal in scope, it concentrates on pedagogical problems, strategies, and successes in the classroom as conveyed by our Florida membership. We have a tremendous challenge in Florida to raise the awareness of foreign/second language teaching and learning.

Methodologies, classroom size, teacher preparation, length of classes, standardized testing, ESOL, National Board Certification, summer institutes, culture/diversity, grant, scholarship, and travel opportunities are many of the various topics that are of interest. The FFLJ most certainly highlights our profession in Florida and raises the level of credibility and professionalism in our discipline and association. It attracts submissions outside of Florida and enhances membership, conference attendance, and revenues from advertisement.

The refereed journal is a rich complement to the Florida Foreign Language Association Newsletter. It includes professional articles, shorter articles/notes from university students, and text and material reviews. It is anticipated that future issues will include input from K-12 teachers highlighting their classroom activities, a friendly debate corner, a placement section of teacher openings, exchange/abroad opportunities, a recognition corner for awards and achievements, and proceedings papers from our annual conference.

We are now inviting you to submit a manuscript for review for publication in the fourth issue of the FFLJ. Please follow the manuscript guidelines below and send your submission by June 1, 2008 to Dr. Betty Green, Editor, Florida Foreign Language Journal at Volusia County Public Schools, 729 Loomis Ave., P.O. Box 2410, Daytona, FL 32114.

A double-blind review process will be followed, in which submitted manuscripts are distributed by the editor to 2-3 reviewers with expertise in the areas addressed in each manuscript. Written comments by reviewers and a recommendation on acceptance are returned to the editor, who then communicates the comments and decision of acceptance to the authors.

Manuscript Guidelines

- The manuscript should appeal to the instructional, administrative, or research interests of educators at various levels of instruction.
- The manuscript should be substantive and present new ideas or new applications of information related to current trends in the field.
- The manuscript should be well written, clearly organized, and carefully proofed.
- A complete reference list should be supplied at the end of the manuscript, and the entire manuscript should be formatted according to guidelines in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Ed.
- Manuscripts should generally be no longer than 8-10 double-spaced pages.
- An abstract of 150 words or less should accompany each manuscript.
- A biographical statement of 50 words or less should be included for each author. Information should include current job or title, institution, degrees held, professional experience, and any other relevant information.

- Three copies of the manuscript should be submitted with no names indicated. Please include a cover letter with the name, postal and e-mail addresses, and phone number of the first author (or other contact person) clearly noted.
- Manuscripts may be submitted in electronic format on a 3.5 floppy or as an e-mail attachment. Please use an IBM-PC compatible program (e.g., Microsoft Word). If including figures and tables, they should be submitted in camera-ready format.
- Send manuscripts to Dr. Betty Green, Editor, Florida Foreign Language Journal at Volusia County Public Schools, 729 Loomis Ave., P.O. Box 2410, Daytona, FL 32114 or e-mail to bngreen@mail.volusia.k12.fl.us.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS IS JUNE 1, 2008

Book Review Guidelines

- Materials reviewed must have been published in the past three years.
- Reviews should be a maximum of three double-spaced pages.
- Each review must include complete bibliographic information, a description of the book/material, the audience for whom it is designed, and how well it accomplishes its purposes.
- A cover letter should provide the author's name, postal and e-mail addresses, telephone number, and a brief (25-word) biographical statement.
- Reviews should be submitted on a 3.5 floppy or as an e-mail attachment in an IBM-PC compatible program (preferably Microsoft Word).
- Send reviews to Lisa Nalbone, University of Central Florida, Modern Languages and Literatures, CNH 511F, 4000 Central Florida Blvd., Orlando, FL 32816-1348.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF REVIEWS IS MAY 1, 2008

Outline of Duties for FFLJ Editorial Board

Editor

S/he oversees entire operation of production, and appoints Review, Technical, and Distribution Editors. Promotes, receives, distributes for judgment received manuscripts. Works in tandem with the President of FFLA, Inc. and the Executive Director to ensure the maximum exposure for promotion and call for papers. S/he works closely with the Managing Editor to ensure proper procedures for final production.

Assistant-to the-Editor

S/he works in tandem with the Technical Editor to ensure correct proofing and authors' satisfaction with proof copy. S/he works with publisher to ensure quality publication and adherence to contract. Works with Executive Director of FFLA, Inc. to ensure payment of expenses incurred in production costs. S/he ensures that the journal is ready for distribution for the annual Fall Conference.

Managing Editor

S/he works with Editor to ensure review processes, publication, and any additional jobs deemed necessary by the Editor. S/he readies him/herself to become editor in a two-year duration.

Review Editor

S/he helps promote and inform publishers of foreign language/ESOL texts and materials of the availability of the FFLJ for purposes of reviews to be considered for publication in the journal. S/he works with Managing Editor in any capacity deemed necessary.

Technical Editor and Layout

S/he works with Managing Editor as to placement and form of articles, reviews, as well as all other aspects of published volume. S/he is granted technical assistance and financial support as needed.

Distribution Editor (s)

S/he works closely with the Editor and Managing Editor to ensure proper timing of issuance of journals. S/he works with executive director of FFLA, Inc. to utilize any franking privileges and membership lists to appropriately distribute readied journal in a timely way.

Advertising Editor

S/he handles advertising promotion and placement in a timely manner. S/he works with Executive Director of FFLA, Inc. regarding finances.

Associate Editor(s)

S/he reviews manuscripts in a timely manner and completes manuscript review form(s). S/he sends completed form to Editor in a timely manner either by e-mail or mail.

Paul A. García and Todd A. Hernández

Information Gap Activities: A Standards-Based Strategy for Promoting Oral Proficiency in a Thematic Context

This article demonstrates how the sustained use of standards-driven information gap activities (IGAs) supports and enhances the development of speaking skills. In the first section, we define the IGA. We then discuss recent research showing how IGAs promote focused student-student interactions. In the third section, we provide a blueprint for implementing the IGA in a standards-based thematic context. We conclude with content-based models from a thematic unit on Argentina that are appropriate for both secondary and post-secondary classrooms.

Introduction and Definitions: Task Performance, Research, and the IGA

IGAs are student-centered communicative tasks. One student, "A," has information that another student, "B," must obtain in order to complete a specific task. Students must then report on the findings of this task. The IGA is one of several performance-based strategies that have the potential to develop students' speaking abilities from Novice- to Intermediate- and to Advanced-level discourse.[1] We recommend that the IGA be used within a specific context, one that integrates the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (National Standards, 1999) with specific cultural content. A thematic unit becomes the central feature for class activities. Further, once practiced and having thus become a "known" technique, the IGA gives students a scaffolded point of departure for using all modes of communication in lesson activities.

We illustrate the benefits of the thematic IGA with examples taken from a unit created by the authors, "¡Ahora, Argentina!"[2] These models are easily adaptable to both local curricular needs as well as other languages. In these tasks, students *continually* respond to each other. They increase their individual in-class "air time" or frequency of second language (L2) use, and thus reduce their language anxiety (Wilbur, 2007). The extensive, mandatory, and repetitive nature of student rehearsal that is characteristic of the interpersonal IGA encourages movement toward an L2 "usage automaticity." This approach—vis-à-vis the presentational nature of traditional teacher-fronted classroom questions/responses, that do not afford all a mandatory role in oral/aural activities—provides an L2 experience where all students participate (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, on the "Atlas Complex"). They employ their background knowledge to respond with appropriate structures, such as discourse markers ("luego" or "primero," for example) that produce greater mean length of utterance. Students may even differentiate between types of interlocutors. They become familiar with different voices or accents in the class—and beyond—depending upon the creation of the particular IGA.[3] They thus transfer their partner-based, interpersonal discussions to a gradually increased presentational mode while engaged in thematically-related assignments.

Recent studies advocate the use of IGAs and similar strategies to promote language acquisition. Doughty and Pica (1986), Lee and VanPatten (2003), Lightbrown and Spada (1993), Pica (1992, 1994), and Porter (1986) view student-student tasks as more effective than teacher-fronted exercises in creating optimal conditions for student use of the target language. In IGAs, students ask for clarification, request information, and negotiate

meaning within a communicative context. Swain (1985, 1995, 2000) further argues that task-based activities—such as the dictogloss, in the case of "form consciousness," increase student-generated opportunities to produce meaningful output. She considers them to be a critical component of the language learning process, suggesting that producing language improves L2 skills in a three-step phase: students notices a gap in their L2 knowledge; thereupon, they modify their output in an attempt to communicate with an interlocutor; finally, they revise their hypotheses about the L2 after receiving feedback.

Based on these insights, we add the role of the automaticity feature of the IGA as a contributory force in L2 usage improvement. The interpersonal format of the IGA provides the learner increased linguistic confidence and builds good language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990) in a knowledge-specific and knowledge-limited, straightforward context. Students' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities are practiced, that is to say, within a clearly marked domain or aspect of the L2 culture. The connection between learning language usage as a technique and using the language itself produces better language.

Information Gap Activities: A Description and Blueprint for Creation

In performing an IGA, students are required to use the target language to acquire new, real knowledge. Figure 1, our first example, depicts how IGAs promote student interaction. Student A is a traveler who must make bus reservations from Buenos Aires (Capital Federal) to the city of Rosario. Student B, who "works at an information kiosk," must provide "A" with departure and arrival times as well as gate numbers at the Retiro Bus Terminal. "A," the student seeking the information completes a form created by the instructor. "B" has a second form containing the relevant data that is to be shared.[4]

Figure 1.

Student A (The Student who has the information)

Origen [Origin]	Destino [Destination]	Salida [Departure]	Llegada [Arrival]	Puerta [Gate]
Buenos Aires, Retiro	Rosario	0700h (sólo lunes y viernes)	1030h	8
Buenos Aires, Retiro	Rosario	0925h (todos los días)	1215h	4
Buenos Aires, Retiro	Rosario	1030h (sólo martes)	1415	6
Buenos Aires, Retiro	Rosario	0845h (todos los días)	1200h	3
Buenos Aires, Retiro	Rosario	0715h (sólo domingo)	1010h	7

Student B (The Student who must obtain the information)

Origen [Origen]	Destino [Destination]	Salida [Departure]	Llegada [Arrival]	Puerta [Gate]
Buenos Aires, Retiro	Rosario			

IGA Blueprint

In Figure 2, we provide the teacher with a five-step procedure for implementing an IGA. The example, "Buscando un departamento en Buenos Aires," is from our thematic unit on Argentina (see Appendices A and B).[5]

In Step One, we activate students' background knowledge to enhance their understanding of the content and the task. Students' background knowledge or schemata is accessed through a series of schema-building activities that introduce the topic of the IGA, the purpose and context of the interaction, and the intended outcomes. This first step should include authentic reading and listening tasks such as a short newspaper article or a video or audio segment. The instructor should then ask students to complete activities based on these authentic items in order to prepare them for the subsequent speaking task. These activities include completing a Venn diagram to compare and contrast cultural information, responding to a questionnaire, and filling in a chart with the correct information.[7]

Step 2: Provide students with a model

In the second step, the instructor provides students with a model IGA in preparation for the

Figure 2

Step 1. • Activate background knowledge to prepare students for the task. • State the purpose, context, and intended outcomes of the task.	Example. • Students read authentic apartment ads from a Buenos Aires newspaper.[6] • Students assume role as a real estate agent. Students then read about prospective clients and choose best apartment for each one. • Students describe their own ideal apartment. National Standards addressed are: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2 and 3.2.
Step 2. • Provide students with a model. • Direct students' attention to linguistic structures needed to complete the task. • Provide students with guided practice opportunities.	Example. • Students view video of a conversation between a client and a real estate agent. • The instructor reviews with students question formation and communication strategies. National Standards addressed are: 1.2, 2.1, and 4.1.
Step 3. • Establish a time limit. • Students perform the task. • Monitor student performance and provide assistance.	Example. • Class reviews directions for the IGA task. • Students complete the IGA task (See Appendices A and B). • The instructor reminds students to complete the chart with the correct information. National Standards addressed are: 1.1 and 1.2
Step 4. • Ask students to re-enact the task.	Example. • Students re-enact the conversation between the client and the real estate agent.
Step. 5 • Provide corrective feedback.	• The instructor provides students with feedback.

task. If this is the first time the students have performed an IGA, the instructor introduces them to IGA procedures in order to maximize student participation and L2 production. The instructor might want to show a video of students performing an IGA to reinforce the appropriate use of strategies to sustain L2 communication—such as how to negotiate meaning and how to circumlocute.

The instructor then directs students' attention to new language features and provides them with brief explicit instruction[8] in the use of the forms needed to perform the IGA. Students engage in guided practice.

Step 3: Students perform the task

The instructor establishes a specific time frame for task completion, monitors student performance of the IGA, and provides assistance.

Step 4: Comprehension-check activities

Students demonstrate their work through re-enacting the task for the entire class.

Step 5: Corrective feedback

The instructor provides students with corrective feedback. He or she can further have students demonstrate successful completion of the IGA through activities that require use of the new information.

Our final activity is designed so that students navigate the cityscape of Buenos Aires through its metro system for subsequent thematic assignments.

Conclusion

IGAs are one of several strategies that enhance students' oral abilities. Their use within a thematic context such as our unit on Argentina provides the instructor with a strategic, procedurally-sound approach for integrating both language and culture into the classroom while simultaneously adhering to the tenets of the National Standards. In addition to promoting improved language acquisition, research indicates that using IGAs has the potential to enhance motivation, which, in turn, further improves student achievement.[9]

Notes

1. Consult the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (1999) for a complete description of Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior level language performance.
2. The reader can contact the authors to obtain this thematic unit. See also Hernández and García (2006) for a discussion of the use of sponge activities within the context of a thematic unit on Argentina.

El subte de Buenos Aires

Student 1	*Student 2*
• You are a participant in a study abroad program in Buenos Aires and you want to use the subte to visit different places in Capital Federal. Your task is to ask for directions. Follow the model. Be sure to complete the chart (see Appendix C) with the directions.	• You are a native Argentine. A U.S. student will ask you for assistance with directions for the subte. Your task is to answer the student's questions using the subte map (see Appendix D). Follow the model.
Model: Estudiante [Student]: ¿Cómo voy desde la estación "Plaza Italia" hasta "Uruguay?" [How do I get from "Plaza Italia" to "Uruguay?"]	Model: Estudiante [Student]: ¿Cómo voy desde la estación "Plaza Italia" hasta "Uruguay?"
Argentino [Argentine]: Tiene que usar la D, dirección Catedral. Luego, tiene que tomar la combinación 9 de Julio, para la línea B, dirección Federico Lacroze. [You have to use line "D" toward "Catedral." Then you have to transfer to line "B" at "9 de Julio" going toward "Federico Lacroze."]	Argentino [Argentine]: Tiene que usar la D, dirección Catedral. Luego, tiene que tomar la combinación 9 de Julio, para la línea B, dirección Federico Lacroze. [You have to use line "D" toward "Catedral." Then you have to transfer to line "B" at "9 de Julio" going toward "Federico Lacroze."]

3. As part of our thematic unit, students visit www.radiomitre.com.ar to find out the weather forecast for Buenos Aires and other cities in Argentina.
4. Student "A" and Student "B" can then reverse roles with a new set of information.
5. The sequence of activities presented in this blueprint introduces students to renting an apartment in Buenos Aires. Extension activities include: students use the Internet to obtain information about apartments; students write an e-mail to an Argentine real estate agent and request information; students compare and contrast apartments in the United States and Argentina; and students this information to other classes. Together with the activities outlined in the IGA blueprint, these performance-based tasks encourage students to link language and culture as well as use the three modes of communication. National Standards addressed are: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 5.1
6. Activities are adapted from a thematic unit on renting an apartment in Paris that appears in Theisen (1997).
7. See Lee and VanPatten (2003) for additional information.
8. Recent research has found that brief explicit instruction is needed for students to acquire high levels of accuracy in the target language (DeKeyser, 1995, 1997; Robinson, 1996; 1997; Terrell, 1991; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993). In addition, researchers have demonstrated that students benefit from explicit instruction prior to communicative activities because such instruction assists them in activating their previous knowledge of the target structures and then focuses their attention on these forms (Cadierno, 1995; Hinkel & Fotos, 2002).
9. This approach will of course be beneficial to FL education majors who achieve "Advanced Low" on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview for their institution to meet ACTFL/ NCATE accreditation requirements (ACTFL Program Standards, 2002) and avoid the dilemma we often face of beginning FL teachers whose language skills are lacking (García & Petri, 2000).

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Biographical Statement

Paul A. García (Ph.D., University of Illinois), a Past President of ACTFL , NADSFL, ALL, and FLAM, is former FL supervisor of the Kansas City, Missouri, Schools (1973-98). A German/Spanish teacher since 1965, Paul retired in 2006 from the University of Kansas, where he taught FL/ESL methods. He is a new resident of Sarasota. He has presented over 100 workshops nationally and abroad; his publications have appeared in many journals. Paul serves as an adjunct at USF-Sarasota in the College of Education.

Todd A. Hernández (Ph.D., University of Kansas), is Assistant Professor at Marquette University, where he teaches Spanish and methods. He has presented workshops at regional and national meetings. His most recent publications appear in FL Annals and Vida Hispánica.

Appendix A. Buscando un departamento en Buenos Aires

Student 1

	Departamento 1 [Apartment 1]	*Departamento 2 [Apartment 2]*
Barrio [Barrio]		
Alquiler ($) [Rent]		
Dirección [Address]		
Muebles [Furniture]		
Aire acondicionado [Airconditioning]		
Número de ambientes [Number of rooms]		
Número de baños [Number of bathrooms]		
Metros cuadrados [Square meters]		
Teléfono [Telephone]		

Appendix B. Buscando un departamento en Buenos Aires

Student 2

Departamento 1: Barrio Norte. $700 por mes. 3 ambientes. 40m2. Aire acondicionado. 2 baños. No tiene muebles. Santa Fe 350. Tel: 3445-5287

[Apartment 1: Barrio Norte. $700 per month. 3 rooms. 40 square meters. Air conditioning. 2 bathrooms. Does not have furniture. Santa Fe 350. Telephone: 3445-5287.]

Departamento 2: Belgrano. $650 por mes. 2 ambientes. 38m2. Aire acondicionado. Amueblado. 1 baño. Las Heras 540. Tel: 4826-5230

[Apartment 2: Belgrano. $650 per month. 2 bedrooms. 38 square meters. Air conditioning. Furnished. 1 bathroom. Las Heras 540. Telephone: 4826-5230.]

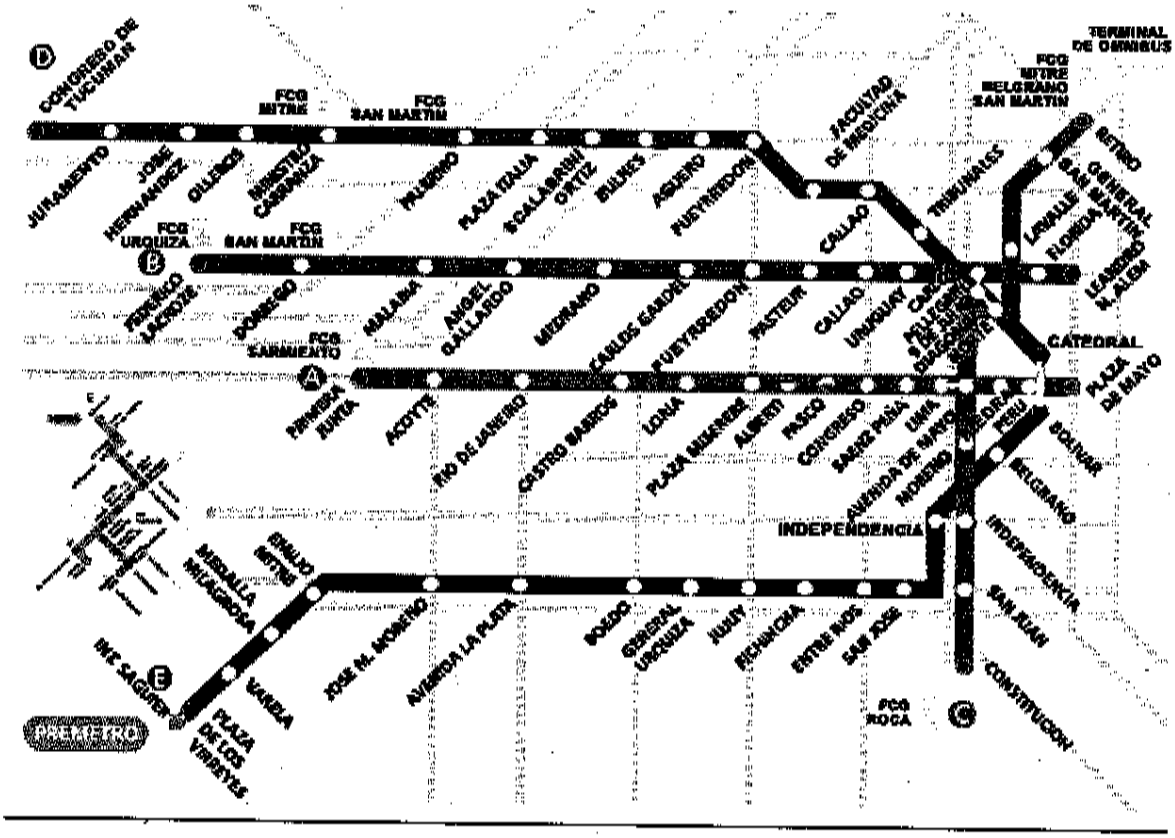
Appendix C. El subte de Buenos Aires

Student 1

Preguntas [Questions]	*Respuestas [Answers]*
1. ¿Cómo voy desde la estación "Retiro" hasta "Río de Janeiro?" [1. How do I get from "Retiro" to "Río de Janeiro?"]	1.
2. ¿Cómo voy desde la estación "Entre Ríos" hasta "Lavalle?" [2. How do I get from "Entre Ríos" to "Lavalle?"]	2.
3. ¿Cómo voy desde la estación "Catedral" hasta "San Juan?" 3. How do I get from "Catedral" to "San Juan?"]	3.

Appendix D. El subte de Buenos Aires

Student 2



Rebecca J. Blankenship

Mobile Phones and Language Learners in the Net Generation

This study examined the text messaging corpus generated by native and non-native learners of English during an in-class asynchronous tandem cultural activity using the Short Messaging Service (SMS) of their mobile phones. Participants in the study were high school Spanish students representing native and non-native speakers of English. Students were paired in native and non-native dyads and participated in a guided cultural activity in which cultural questions were presented for discussion via the text messaging function of their mobile phones. The messages were examined using the qualitative analysis techniques of word count and keywords-in-context. A corpus was then constructed to determine if students with different first languages communicated using a language particular to the text messaging environment. After navigating through a myriad of logistical and technical issues, the corpus generated indicated that, while students produced many clipped and phonetic spellings and letter-number combinations of standard English words (acronyms), language specific to the text messaging platform did not emerge as a result of these tandem activities.

Introduction

The Net Generation

An undeniable reality of life in the 21st century is the influence of technology over everyday activities. This is particularly true among teenage users of digital technologies. McKay, Thurlow, and Zimmerman (2003) characterized teens as "connected," "wired," and "networked" (p. 185), while Prensky (2001) suggested that today's young people are automatically born into the digital environment. Mckay and Thurlow (2003) contend that mobile phone use has become highly influential in the way that teenagers communicate. This is particularly true of high school students who seem to be the most plugged in, especially when it comes to mobile phones (Kim & Santiago, 2005). Hsi, Pinkard, and Woolsey (2005) even suggest that emerging technologies, such as those used to develop mobile phones, actually serve as a digital platform in which teens can explore and create different forms of self-expression. The popular use of text messaging language among teenagers is one example of this digital self-expression. As new mobile phone technologies continue to emerge and affect how teens self-express, understanding the language they use to communicate becomes increasingly important.

Building a corpus from high school language students' text messages

Educators have begun to examine the efficacy of using mobile phone and IM technologies in the foreign language classroom. While some studies have attempted to quantify the resultant level of proficiency or retention from these activities (Chung, 2005; Thornton & Houser, 2005), others have looked at how social identities evolve between native and non-native learners of a language using a qualitative methodology such as Discourse Analysis (Baron, 2004). Although these studies use various methodologies to examine the use of mobile phones

as a digital environment conducive for language learning, they do not actually examine the language used during the activities, particularly among high school aged language learners. The genesis of this study, then, was to mitigate this gap in the research addressing mobile phone use in the foreign language classroom.

This study addressed two central questions. The first question addressed compiling a corpus of text messaging language generated through a tandem text-messaging culture activity between native and non-native learners of English. The second question examined the corpus generated during these exchanges in order to determine if students deferred to the texting language in their responses to the prompt questions. Both of these questions were contextualized using a socio-historical perspective given the aforementioned technical and social communicative evolution of teenagers.

An Overview of Previous Studies

Earlier studies examining the use of either Instant Messaging (IM) or text messaging language and the pedagogical efficacy of using mobile phones in foreign language education were primarily conducted in Asia, Canada, and Europe (Chung, 2005; Thornton & Houser, 2005). These studies examined either the actual language acquisition (Thornton & Houser, 2005) or the negotiated discourse (Chung, 2005) through mobile phone, IM, and text messaging activities. Chung noted that, while chatting via IM, students were "creating" their own set of emoticons and were doing so to negotiate responses and situate themselves in relation to others. Her study demonstrated that native and non-native learners will develop some sort of negotiated language to effect communication in an environment (in this case digital) when neither language is particularly dominant. While some language specific to the text messaging environment was discussed in Chung's (2005) article, the idea that text messaging language is itself an actual language was not considered.

Thornton and Houser (2005) studied Japanese university students specifically examining how mobile phones were being used for language acquisition. They used a *push* protocol (review activities given at regular intervals using different contexts to encourage long-term retention) to transmit vocabulary review lessons to the mobile phone emails of English as a Foreign Language students. While positive acquisition did occur and students expressed, via survey, the importance of the mobility of the lessons to their practice and retention of vocabulary, the language used or developed by students that was particular to this type of digital lesson was not addressed.

Baron (2004), on the other hand, did look at the specific language used in IM. Baron noted gender differences in the IM messages and found that acronyms were used during the chats. She referred to them as "Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) Abbreviations" and referenced, via word count, the frequency of their use during the conversations. The acronyms she referenced were most frequently used by females in informal exchanges but were not user generated; rather, they came from the AIM acronym dictionary. While the findings of her corpus were instructive as to gender differences in IM chat, they failed to evidence any instances of user negotiated and created IM or texting language specific to a chat or messaging environment.

Thurlow's (2003) study, unlike Baron (2004), Chung (2005), and Thornton and Houser (2005), actually considered how British teenagers were manipulating text messaging language. What Thurlow found was that 61% of the message exchanges were used socially to maintain relationships while the remaining messages were used for informational purposes. His corpus was similar to Baron's evidencing the use of acronyms and letter-number homophone combinations. He concluded that the specific language used by teens while text messaging was really more a result of sociolinguistic language play than the evolution of a new digital language.

Theory

Since the historicity of interpersonal discourse and its affect on written and spoken language is of particular importance to second language research and foreign language pedagogy, employing a socio-historical Vygotskian perspective to examine a corpus of language unique to the digital environment was quiet appropriate for this study. Exploring how people adapt communication to a particular

technology (in this case, the text messaging feature of a mobile phone) is a reasonable exploration of the historical evolution in interpersonal communication. In her piece on Computer Mediated Discourse (CMD), Herring (2000) even suggested that the growth in research among these technologies demonstrates progression in understanding the social discursive significance that mobile and internet technologies have on interpersonal communication.

Method

Participants

Since the underlying rationale for this study is based on mobile phone use among teenagers, high school students were chosen as participants. The setting for this study was a large public school district in the southeastern United States where I am presently teaching Spanish. Student participants in this study were selected from my Spanish classes using a criterion-based non-random convenience sampling scheme (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, in press). Participants were selected based on the following five criteria: (a) native language, (b) enrollment in a Spanish level three or higher course, (c) access to a mobile phone with text messaging capabilities, (d) students over the age of 16, and (e) students in grade level higher than 9th grade. Four students (two females and two males) were selected to participate in the study based on these criteria.

The males represented a non-native speaker from Puerto Rico in the 12th grade (Alex) and a non-native speaker from the United States in the 11th grade (Bob). Bob reported his first language as American Sign Language and his second language as English (this did not present a problem for this activity since this student was bilingual and primarily communicated in English). Alex reported his first language as Spanish. Both students were enrolled in my Advanced Placement Spanish Language course. The females represented a 12th grade non-native speaking female participant from Puerto Rico who reported Spanish as her first language (Carly). The native speaking female participant was in the 11th grade and was from the United States (Denise). Carly was enrolled in my Advanced Placement Spanish Language course, and Denise was enrolled in my Spanish Level 3 course (see Figure 1).

The four participants were then paired in native and non-native speaking dyads. Each dyad had access to a mobile phone with text messaging capabilities and was familiar with mobile phone technologies and communicated regularly using text messaging. Accordingly, the dyads were Alex and Bob (male dyad) and Carly and Denise (female dyad).

Instruments

Cultural prompt questions were given to participants prior to the activity. These questions were presented in English. Since I was examining if native and non-native learners of English were interacting using the language particular to text messaging, the prompts were presented in English. The questions related to a current issue in Hispanic culture. The text messaging activity took place during a regular class time using the text messaging feature of a mobile phone as the communication medium. Each activity was to last a minimum of 15 minutes during which time participants dialogued based on the cultural issue presented in each prompt question.

Procedure

Activities occurred one day per week over a nine week period during regular class time. Participants were physically separated in different classrooms during each instance. A total of nine interactions across nine weeks took place. One participant in the

Figure 1. Participants by demographic information.

Gender	*Age*	*Grade*	*NS/NNS*	*Ethnicity*	*Nat. Lang.*	*Course*
Alex	17	12	NNS	Hispanic	Spanish	AP
Bob	16	11	NNS	White	ASL	AP
Carly	17	12	NNS	Hispanic	Spanish	AP
Denise	16	11	NS	White	English	LV3

dyad was responsible for sending all of the unedited messages to my district email. The messages were then copied and pasted from email to a Microsoft Word (Microsoft, 2003) document and then into Nvivo version 7.0 (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2007) for further evaluation. Nvivo is a facilitative software product designed for qualitative data analysis that enables the researcher to examine text and categorize emergent themes.

Analysis

After preliminary analysis, it was determined that word count query and keywords-in-context would be used to understand the significance of textual attributes that the dyads used to answer the cultural prompt questions (Spradley, 1979). Since the purpose of the tandem activity was to examine emergent text messaging language, coding themes *a priori* was not efficacious to the study's design. As such, a variable-oriented analysis was conducted in place of *a priori* coding since of interest was the relationship between and among well defined textual attributes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The variables under consideration were messages containing instances of "texting language" and any instances of "participant created text language." "Texting language" is any language used in an SMS platform that is not acronymic or phonetically spelled English. "Participant created text language" is any text messaging language specifically re-created by end-users during a particular exchange. By examining the data in this way, it was hoped that instances of language other than standard English or previously categorized text messaging language (referencing the corpora of Thurlow and Baron) would emerge in the tandem exchanges. Thus, any categorization of the text messaging language occurring in these exchanges would, of necessity, occur *a posteriori* to the data analysis.

Results

Initial examination of the forwarded emails suggested that, based on the parameters of this particular activity, a very minimal corpus would be produced. Situational issues, such as signal dropping and incompatible mobile phone plans, contributed to data loss and legitimacy issues concerning the internal trustworthiness of the text messages. Other legitimation issues arising from technical problems would also have to be addressed and included such concerns as data saturation and participant fatigue. It was further determined, based on these technological and legitimation concerns, that forcing pre-determined categories on the data would hinder rather than facilitate thematic coding of the text messages. However, after initial examination of the messages, it was determined that the text language could be preliminarily evaluated but no substantive corpus would be generated as initially hoped with concomitant codes and patterns as evidenced in the corpora of Thurlow and Baron.

The results of the tandem activities produced text messages that I examined at the word level. I based this examination on a word count query that I conducted using NVivo version 7.0 (QSR International, 2007), focusing the attention on word instances that met two main criteria: (a) frequency and (b) non-standard English. Since I did not establish *a priori* categories for the corpus, I looked to the actual word count to guide the choice of categories to inform the corpus. I noted instances of single-letters, letter-number combinations, and clipped spellings that suited the selection criteria. I also noted a significant amount of phonetically spelled words and included them in the selection. I then constructed a preliminary corpus, turning the instances into categories and noting the frequency of their occurrence across the messages selected for examination. After completing the preliminary corpus, I went back to the corpora of Thurlow (2003) and Baron (2004) to compare if these findings were in anyway similar. Thus, coding, of necessity, occurred *a posteriori* to data analysis.

I found the corpus to be quite similar to Thurlow's (2003). He particularly focused at the word level, as I did, and our category selections were similar as well. I was hoping to find specific instances of the use of text messaging language as the native and non-native speaker dialogued over the course of the tandem activity. Contrarily, the corpus revealed only one instance *(lol)* of text messaging language and that language was really part of the acronyms typical of a texting or IM discussion. Instead, the dyad, especially at the end of the activity, used more standard English. I then concluded that they

deferred to standard English because of the more academic content of the cultural questions; this was most evident from the first to the last activity as noted in the results.

Finally, as a result of the aforementioned technical difficulties, the text messages examined for this study came from the interactions in the female dyad. The male dyad, while participating in the initial four weeks of the activity, was unable to continue due to one of the males losing phone privileges as a result of a disciplinary infraction at home. A substitution was not made resulting in data being gathered only from the female dyad. Thus, no assignment of gender specificity to any of the text messages and text messaging language could be made eliminating the possibility of looking for gender based themes or making gender comparisons.

In summation, a total of 93 text messages representing 2,320 words were received from the female dyad. Only a certain number of those messages were actually examined in NVivo for word count query and keyword-in-context. Since the objective of the study was to look at the specific texting language used, messages that were not considered included: (a) sent messages that included the grammatically correct prompt question, (b) duplicated messages, and (c) messages that had no instance of texting language. After excluding these three types of messages, the total number of messages considered for examination was 34 representing 118 words. While this number was certainly disappointing from the standpoint of generating a substantive corpus, it did inform me as to future designs and the potential for additional research.

The word count query revealed that the female dyad used an insignificant amount of language particular to the text messaging environment. The texting language used, upon examination, tended to demonstrate machinations of phonetically spelled English and letter-number spelling combinations as observed and previously thematically coded by Thurlow (2003). This result was disappointing from the standpoint of building a corpus of language unique to this activity and these students. Instances of non-standard English (i.e., clipped English or letter-number combinations) dominated the messages, particularly those of the non-native English speaker. Also, most of the messages that could be examined for potential occurrences of text messaging language occurred at the beginning of the activity representing 27 messages and 214 words in the first activity alone. Additional messages were not concentrated on one particular day but, rather, were spread across the remaining eight weeks. This result was significant because it suggested that the female participants became fatigued and their answers became more technical. Below is an example of the fatigue-clinical answer combination noted in week 7:

Female Dyad, Week 8 Exchange

Should local businesses be penalized for hiring illegal workers?

DENISE: How should businesses be penalized for illegal workers?

CARLY: I think they should have a time limit before they get penalized because people do need jobs...

DENISE: Many people do not know the regulations on living here and...

CARLY: ...its not like its written everywhere forIto know the rules they just want 2be free...

DENISE: Im pretty sure they know if they are being smuggled here that there doing something wrong

Of particular note is the significant drop off on the part of the non-native English speaker in the use of clipped spellings and letter-number combinations. In the first week's exchange, she used 57 clipped spellings and letter combinations. By the week 8 exchange, she only used 8.

The word count revealed that the majority of the language used in these text message exchanges was either clipped English, numbers used to represent words, or phonetic spellings, categories that have been established in previous studies. Examination of the instances in the first exchange evidenced only one use of an actual word unique to the text messaging environment (lol) for the expression "laugh out loud"). The remaining instances were either clipped or phonetic spellings (see Appendix B). For example, rather than say "that," the dyad chose "dat." The intentional substitution of "d" for "th"

was also noted in "da" for "the" and "deir" for "their." The numbers "1" and "2" were used to substitute for actual spellings of "one" and "to" or "too" and single letters ("b," "r," and "y") were used in substitution of actual spellings of "be," "are," and "why" as well. The only letter-number combinations used were combinations using the numbers "1" and "2" (note "2gether" for "together" and "ever1" for "everyone"). Below is a sample exchange from the first week:

Female Dyad, Week 1

In your view, should the United States declare English as the official language?

DENISE: In your view, should the u.s. declare english the official language?

CARLY: Ther r 2 many different lang wher u just cant take that away 4m pp

DENISE: I agree with you i think that english is spoken just as much as spanish is so it wouldn't be fair. We should just stay...

CARLY: Not evry body is da same and u just have 2 accpt it

DENISE: Exactly people should just get used to our diversity

Since the word count revealed that the female dyad minimally used language specific to the text messaging environment (i.e., lol), it was important to understand what type of language they used to answer the cultural prompt questions. Returning to Baron's initial findings, females tended to be more grammatically correct paying greater attention to form, particularly if the messages were more business rather than personal. Examination of the messages sent by the female dyad substantiated this initial claim of Baron's. Primarily, they used more clipped and letter-number combination spellings than grammatically correct English. As the activity progressed, subject fatigue and technical issues generated much more structured dialogue than answers in the first exchange.

After the word count, the keyword-in-context protocol was used to clarify exactly the type of language being used. In other words, by looking at the text around the language, I was able to best determine if the language was clipped, phonetic, or letter-number (categories set previously by Thurlow). This protocol was not used to set domains for future analyses; its entire purpose was to ferret out how the language was being used by the female dyad. For example, I specifically looked at less obvious (like single letters or numbers) language. In one exchange, the dyad was discussing question 3 regarding the effect that illegal immigration had over the United States' economy. The exchange went as follows:

Female Dyad, Week 3

How does illegal immigration hurt/help the United States' economy?

DENISE: Exactly they give a great deal to our economy and dont get much

CARLY: True w o them i donno where the economy would b

DENISE: I agree with you and i feel bad that they get treated so badly

CARLY: They help w da work but they also harm w da bad habits dey bring he which gives them a bad rep

Here, I used the surrounding words and context of the exchange to determine that: (a) the single letter combination of w and o indicated the preposition without, (b) donno was an intentional misspelling of "don't know," and (c) the single letter b was used as a clipped spelling of the verb "be." I further noted that the non-native speaker used da to refer to "the" and dey to refer to "they."

Interestingly, most of this word usage came from Carly, the native speaker of Spanish. The native speaker of English, Denise, actually used more grammatically correct phrasing (sans the occasional capitals and appropriate punctuation) from the beginning of the activity. She really never deviated to clipped spellings or letter-number combinations throughout the duration of the activity. This was unexpected, particularly since I have frequently observed Denise using texting language on different occasions outside of the constraints of this activity. I preliminarily concluded, then, that at least one female in the dyad (Denise, the native English speaker) reverted to more academic English as a result of the more structured activity as observed in prior research

(i.e., Baron, 2004). A sample exchange from week 4 is noted below to illustrate this pattern:

Female Dyad, Week 4

Should the United Nations take a more active role to control illegal immigration?

CARLY: Should da united nation take a more active role in controlling illegal immigrants

DENISE: I think that someone needs to take responsibility and do the job but i don't care who

CARLY: I think dat in every part of da world dere is img problems and dat everı needs 2 think and

DENISE: I agree with you it isn't just one persons problem

At this point, I was left with understanding why Carly used more clipped words and letter-number combinations than Denise in this activity. As previously noted, I am the classroom teacher of the participants in this study. I was able to observe their communication habits, both verbal and written, during and outside of class times. Of note were the pronunciation differences of academic English between Carly and Denise. Carly tended to pronounce "th" as "d." Interestingly, much of the phonetic spellings Carly used during the activity featured this phonetic spelling, and the spellings reflected her pronunciation patterns. Thus, the lack of texting language may have resulted from not only the structure of the activity but also the speaking patterns of the non-native English speaker.

Finally, in answering the research question based on these preliminary findings, it would be unreasonable to suggest, that for this activity and study, that native and non-native learners were using a language particular to the digital platform of the text messaging feature of their mobile phones. Rather, the language they used has been documented in previous studies as an acronymic version of the English language. But, there was a potential, if a less structured design was used and I had unfettered access to their text message exchanges, to create a corpus of language used by native and non-native learners of a language as they negotiate communication in a digital environment.

Discussion

While the study here was disappointing from the standpoint of generating a corpus of actual text messaging language, it did reveal that, in order to construct a substantive corpus, the study needed to be reconceptualized and perhaps approached initially as a pilot study. What the corpus did provide was an indication of areas for further research. Although participants appropriately reflected the demographics of the typical foreign language classroom in the high school used in this study, in future studies, I would not choose to set such a structured activity or use any activity at all. The initial reason for designing the study around these tandem exchanges was to maintain a locus of control over the students to glean consistent data, not to encourage language acquisition. In reality, that control undermined the results. What I needed instead was unfettered access to their text messages sent via mobile phone which I considered, at the beginning of the study, to be an unmanageable task. However, in retrospect, I would have designed the study in such a way that would have enabled me to gain the access to the unstructured text messaging conversations typical of today's high school student. By so doing, a more relevatory corpus of text messaging language would be generated to better explain how native and non-native speakers of English communicate in the digital world.

While I was not interested in the participants' acquisition of Spanish, the results were instructive as to the pervasive influence technology has had not only on the foreign language student but also on the foreign language classroom. As more students and educators embrace mobile technologies, the potential for more foreign language instruction to be conducted in a mobile environment is a definite area for future research. As Herring (2000) suggested, the very fact that these internet and mobile technologies exist provide language researchers with an opportunity to not only examine language use within a certain technological media but also to address implications of this language use in second language and pedagogical research. Of course, implicated in the use of these technologies are the

communicative methods preferred by end-users (a more sociolinguistic aspect that could be looked at in future studies), and it is certainly to the benefit of all users to understand the language used to communicate across different platforms. The design and results of this study were carried out in such a way as to inform the research question and provide a venue for future research in the area of mobile phones and foreign language education.

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Biographical Statement

Rebecca Blankenship is a doctoral student in the SLA/IT Doctoral Program at the University of South Florida. Her areas of interest are politics and second language learning and activity theory as it relates to mobile technologies in foreign language pedagogy and education. She is presently serving as the Department Chair of Fine Arts and World Languages at Brandon Senior High School. This is her 11th year in foreign language education in the public schools

Appendix A

Corpus of Instances of Clipped English, Letter-Number Combinations, and Phonetic Spellings from Tandem Cultural Dyadic Activity

Word Instance	*Clipped English*	*Letter-Number Combo*	*Phonetic Spelling*	*Number of Instances*
1		x		2
no1		x		1
sever1		x		3
2		x		13
2gether		x		1
acpt	x			1
b			x	2
bak			x	1
bc	x			7
da			x	15
dat			x	9
dats			x	2
deir			x	7
dey			x	13
dint			x	1
dis			x	1
donno			x	1
dere			x	1
havta			x	1
likd	x			1
lol				2
kno			x	4
noder			x	1
payd			x	1
ppl				1

Jeffra Flaitz

How Schools Back Home Affect Classrooms Here

This article highlights some of the cultural differences that can impact student-student, student-teacher, and student-administrator, as well as parent-school personnel interactions when English Language Learners enter schools in the United States. Because both groups possess vital background information on cultural differences, ESOL teachers and Foreign Language teachers make ideal partners for becoming critical advocates for their ESOL students. This collaboration can enhance all content teachers' understanding of how schools back home affect classrooms here for English Language Learners.

It comes as little surprise to educators to learn from the Center for Applied Linguistics (2003) that English Language Learners (ELLs) now comprise the fastest growing segment of the U.S. elementary and secondary student population. Over the decade spanning 1992 to 2002, U.S. public schools experienced a 96% increase in ELL enrollment. Fifteen states reported their ELL population grew by 200% (CAL, 2003). Despite the fallout from 9/11, community colleges and universities in the U.S. are also welcoming hundreds of thousands of ELLs to their programs (IIE, 2004). Some 572,590 international students were studying in U.S. institutions of higher education in 2004, a drop of only 2.4% over the previous year. Over 43,000 of those students were enrolled in Intensive English Programs (IIE).

I have been investigating the impact of this trend on classrooms in the United States and lay out my findings in a new book, *Understanding Your Refugee and Immigrant Students: An Educational, Cultural, and Linguistic Guide*, published by University of Michigan Press (2006). Eight colleagues from USF's English Language Institute and I researched and co-authored an earlier volume called *Understanding Your International Students: An Educational, Cultural, and Linguistic Guide* (2003).

The information and insights I have gained from my research strike me as critical knowledge not just for teachers of ELLs, but for all instructors in the U.S. educational system, regardless of the subject matter they teach. We would all be well advised to pay attention to the changes in the make-up of today's student population. In most schools, however, it is the (often solitary) teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) who is primarily charged with the responsibility of equipping the members of the burgeoning ELL population with the linguistic skills needed to succeed in school and beyond the classroom. It is important to note, however, that the ESOL teacher's effectiveness in the classroom does not rest exclusively on his or her technical knowledge of the English language, nor how to develop proficiency in it among ELLs. ESOL teachers also rely on their understanding of the educational and cultural environments in which their students were initially schooled, and they try to uncover and pay attention to the expectations that their ELLs bring to the classroom with regard to teachers, schools, and learning in general.

Foreign language teachers, too, are prepared through their formal training as well as their interpersonal associations with people from

other countries to appreciate the role of culture in communication. Many have learned from first-hand experience that the conventions of an unfamiliar culture almost always differ in some way from one's native culture, and that the adjustment tends to take a toll on the newcomer. The skill sets that Foreign Language teachers naturally develop through a plethora of cross-cultural experiences complement their formal knowledge of the second language acquisition process, making them ideal partners for their ESOL peers and critical advocates for ELLs.

ESOL and Foreign Language teachers may set the standard for working with ELLs, but their content area peers have as many opportunities and as much responsibility for educating these young learners in as optimal a learning environment as possible. In other words, all teachers benefit from understanding how schools back home affect classrooms here, for, clearly, educational practices, policies, and perceptions vary from one country to the next and constitute a critical framework for learning.

In El Salvador as well as Somalia, for example, one of the teacher's roles is to teach students how to behave. Discipline is thought to begin at school and to be reinforced at home, not the other way around. Thus, the warm and patient U.S. teacher may struggle to gain the respect of students who expect severity from him or her. Ethiopian students likewise navigate the teacher-student relationship much differently from their U.S. peers. At home a student selected by his or her classmates "rides herd" over the other students, disciplining peers and advising the teacher on how to manage the problems of certain students. The cultural norm of group orientation and loyalty among Cuban students leads them to expect teachers and peers to help and care for each other more than is the case in the U.S. where individualism, competition, and time consciousness diminishes the development of interdependence.

The amount and nature of prior formal education students have may also shed light on the behavior and performance of ELLs. Due to widespread child labor practices set in motion by grinding poverty in Guatemala, many children do not attend school or do so only intermittently; they work and earn money for the family instead. By adulthood most Guatemalans have acquired only 3.5 years of education (Nationmaster.com, 2005). Moreover, since the majority of Guatemalan immigrants to the U.S. are of Mayan origin, their first language may not be Spanish. Indeed, if they attended school back home at all, the language of instruction—Spanish—may have been as much an obstacle to learning in Guatemalan classrooms as English is to them today in U.S. classrooms. In Liberia almost all the schools were destroyed during the country's 15-year civil war. Not only was the schooling of children interrupted, but young boys were recruited as soldiers. Teachers should realize that some students from these environments may not know how to hold a pencil let alone how to selectively apply formal study skills and academic learning strategies to the tasks they face at school.

Anticipating differences in grading and evaluation practices can also help the teacher prepare students for the assessment process. Students from Ecuador, for example, are familiar with a grading scale that ranges from 0 to 20 (International Association of Universities, 2003). Unless the teacher explains the U.S. scale, those unaccustomed to the 0-100 range might initially fail to distinguish the critical difference between a 60 (pass) and a 50 (fail). The color of ink used to grade homework is another school culture practice that can vary across cultures. In fact, teachers may want to avoid using red ink to grade their Korean students' papers as it is the color in which the names of deceased ancestors are written, and thus signifies death. In Poland classmates bond so strongly that they may work together to devise strategies to "outsmart the system." Cheating on tests is not sanctioned, yet it is widely adopted as a self-protective mechanism. To students from India, tests tend to take on much greater importance than they do to their U.S. counterparts. Many Indian parents invest huge amounts of time and sometimes accrue large debts to support their children's education. To them academic achievement is one of the highest forms of self-actualization, and their children fear their disappointment. In some Moroccan schools, advancement of a student to the next academic level may be the outcome of group consensus. While in a U.S. setting a student's grade point average may determine promotion to the next grade, many Moroccan teachers rely on collective

decision-making amongst themselves as the strategy for advancing students. Indeed, sometimes this practice leads students to attempt to negotiate their grades! Teachers of Ukrainian students shouldn't automatically assume that a gift presented to them the day before final exams represents a similar attempt to influence the grading process and the teacher. End-of-school-year trinkets are common tokens of appreciation for the teacher's help, support, and kindness—that is to say, they are unlikely to be bribes.

ESOL and Foreign Language teachers are usually well aware of the fact that communication styles also vary across cultures. Learning more about how our ELLs have been taught to view and use certain classroom-based communication strategies can potentially ease the stress of ELLs as well as their teachers. In Afghanistan, for example, where storytelling (especially in the general absence of televisions and DVD players) is a form of recreation, the audience is not expected to sit passively but is encouraged to shout approval or dissent. Unless the teacher knows about this tradition, an Afghani student's unsolicited participation during teacher-centered presentations may be interpreted as inappropriate, rather than as a normal, turn-taking behavior. Iran provides another contrast as far as communication styles are concerned. There, classes last for 80 to 90 minutes; this is the teacher's—and only the teacher's—time to speak. However, Iranian students are expected to take advantage of the break between classes to bombard the teacher with questions and requests for clarification. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, can also affect the communication patterns of ELLs. Students from the former Yugoslavia, for example, who have witnessed atrocities or experienced humiliation at the hands of authorities, may distrust teachers and therefore be unwilling to participate in class activities or disclose essential information about their home life to school counselors or health clerks. PTSD can also cause some students to "act out" and become disruptive in class.

While U.S. teachers are, unfortunately, sometimes treated with disdain by their students, teachers in many other cultures are revered. Filipino teachers earn the admiration of students and parents by frequently helping with the purchase of notebooks, pencils, and erasers, all the while being severely underpaid when they are paid at all. Parents of Filipino students in the U.S. may thus assume that teachers do the same, and may offer gifts and lavish praise for the "sacrifices" they perceive the teachers to have made on their children's behalf. On the other hand, in Indonesia, where poor working conditions and low salaries discourage all but the weakest college students from pursuing a career in education, teachers are less highly regarded. For somewhat different reasons, Russian students may expect more of their U.S. teachers. At home, where academic standards are high, they face hours of nightly homework, and in class they are expected to recite from long memorized texts. Russian learners sometimes view the tendency of U.S. teachers to accommodate students as overly indulgent and even insulting. As for Indian parents, they may expect to be involved in their children's learning, but Hmong parents consider such activity to be more akin to interference. Moreover, not only are Hmong parents unlikely to have the skills in English needed to help their children with homework, but they may not possess academic learning skills or literacy skills in their native language.

No discussion of cultural differences is complete without reference to non-verbal communication, and so it is within the context of the multicultural classroom. Teachers should understand that laughter, for example, among Chinese students can as much represent amusement as it can embarrassment, surprise, or fear. A Dominican student who wrinkles her nose in response to a request may be telling the teacher that she doesn't understand, not that she doesn't want to carry out the task. For a Honduran student, a graded essay casually slid across the seminar table may cause unintended offense as Hondurans tend to expect their teachers to physically handle their written work with respect.

Acknowledging that schools back home do affect classrooms here is a significant first step for teachers who are often overwhelmed by the struggle to accommodate international, refugee, and immigrant students. Embracing the possibility that student behavior can be illuminated by learning more about the circumstances in which they were initially

schooled benefits both teachers and students in the following ways.

- It helps us help our students realize their academic goals
- It demystifies student behavior as we strive to view it through the lens of the learner's culture
- It validates the student and his/her educational and personal history
- It makes way for identification of students' hidden expertise and prior experience
- It increases the student's sense of belonging and reduces isolation
- It increases and improves interaction between mainstream and ELL students
- It builds trust and confidence in the teacher and school
- It equips teachers with the means to develop more effective lessons and assessments
- It paves the way for better communication with parents
- It inhibits the development of prejudice among mainstream students

Our discussion so far has focused on ELLs and their ESOL, Foreign Language, and content area teachers, but other school personnel (such as administrators, counselors, health clerks, security officers, and cafeteria and maintenance staff) as well as mainstream students and their families also play key roles in creating and preserving an optimal learning environment. ESOL and Foreign Language teachers are perfectly positioned for sharing their insights with these others formally through workshops and even discussions at the water cooler and informally through invitations to participate in collaborative school-wide cross-cultural student projects or after-school events for parents of ELLs.

Happily, learning begets more learning. Initially, we may simply be content to expect cultural differences when working with ELLs, only to discover as we negotiate these differences how satisfying and useful each inevitable "ah ha" moment can be, and how such experiences lead us to a more energized involvement in proactively searching for answers to the question "How do schools back home affect classrooms here?"

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Biographical Statement

Dr. Flaitz is an Associate Professor of Linguistics at the University of South Florida where she also co-directs the PhD program in Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology. Here degrees include an undergraduate in Russian Language and a master's and a Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education. She is currently on sabbatical to pursue research.

Karen Verkler

A Blueprint for a Standards-Driven and Communicatively-Based Foreign Language Methods Summer Institute

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 specifies steps for the improvement of K-12 schools while ensuring the successful scholarship of each student. Two of the mandates of the legislation pertain to foreign language instruction and the dire need to produce highly credentialed educators. The act calls for special initiatives to hasten the training of highly qualified mid-career professionals in the field of education, affording them certification in a timely fashion. Such initiatives include "intensive foreign language programs for professional development" (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). A large, metropolitan Central Florida university has developed such a program by means of an intensive, 6-day foreign language methods summer institute, scheduled during teachers' summer break to accommodate preservice and inservice educators throughout Florida. Couched in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999), the highly interactive, secondary-level institute is described within this article.

Introduction

The State of Florida is currently in the position of having to respond simultaneously to several mandates that ultimately demand the accelerated certification of individuals seeking a teaching license in the field of foreign language education. The No Child Left Behind Act calls for intensive foreign language professional development training (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, Sec. 5493). More specifically, this legislation describes the need "to encourage the development and expansion of alternative routes to certification under State-approved programs that enable individuals to be eligible for teacher certification within a reduced period of time" (Section 2311).

Another legislative move resulted in the Title XLVIII K-20 Education Code, Chapter 1007 Articulation and Access (Florida Department of Education, 2003), which calls for a seamless articulation of the K-20 curricula, including foreign languages. To address this statute, the number of qualified foreign language teachers has to dramatically increase. In addition, the Florida Constitutional Amendment No. 9 mandates smaller class sizes, resulting in a need for additional teachers in all disciplines, including foreign language.

The lack of properly credentialed foreign language teachers is dire, given the extended status (1984-1991, 2001-2007) of foreign language on the list of critical teacher shortage areas. The number of foreign language education graduates statewide does not even come close to filling the number of teachers needed in this area, given that the number of foreign language education graduates from Florida public universities over the last 5 years averaged only 25 per year. In addition, approximately 8% of all currently practicing foreign language teachers lack proper credentials.

Although there are currently several options that can be pursued in attaining foreign language

certification in Florida, methodology courses are still among the requisites within those options. Most foreign language pedagogical training is offered by school districts, colleges, or universities during the fall and spring semesters, rendering the completion of certification requirements difficult for in-service teachers trying to fit this requirement into already hectic schedules. To rectify this situation, the foreign language education program at a large metropolitan Central Florida university developed an intensive summer institute that is open to its own foreign language education undergraduates as well as in-service teachers seeking alternative certification or re-certification. To accommodate the schedules of as many of the state's in-service foreign language teachers as possible, the 6-day institute begins on the Monday following the last teacher attendance date.

The institute addresses strategies that are developmentally appropriate for secondary-level students. Its curriculum, the highlights of which are described in this paper, are heavily aligned with the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999), the foundation upon which the state-mandated Florida Sunshine State Standards for foreign languages were built. The primary text of the institute is Teacher's Handbook: Contextualized Language Instruction by Shrum and Glisan (2005). The curriculum also incorporates cognitive processing activities built upon the precepts of brain-based research.

Since the conceptual framework of the university's college of education is the development of reflective, facilitative practitioners, my role as the course instructor models that philosophy. The institute is thus replete with highly participatory activities in which the students, with purpose and reflection, teach each other a large percentage of the content. I facilitate comprehension by providing any necessary clarification of concepts. The course content is taught, practiced, and applied in activities and assignments within class time, a process that has proven to be time-efficient while enhancing student understanding and retention.

Day 1

Curricular Infusion of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning

After showing my students the video entitled *The Five Cs: The Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1998), I engage them in a discussion regarding the National Standards as constituting the foundation of the Sunshine State Standards for foreign language instruction. The National Standards of Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities directly translate into the strands of the Florida's Sunshine State Standards, which delineate expected student behaviors that are to be demonstrated in each discipline at each developmental level. Each Sunshine State Standard *strand*, or label for a category of knowledge, bears a name equivalent to the National Standards, with the exception of *Communities*, which is identified as *Experiences*. *Communication* relates to any activity designed to enhance student discourse in the language. The strand of *Culture* emphasizes the need to infuse culture into language teaching. According to the strand of *Connections*, instruction needs to include the integration of other disciplines into the foreign language curriculum to demonstrate the interrelatedness and, hence, relevance, of different content areas. By making *Comparisons* with aspects of other cultures, educators can scaffold new information on familiar experiences, rendering course content more comprehensible to students. The frequently neglected strand of *Experiences* provides students the opportunity to utilize the language outside of class through rich, communicatively-based extension activities. Conversely, this strand also implies bringing the target language into the classroom by means of speakers, Internet broadcasts, etc.

My students learn how to match their lesson objectives to the more specific benchmarks, the performance-based, measurable components of the Sunshine State Standards. To afford my students practical experience in referencing the Sunshine State Standards when developing their curriculum, I assign them to five-person collaborative groups responsible for textbook analysis. In this exercise, each group analyzes a chapter of a high school

textbook for its inclusion of activities that address the student competencies delineated by the Sunshine State Standards. If a standard has been overlooked in the chapter, the students are required to develop activities that would afford the inclusion of that standard.

Day 2

Teaching the Text Backwards

The traditional means by which to teach a text involves following the chapters sequentially throughout the text, and progressing from the beginning of the chapter to the end of the chapter. This procedure typically entails first reading the text of the chapter, answering the study questions at the end of the chapter, discussing the material in class, and then doing selected applications based on the material of the chapter. However, the activities that tend to be most contextualized, hands-on, and meaningful are frequently found in the real-life application enrichment or extension activities at the back of the chapter. According to Jameson (1998), the traditional way of teaching a text runs contrary to three principles that enhance second language learning: render the content more comprehensible (Krashen, 1982), increase student-student and student-teacher interaction (Swain, 1985), and incorporate cognitive and study skills (Cummins, 1981).

The process of teaching the text backwards addresses the above conditions. Jameson (1998) suggests that instruction begin by introducing the new content in a participatory, concrete manner that approximates real-life situations. The rich, highly contextualized extension activities at a chapter's conclusion often serve as good resources for introductory exercises. Second, engage students in discourse about the introductory exercises and have them hypothesize different scenarios. Ensure repetition of the vocabulary and concepts, relating them to the students' needs and interests. Third, teach students how to identify the main ideas of the chapter by perusing the chapter's study questions, headings, subheadings, and illustrations. This strategy, which addresses the higher order thinking skill of prediction, teaches students the valuable study skill of previewing material to increase its comprehension. The final step of teaching the text backwards has students actually reading the chapter so that they can respond to the study questions. Given that the students have already had ample time to apply the chapter vocabulary and concepts in numerous contextualized, real-life ways, this final task should merely serve as a chapter review.

Once I familiarize my students with teaching the text backwards, they are divided into same-language groups. Provided with a foreign language secondary textbook, they select a chapter and follow the above procedures for teaching their chapter backwards. They attempt to make the content more comprehensible by the addition of contextual clues, such as concrete referents. They seek to address the standard of *Culture* by incorporating realia, much of which can be easily obtained via the Internet. To enhance the transfer of skills to real-life situations, which will address the Community standard, they develop activities that apply the concept taught in a concrete, real-life way. Using cognitive organizers, they attempt to find *Connections* between the main ideas promoted in the chapter. The final product, which they then share with the class, encompasses a sequence of highly contextualized, culturally-rich, interdisciplinary, and authentic activities that could constitute a highly interactive, communicatively-based unit.

Lesson Planning

Since interdisciplinary planning is emphasized across the curriculum, it would be negligent not to include it in lesson planning. Referencing the *Connections* strand of the National Standards, I teach the use of semantic mapping to link related themes, vocabulary, and ideas to the main topic of a lesson. My students are directed to create an interdisciplinary lesson plan, as the relevancy of a topic increases when students are exposed to that topic in numerous different settings (Burton, 2001; Flint, 2000).

In addition to drawing from other disciplines when designing their lessons, my students must also integrate technology into their activities. Both the National Educational Technology Standards (ISTE, 2000) and the Standards for Foreign Language Learning are shaping current foreign language

instruction. Curricular integration of technology as a means to address these standards is increasing in popularity, as educators become more willing to serve as facilitators and learn from their students, many of whom are more computer literate than they.

To give my students a sampling of technological curricular integration, I set up several technology stations around the periphery of the classroom. During the course of the institute, students work their way through the different stations at their own pace. At each station, they complete exercises illustrative of technology as an instructional tool.

The stations deal with the following topics: (a) keypals (email penpals), (b) the Sunshine State Standards, (c) software selection, (d) foreign language resources, (e) foreign language professional organizations, and (f) Inspiration, an instructional, graphic organizer software program. The students progress from one station to another during breaks throughout theinstitute, after which they reflect on their favorite use of technology, why it was their favorite, and how they can apply it in their own classrooms.

After familiarizing my students with the Sunshine State Standards, interdisciplinary planning, technological integration, and strategies to enhance the comprehensibility of their lessons, I teach them how to design a detailed, comprehensive lesson plan. While learning how to write measurable, performance-based objectives, students are challenged to address as many of the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives as possible: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This hierarchical taxonomy of cognitive processing is the most widely utilized categorization of instructional objectives in the field of education.

Throughout the institute, the students are provided with time to revise and add to their lesson plans. They develop their plans section by section, adding on to them daily as they receive peer and instructor feedback and as they learn in greater detail about the numerous decisions and considerations entailed in planning. Their plans, thus, for most of the institute, are works in progress as they undergo continual revision. The final products, highly interactive, culturally rich, standards-driven, and communicatively-based lesson plans, are shared during the final class meeting. After sharing their plans, discussion ensues with commendations and/or suggestions for clarification and modification. This activity allows the students to view the institute coursework as a cohesive whole complete with strategies that they have integrated into their own lessons. The exercise also serves as the summative assessment of student attainment of the course objectives.

Day 3

Peer Editing of Lesson Plans

Research has found peer editing, of which revising and editing are integral components, to be very effective in improving students' writing skills (Peterson, 2003; Tompkins, 2003). Peer editing focuses on the process of writing, rather than on the product of writing. On Day 3 of the institute, students are provided with criteria to address when editing a peer's composition. After students revise their plans, the papers are given back to the authors for revision for another peer editing session. This process continues throughout the rest of the institute until the day before the students have to share their plans. At that time, their plans are collected and instructor feedback is given.

Student benefits of peer editing are numerous. Students learn about the process of writing. They learn how to collaborate in helping one other. They assume ownership of their own writing. Students will frequently make observations that escape the scrutiny of the teacher. Students can often explain things to their peers in a way than is more comprehensible than the teacher's explanation. Peer editing is also a non-threatening way to gain feedback on one's work. Finally, from a teacher's perspective, much of the evaluation of the paper has already been completed by the time the paper is received by the teacher, thus making the assessment of the final product less time-consuming than it would normally have been without peer revision.

The Three Modes of Communication: Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational

Contemporary foreign language pedagogy focuses on communicative competence, or the ability to utilize language in a meaningful, functional, and contextual mode. This approach categorizes communication into three communicative modes that reflect distinctions in the purpose and context of the discourse: the interpersonal mode, the interpretive mode, and the presentational mode. Most obvious in conversation, the interpersonal mode is characterized by the negotiation of meaning in which individuals carefully observe each other to glean meaning from the interaction. The interpretive mode, which requires participants to infer meaning without the opportunity to negotiate meaning, involves "one-way communication" such as that performed when interpreting written text, videos, and radio and television broadcasts. Individuals engage in the presentational mode when preparing "spoken or written communication for people (an audience) with whom there is no immediate personal contact or which takes place in a one-to-many mode" (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999, p. 37). The *Communications* standard specifies that classroom activities should ideally provide opportunities for students to gain proficiency in all three communicative modes.

Once students learn about the three communicative modes, they immediately apply this information in a three-member group activity. After the trio decides upon an overlying theme of a unit that they might teach, each group member assumes responsibility for one of the three communicative modes. Each individual then develops an activity or assignment that would address the unit theme while requiring his/her students to function in the specified mode. For example, if a group member is responsible for addressing the interpretive mode and the overlying theme is "vacations," an acceptable activity might include the interpretation of a travel brochure. Each trio thus creates three sample activities that provide students the opportunity to communicate in each communicative mode during a unit.

Model for Integrating Form in a Story-Based Language Approach: PACE

Contemporary pedagogy espouses the integration of structure and meaning in order to render content more relevant to students. According to this belief, grammar, which tends to be taught in isolation, is introduced within a meaningful, real-life framework. PACE, a model for integrating form in a story-based language approach, utilizes a cyclical, whole language approach. According to Shrum and Glisan (2005), this model entails the following sequence: (a) During Presentation, the teacher foreshadows the grammatical explanation through integrated discussion that focuses on meaning. The use of children's literature in which the grammatical construct occurs repeatedly is recommended to introduce the structure contextually. (b) In the Attention stage, during which meaning remains the emphasis of instruction, the teacher recycles the story through the use of Total Physical Response (Asher, 1986) or other interactive exercises. (c) The teacher, during the Co-construct phase, encourages the students to hypothesize about the repeated structure, turning their attention to the grammatical structure. (d) Finally, the Extension stage includes the provision of rich, contextualized, real-life follow-up activities that require students to employ the grammatical structure.

To assist my students in understanding and applying this model, I assign them to four-member language specific groups. Referencing a foreign language textbook, they select a grammatical concept. Responsible for a different stage of PACE, each group member reviews the types of activities characteristic of the stage of PACE he/she has been assigned. Once this task is accomplished, the students develop a lesson plan detailing the activities they would implement while in this stage of instruction. If the assignment is successfully completed, each group's communicatively-based unit is "contextualized and integrated, which enables the instructional events to flow naturally" (Shrum & Glisan, 2005, p. 200). The grammatical construct is taught, not in isolation, but through context, repetition, and interaction in which the students are able to experiment and play with the language. In addition, because learners are actively

engaged in real-life exercises, their comprehension and retention are enhanced.

Day 4

Strategies for Teaching Interpersonal Speaking

Thanks in part to the Oral Proficiency Guidelines of ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), current foreign language education is turning its attention to the development of language proficiency instead of student mastery of a specified set of skills. Proficiency, according to Shrum and Glisan (2005), is the "ability to use language to perform global tasks or language functions within a variety of contexts/content areas, with a given degree of accuracy, and by means of specific text types" (p. 216). Although ACTFL's Oral Proficiency Guidelines do not have widespread use, they have influenced the way that teachers assess students' oral skills. Alternative forms of assessment, such as interviewing, role playing, monologues, storytelling, and descriptive orations, are being employed as evaluation tools.

Shrum and Glisan discuss several strategies for teaching interpersonal speaking, such as instructional conversations, turn taking, gestures, and student discourse in pair/group activities. As is my practice, the students are grouped into six different groups with each group assuming responsibility for a different strategy. Their task is to utilize any instructional medium of their preference and teach the highlights of their assigned strategy to the rest of the class. The latter part of the assignment requires them to discuss and/or demonstrate how they can apply their strategy to their own classrooms.

Rubrics: Evaluating Open-Ended Products

Over the last decade, alternative forms of assessment, including authentic assessment, have gained in prominence as educational reform seeks to improve the correlation between curricular goals and real life skills (Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Performance assessment focuses on the evaluation of the student's ability to apply the information acquired. Assessment in foreign language education has followed the same trend. Authentic and performance-based assessment ideally requires students to demonstrate their proficiency in the target language by numerous means other than the typical pencil and paper quiz or test.

Although this move toward authentic assessment is laudable, this manner of evaluation is often time-consuming, unclear with regards to specific criteria, and prone to subjectivity. To objectify the assessment of authentic tasks and other open-ended assignments, the use of rubrics is highly recommended. "Rubrics are a scoring scale consisting of a set of criteria that describe what expectations are being assessed/ evaluated and descriptions of levels of quality used to evaluate students work or to guide students to desired performance levels" (The Rubric Builder 1).

To illustrate the value of rubrics, I provide students with a sample paragraph written by a faux beginning language student. Before supplying them with a rubric, I instruct them to grade the paragraph. No other directions are given. The students overtly wrestle with this assignment, unsure of the criteria to be addressed. After they complete this part of the assignment, we discuss their reaction to the task, which often encompass feelings of confusion and lack of direction. They are then provided with a rubric and taught how to use it. Evaluation with the rubric is much more systematic and purposeful. The students appear to tackle this task with much less trepidation than they had without the rubric. Following the second evaluation of the compositions, discussion about their reactions to the grading process again ensues. Students indicate that their confidence in their ability to accurately evaluate the paragraph was much higher with the rubric, as it provided them with clarity and purpose. They also reflect on how different the latter grades are from the scores issued after the first evaluation, which was conducted sans the rubric. The discussion also includes the need for accountability and the provision of criteria to justify grades students earn in the event of a student or parent confrontation, a very real possibility in our litigious society. Our discourse also includes additional and different criteria, such as pronunciation and fluency, that might be used for an oral presentation. An extension activity requires the students to individually or in groups develop an open-ended assignment that they might actually use

with their own students and design an appropriate rubric for its evaluation. Their creations are shared with the rest of the class.

Cognitive Processing Strategy: Affinity Diagram (Holt & Hutchinson, 1999)

Having completed two-thirds of the institute, the students have learned a lot of information. To assist them in synthesizing all of this material, a cognitive process strategy called the Affinity Diagram is in order. The affinity diagram, which is an interactive data collection method that affords groups of individuals the opportunity to identify and process large amounts of information in a short time frame, requires merely a pen/pencil, large and small post-it notes, and several surfaces (such as tables, chart paper, or even the classroom floor) around which groups can freely move to arrange and re-arrange the post-it notes. The entire activity is completed in silence, as discussion tends to inhibit student involvement.

The students are given the topic: What have you learned thus far in this institute? As students generate short phrases (two to four words in length), they write them on the small post-it notes. Once group members' ideas are exhausted, they then peruse the post-it notes scattered around the tables or chart paper, thinking of categories under which the written contributions might naturally fall. The categories are written on the larger post-it notes. Group members then, still in silence, arrange the smaller post-it notes under categories that make the most sense to them. Once sufficient time, usually 3-5 minutes, has transpired for the completion of the activity, each group is encouraged to share its categories and several of the subcategories.

As the instructor, I find this exercise to be a powerful means of informal assessment of my students' comprehension, acquisition, and retention of the course material. If my instruction has indeed been effective, then there should be much overlap among each group's contributions. The Affinity Diagram is a very simple way to attain feedback about whether course objectives have been met. This activity also provides students with numerous benefits: (a) All contributions are valued equally. (b) The hands-on aspect appeals to the kinesthetic/tactile learner. (c) Everyone is encouraged to participate. (d) Students engage in higher-order thinking as they seek to sift through large quantities of material in order to separate that which is most meaningful from that which is tangential. In addition, the categorization of the written contributions entails content analysis, one of the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Day 5

El Café Assignment

A large portion of this day is dedicated to the sharing of an assignment entitled "El Café."

As in a coffee shop where poets and other writers share their work, students are each given five minutes to informally share this assignment as the class indulges on coffeehouse refreshments. In preparation for this assignment, students read a professional journal article of their own choice that deals with second language education at the secondary level. Then, based on what they glean from the article, they create an actual classroom activity that they can implement with their own students. The activity is to be described in enough detail and with enough clarity to allow for replication by other teachers. The five-minute sharing session is accompanied by the distribution of a student handout consisting of: (a) the bibliographic citation of the journal article in APA format, (b) a paragraph summarizing the main idea(s) of the article, and (c) a detailed description of the classroom activity developed from what was learned in the article. Following this assignment, each student has thus received a large number of diverse, practical classroom activities derived from theoretical research.

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold. First, students become familiar with professional journals in their area of expertise. Second, they learn how to read, analyze, and derive meaning from the journal article, and then how to apply what they have learned to enhance their instruction. It is through the latter part of this assignment that the students become aware of the value of professional journals as a means by which to enhance one's skills as an educator.

Assessment

As mentioned earlier, current foreign language pedagogy makes a distinction between achievement and proficiency. The push in today's second language philosophy is toward the development and assessment of a student's language proficiency rather than mastery. As such, Shrum and Glisan recommend the use of interactive tests that consist of three different types of test items: prochievement, performance-based, and authentic/standards-based. In addition, to add cohesiveness to the test, they advocate that all of the test items be related to a common theme, such as the overlying topic of the unit.

Prochievement test items, as the name indicates, combine structural knowledge of the language (achievement) with proficiency level across a continuum. The proficiency component of this test item permits students some creativity in response; the achievement portion stresses accuracy in structure.

Performance-based test items afford students more flexibility in response. These divergent test questions use prompts. However, unlike prochievement test items, which provide strict parameters in response, performance-based test items do not specify the inclusion of a limited pool of target language terms in the answer.

Authentic and standards-based assessment most closely approximates language usage in real-life situations. Students are presented with an actual scenario to which they must react with creativity and solid judgment. Shrum and Glisan (2005) describe this type of test item as one that "replicates or simulates the contexts in which adults are 'tested' in the workplace, in civic life, and in personal life so that students address an actual audience, not just their teacher" (p. 371) and "assesses the student's ability to use a repertoire of knowledge and skill efficiently and effectively to negotiate a complex task" (p. 371).

Once students learn about the different types of test items, they are provided with the opportunity to apply what they have learned. Groups of five students are formed and given the task of creating an interactive test, following the guidelines specified by Shrum and Glisan (2005). As a group, the students select a chapter from a foreign language textbook. For that chapter, they identify the theme/unifying concept and design a test consisting of the following test items: (a) one written prochievement item, (b) one oral prochievement item, (c) one oral performance-based item, (d) one written performance-based item, and (e) one authentic/standards-based item. Each of the five students comprising the group is responsible for a different type of test item. All test items of the resultant test should be related to the unifying theme of the chapter. The final product, an actual interactive test, is then shared with the rest of the class. If completed successfully, this assignment reflects a cohesive, thematically organized assessment instrument that affords increased flexibility and creativity in response as students progress through the test.

Day 6

Professional Development

Teaching is not just a job. It is based on scholarly pursuits. Individuals in a profession have a commitment to continue to learn and grow professionally. One of the best ways of being a life-long learner is to become a member of a professional organization (Parsad, Lewis, & Farris, 2001). Thus, my students are apprised in detail of the numerous benefits of membership: (a) discounted student rates, (b) receipt of professional journals and newsletters, (c) copious opportunities for networking, (d) professional development opportunities, (e) easy access to advocacy groups, and (f) frequently discounted rates to professional conferences. As I discuss the state, regional, and national foreign language professional organizations available to foreign language educators, I share their websites, sample journals, and newsletters.

Serving as a workshop presenter at a professional conference is another venue for professional growth. Although most of my students, who are either pre-service or novice in-service teachers, balk at the thought of presenting, they are encouraged to submit a proposal to present at a future date. Most of them do not feel as though they have anything worth sharing with others; however, they express more enthusiasm once the following possible presentation topics are suggested to them: (a) successful teaching strategies, (b) assignments that have been enthusiastically received by students, (c) a particularly popular

unit, or (e) a strategy they have learned in another workshop/seminar and want to share with others.

In preparation for this level of professional development, students are instructed, as a final course activity, to pretend they are interested in presenting at the next conference of the Florida Foreign Language Association, Inc. (FFLA, Inc.), the state's largest foreign language professional organization. As such, their task consists of working either individually or in presentation groups and completing the FFLA, Inc. conference presentation proposal in its entirety. The initial task of this assignment requires that students brainstorm possible topics for presentation, taking into consideration the following questions: (a) Can the topic be realistically taught to an audience within 55 minutes? (b) Does it allow for the audience to be actively engaged in the demonstration? (c) Can it be easily adapted for different age levels? (d) Can it be taught in an enjoyable way?

After a presentation topic has been selected, the students complete the rest of the presentation proposal, strictly adhering to its guidelines. Once all presentation groups have completed this assignment, they share their topic with the rest of the class. All groups are encouraged to submit their proposals to FFLA, Inc. for actual consideration for inclusion in upcoming conferences, a suggestion that has resulted in former students presenting not only at the FFLA conference, but at regional and national conferences as well.

Conclusion

The foreign language methods course at the secondary level has been designed as a summer institute to facilitate in-service teachers' satisfaction of Florida's certification requirements in methodology. The curriculum consists of professional journal articles and textbook readings that reflect current second language acquisition pedagogy. Other components of the curriculum include multi-modal activities, cognitive processing strategies based on contemporary brain-based research, student microteaches, hands-on applications of concepts, and creative activities that simulation real-life scenarios. The integration of all of the above components has allowed me, as course developer and instructor, to attain my ultimate objective for this course: the development of a rich, comprehensive, standards-driven, and communicatively-based curriculum that produces highly trained foreign language educators prepared to meet the demands of today's challenging teaching profession.

Biographical Statement

Karen Verkler, Ph.D. is the Foreign Language Education Program Coordinator at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, FL. A former middle school Spanish teacher, she has taught courses in methodology at the university level for the last twelve years. She served as the FFLA, Inc. president from 2001-2002.

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Call for 2007 Conference Proceedings Papers

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Sincerely,

The FFLJ Editorial Board

Reviewed by Ramón Anthony Madrigal

Age in L2 Acquisition and Teaching

Edited by Abello-Contesse, C., Chacón-Beltrán, R., López-Jiménez, M. D. & Torreblanca-López, M. M. (Eds., 2006). Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.

This monograph offers eleven provocative chapters, written by expert researchers in the field, that contribute to the continuing discussion of the significance of the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) in second language acquisition (SLA) and second language teaching. The CPH refers to the notion that children are better at learning languages than adults. Given early (before puberty) and consistent exposure to the L2, children can eventually achieve native-like proficiency in the target language, whereas adults cannot. This book is Volume 22 in the Linguistic Insights: Studies in Language and Communication Series, edited by Maurizio Gotti. This publication will be of interest to researchers in the disciplines of SLA and foreign language education (FLE), teachers in second/foreign languages, as well as policymakers concerned with curriculum design in L2 instruction. After presenting a concise overview to the volume (Chapter 1), including a discussion of the history and tenets of the CPH, the editors divide the book into three parts: Age, theoretical issues, and pedagogical implications (Part I), Age and L2 learning in school and family settings (Part II), and Age, aptitude and child/adult L2 learning (Part III).

Part I begins with an analysis of age, acquisition, and accent (Chapter 2). Scovel, a long-time advocate of the CPH, argues that foreign accents are "pervasive, permanent, incorrigible, and epiphenomenal" (p. 32). He is careful to distinguish between human language and human speech, concluding that while there is most definitely a critical period for the later, the same cannot be said for the former. Scovel writes with clarity and establishes persuasively his fourfold thesis. Next, in his examination of recent arguments against the CPH (Chapter 3), DeKeyser, critiques the three most common objections to the CPH: (1) the existence of apparent exceptions to the CPH; (2) age is confounded with other causal factors, such as motivation and different levels and quality of exposure (input) to the L2; and (3) the exact shape of the age-proficiency function. DeKeyser argues that studies that suggest that adult learners are just as good at SLA as child learners suffer from serious methodological flaws. Moreover, he maintains that empirical studies that have attempted to discredit the CPH due to other confounding variables (such as input) are inconclusive and fail to explain why adult L2 learners with 40 years of residency in their new country fail to achieve the proficiency of university-age native speakers. Finally, DeKeyser suggests that the third objection is irrelevant, since the CPH "does not exclude a decline in learning capacities at other ages for other reasons" (p. 53). He concludes that the CPH has not been seriously challenged by the empirical evidence to date. In the final essay to Part I (Chapter 4), Chandler focuses on adults' failure in L2 learning and argues for the existence of multiple critical or sensitive periods for language acquisition, which vary due to individual differences. A typology of non-traditional L2 learners is proposed, along with a discussion of adults' L2 learning difficulties and their pedagogical implications.

Part II commences with Muñoz' description (Chapter 5) of the Barcelona Age Factor Project (1995-2004), a school-based study of the effect of age (onset ages 8 and 11) on the acquisition of English as a foreign language (EFL). Although the BAF Project is an ongoing, longitudinal study, preliminary results suggest that while older starters achieve faster rates of morphosyntactic development and literacy in the L2, younger starters will eventually surpass them over the long term. Next, Abello-Contesse (Chapter

6) describes a study of student-student interaction in an early (6-7 year olds) EFL immersion program at a school in Spain. He suggests that the absence of L2 production was due to psychological factors, along with neurobiological and sociolinguistic variables. A discussion of the traditional teacher-fronted pattern of interaction concludes this chapter. Gallardo del Puerto and García-Lecumberri (Chapter 7) report on their study of the effects of age on single phoneme perception for EFL learners in primary and secondary school students in the Basque Country in Spain. Although the authors found that older learners (onset age 11) exhibited better discrimination abilities than younger learners (onset ages 4 and 8), they argue for (surprisingly!) earlier and more intense exposure to the L2 in schools, including its use as the means of teaching other school subjects (p. 128).

In the following article, (Chapter 8), Pérez-Vidal focuses on theoretical and pragmatic issues in the areas of family multilingualism and multilingual education, especially the concerns of parents who are attempting to foster the active use of a foreign language in the family context. The author reviews the phenomena of weak and dominant languages, code-switching, the causes of language mixing, as well as parental discourse strategies. Specific examples are cited from a three-year case study of a child (age 1 year, five months to age 4 years, three months) being raised in a bilingual English-Catalán home. While Pérez-Vidal offers a useful list of good practices for bilingual development in home settings, she inappropriately generalizes her suggestions to school contexts and contends that language policy planners "should guarantee the right for all citizens to be able to use at least two languages other than their own" (p. 148)! In a similar study, Ruiz-González examines how parents may promote the productive use of the weak language in family bilingualism (Chapter 9). After reviewing theoretical considerations of the age factor in SLA and bilingual L1 acquisition, along with interaction patterns and parental discourse strategies, the author describes her qualitative case study, conducted over a six-month period, recording her observations, experiences and reflections on promoting the production of English by her three children (ages 8, 4, and 3). The author concludes that raising bilingual children is a formidable task that requires a high level of motivation and effort on the part of parents, including the firm application of discourse strategies of insistence when the productive use of the target language begins to decrease (p. 170).

Part III of this engaging monograph consists of two essays. In the first study, Milton and Alexiou (Chapter 10) investigated language aptitude development in 73 young learners (ages 5, 6, and 7) enrolled in public and private nursery schools and private English language schools in Thessaloniki, Greece during the first month of 2003. Using adaptations of standard aptitude tests, four cognitive skills were measured: memorization, association, visual perception, and classification. The results of this study suggest that primary analytic skills emerge at an early age, and that older learners are better explicit language learners than younger learners. A discussion of aptitude diagnosis and aptitude profiles ensues, including pedagogical implications for tailoring language teaching to match the learning styles of individual language learners. In the next article, Guijarro-Fuentes and Geeslin (Chapter 11) examined the interpretation of the Spanish copula (ser and estar) by Portuguese near-native speakers, all of whom learned Spanish after puberty. Comparing the grammaticality judgments of this group (n = 11) with a control group (n = 19) of native Spanish speakers, the authors found that a statistically significant difference was evident between the two groups. Hence, this study supports the CPH, at least as far as the semantic and pragmatic interpretations of copula choice in Spanish are concerned.

In the judgment of this reviewer, this collection of articles provides an excellent summary of the current state of research on the variable of age in SLA. Although the anticipated readership of educators, researchers, graduate students and policymakers will likely disagree with some of the conclusions expressed in this book, they will certainly be stimulated in their thinking about this important topic.