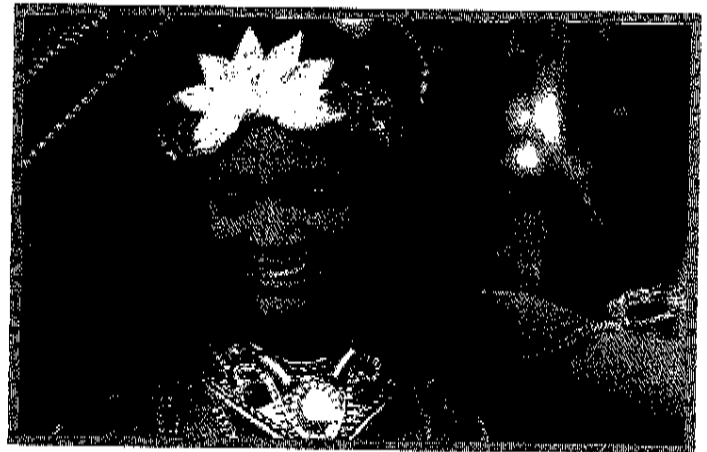


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FALL 2008

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Editor's Acknowledgement

It is time again to celebrate another issue of the Florida Foreign Language Journal. Over its six-year history, this peer reviewed professional Journal has proudly published a tremendous variety of articles that speak to our instructional, administrative, or research interests as foreign/second language educators. This year's issue continues this tradition with two research articles and a third contribution that fits perfectly under the latest addition to the Journal.

The first article on the changing of perspectives by Cai, Harvey, Terantino and van Olphen opens our eyes to the benefits of reflective practices in the teaching profession. The importance of having teachers develop their reflective teaching practices is not only professionally sound, but a necessity in education in today's world. The suggestions provided in the article will surely help raising the awareness of reflections in ones' own teaching. The second article by Karen Verkler reports on the variety of factors that motivate high school students in Spanish to go beyond Level 1 and Level 2 classes. In times where enrollment in upper-level foreign language courses keeps declining despite overwhelming evidence of the growing need of multilingualism in our global economy, this pertinent information can assist educators of foreign languages to find better ways of promoting students' study of a chosen language far out in the future. Taken together, these articles can influence our daily teaching practice through their message of commitment to the profession by means of ongoing professional development and peer exchange, as well as by providing contextualized language activities that are meaningful to our students.

This issue of the FFLJ marks the beginning of a new section within the Journal's makeup. Next to the traditional *Articles* and *Reviews* sections, we have added the *Special Departments* section in which we place papers of interest to our profession that do not fit the conventional research-based article format. It is within this section that we will publish proceedings from the annual conference, and we hope to see opinion pieces or descriptions of best practices that are connected to research.

In its first appearance, the *Special Departments* section consists of Hall Rennert's literary analysis of a poem by the Argentine author Jorge Luis Borges whose work we often include in our schools' AP courses. His analysis is augmented by a contribution by Reinhold Schlieper who shows us how to use this work in the classroom, teaching in the affective domain. We thus invite you read about the connection of, as Reinhold Schlieper so aptly puts it, "...the language of another national tradition to its literature" in *Affinity to German* trust that you will enjoy the latest addition to the composition of the FFLJ.

It has indeed been our pleasure to produce the 2008 issue of our association's Journal, and we hope to you will get pleasure from reading it. Additionally, we encourage you to contribute to next year's issue by submitting a manuscript so that we can continue to grow the impact the Florida Foreign Language Association has on our profession.

Betty Nielsen Green
Editor, 2008

Carine Strel Halpern
Assistant-to-the-Editor, 2008

President's Corner

Dear colleagues in world language education,

It is my distinct pleasure to extend this greeting to you as part of the 2008 edition of the Florida Foreign Language Journal. During its six year history, the FFLJ has elevated our organization to a level of professionalism of which we can be very proud. It has provided FFLA members with a platform for the sharing of current trends, research, and pedagogy, providing evidence of the passionate dedication demonstrated by K-16 world language educators in the state of Florida. On behalf of your 2008 FFLA Board of Directors, I offer heartfelt gratitude for the tireless efforts of Dr. Betty Green, FFLJ editor, whose dedication and skill make this journal possible. The ideas and information shared in the FFLJ forge a prominent pathway to advocacy for cultural competency and proficiency among students in the languages of the world. With a focus on continuous improvement of instructional practices made possible by the sharing of ideas and information in a scholarly context, our journal contributes to the realization of our vision.

As members of FFLA, we owe a great deal to the many who have led our organization and to those, like Dr. Green, who have served on your FFLA Board. Each president, and the board members who have supported them, have been pioneers in the quest to serve our membership and to advocate for language study. I thank my predecessor, Margie Fox, for the work she did to highlight the importance of supporting teachers and for organizing for our membership a successful 2007 conference around the "mind, body and spirit" of the professional educator. I also look forward to support the 2009 FFLA President, Judy McDermott, who is already hard at work planning the 2009 FFLA Conference in St. Augustine. This conference will serve as the setting for the celebration of our 40th state conference, honoring 40 years of leadership in the profession.

The work of the FFLA Board this year has been led by the opportunity to host the national ACTFL convention and World Languages Expo, organized around the theme, "Opening Minds to the World Through Languages". Committee chairs have worked diligently to promote the conference and the opportunities it provides to our membership. Among the special Board projects this year was the formation of a scholarship committee which sought donations and awarded four FFLA members full scholarships to attend the ACTFL conference.

Each year offers new challenges and opportunities. In the midst of economic turmoil the world continues to shrink, and we do all that we can to "open minds" and hearts to the importance of cultural and linguistic competence. Districts in Florida continue to seek opportunities to cultivate effective K-12 programs while joining universities in adding new languages, such as Chinese and Arabic, to their list of offerings. The networking opportunities provided by our conference, the FFLAN (newsletter), capably managed by Jacki Cinotti, and the FFLJ make us stronger and better able to thrive during challenging times.

It is my hope that each foreign language teacher in the state of Florida will take the opportunity to join FFLA and that each FFLA member will take the time to share their skills, expertise and vision using one of the pathways available to them. This could consist of writing an article for the FFLAN, presenting at the 2009 FFLA conference in St. Augustine, applying to serve on the FFLA Board, or submitting to the FFLJ. The many voices of our membership create a chorus with the potential to "open the minds of the world through languages".

With sincere appreciation for your support,

Jan Kucerik, 2008 FFLA President

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 sixth 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 the FFLJ 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 sixth issue of the FFLJ. Please follow the manuscript guidelines below and send your submission by July 1, 2009 to Dr. Betty Green, Editor, Florida Foreign Language Journal at Daytona State College, 1200 International Speedway Blvd. Daytona Beach, 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 the 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 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 Daytona State College, 1200 International Speedway Blvd. Daytona Beach, FL 32114 or e-mail to greenbe@daytonastate.edu.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS IS JULY 1, 2009

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 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 JULY 1, 2009

Shengrong Cai, Jane Harvey, Joe Terantino, Marcela van Olphen

Changing Perspectives: Reflective Practice for Foreign Language Teachers

Geared toward teachers seeking to develop a reflective approach to teaching, this article addresses both theoretical and practical aspects that sustain reflective practice. Many teachers are already working within a reflective teaching framework; however, they may not be aware of it. This article aims to provide teachers with suggestions for developing a more systematic approach to reflective teaching. To accomplish this goal, the authors invite teachers to raise their awareness of current practices, to capitalize on what they are already doing well, to look for ways that some practices could be improved, and to elaborate a plan for future action. To support these teachers' endeavors, the authors share a wide range of ideas, materials and strategies that facilitate reflective teaching.

Introduction

Although reflective practice might seem to have emerged as a relatively recent trend in education, reflective thinking has been present in the field of teacher education for almost 100 years. For instance, consider Dewey's (1910) book *How We Think* and his later revised version (Dewey, 1938), in which he addresses reflective thought, thinking beyond direct observation, and beliefs about facts and truths. Dewey (1910) contends that reflective thought is more a consequence than a sequence of ideas:

Reflection involves not simply a sequence of ideas, but a consequence—a consecutive ordering in such a way that each determines the next as its proper outcome, while each in turn leans back on its predecessors. The successive portions of the reflective thought grow out of one another and support one another; they do not come and go in a medley. Each phase is a step from something to something—technically speaking, it is a term of thought. Each term leaves a deposit which is utilized in the next term.

The stream or flow becomes a train, chain, or thread. [...] (pgs. 2-3)

In his view, "Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought" (p. 6). According to Fendler (2003), reflective thinking is encouraged as an approach for inspiring habits of thought and promoting self-discipline for social betterment and as means of setting the stage for future prospects. In this vein, Schön (1983) makes the distinction between "technical rationality" and "reflection-in-action." Within reflective practice, uncertainty is a desired and valued trait for professional reflective practice. Furthermore, reflection allows teachers to look into tacit understandings developed as a result of recurring experiences while making sense of new situations, which in turn, may lead to new experiences. The purpose of this article is to remind teachers of theory and principles underlying reflective practice, and to offer practical suggestions as to what they can do to facilitate reflection on their own teaching. The next sections are organized as follows: (a)

overview of reflective practice (assumptions about reflective teaching, foreign language teachers' knowledge), (b) reflective practice in action (belief questionnaires, observations, journaling, blogging, professional development activities, etc.), and (c) a reflective practice action plan for committed teachers.

Overview of Reflective Practice

Reflective practice seeks to understand teaching from an internal perspective. That is, rather than a top down approach, reflective practice aims to understand the underlying reasons for what teachers do and why they do it. Reflective practice is teacher-centered and teacher-initiated. Instructors engage in observing themselves, collect data about their teaching, and use it as self evaluation for the purpose of generating change and professional advancement (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. ix).

When teachers work from a reflective practice orientation, certain assumptions need to hold true. For instance, within the reflective approach, professional development is a lifelong process. Therefore, conceptions of language teaching and learning are ever-evolving phenomena. The environment generated by this always evolving nature of reflective teaching promotes continuous renewal and change for those who practice it. Reflective teachers focus on the "what" and "why" questions as they teach (Nunan & Lamb, 1996).

According to Nunan and Lamb (1996), reflective teachers need knowledge and skills in three key curriculum areas: (a) planning, (b) implementation, and (c) evaluation. When planning, teachers need to be aware of learning styles and learners' needs while being able to organize content, select objectives and goals, and cast learning experiences that draw on learners' need. As for implementation, teachers need procedural competence in classroom instruction and management, particularly those skills that enable them to analyze self and learners' classroom behavior. In terms of evaluation, teachers need to take into consideration learners'

assessment with respect to the program's goals and objectives. In addition, teachers need to be able to assess their teaching effectiveness while supporting and promoting independent learners who conduct self-monitoring and assessment activities.

The next sections present hands-on activities that we hope will encourage teachers to expanding their current reflective practices.

Reflective Practice in Action

In this section we (a) discuss some of the major areas for reflection, (b) introduce beliefs questionnaires, observations, journaling, blogging, and other activities that generate opportunities for professional growth as reflective practitioners, and (c) provide some resources to begin a portfolio.

To develop through reflective teaching, first we should address questions such as "What do we reflect on?" Table 1 presents a list of major areas for critical reflection in foreign language teaching and the reasons why we should focus on these areas.

Beliefs

We can reflect on our own belief system by completing a questionnaire. If we have never reflected on our beliefs about language learning and teaching, filling out a questionnaire of this kind may help us examine the assumptions and beliefs underlying our everyday teaching practice and make them explicit. We may obtain a better understanding of why we have adopted a certain teaching style and which factors have influenced our teaching. For further information, see Richards and Lockhart (1996, p. 29-44) and Horwitz (1985).

Observations

Teacher observations are an integral and common component of many teacher development programs for pre-service and in-service teachers. In the pre-service context, student teachers or interns are charged with observing more experienced teachers in practice (Richards & Lockhart, 1992). This process is

designed to expose the inexperienced teachers to veteran teaching, the end goal of which is that the beginning teachers will be able to adopt and emulate the methods they observed in the classroom.

The process of teacher observations for in-service practitioners is quite different. Typically, in-service teachers are observed by a school administrator who makes scheduled or unscheduled visits to the teacher's classroom. Here the goal of the observations is more to ensure maintaining a minimum standard of

teaching for the overall school. In recent years, the practice of in-service teachers observing other in-service teachers has become more prevalent, and it is a viable alternative for professional and personal development.

Each of the observation methods described has its respective benefits and shortcomings for language teachers. First, with pre-service teachers a major concern is that the inexperienced teachers may not be able to process the observation adequately. They may need more guidance to establish a focus within

Table 1

Areas for reflective focus (Adapted from Richards & Lockhart, 1996)

Areas	Why this area?
Teachers' beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we believe about teaching and learning heavily influences the way we teach. • We are not always aware of our fundamental beliefs about teaching.
Teacher decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching involves a constant series of decisions, some of which we are aware we are making, some of which we are not. • Decisions depend on our immediate and long-term teaching goals as well as what we believe about teaching and learning.
The role of teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we see our role as teacher depends on our teaching context as well as our beliefs and will affect our classroom practice.
Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our learners, their backgrounds and expectations also influence our teaching, and we need to be aware of these.
The structure of a language lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we organize learning activities during a lesson is crucial to ensuring as much learning happens as possible.
Interaction in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to be aware of how much and what kind of interaction occurs in the classroom as language learning happens through interaction.
The nature of learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to be completely aware of what constitutes a learning activity so we can design effective ones for our classes. • We need to think about how the classroom activities we organize can maximize learning.
Language use in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlike in many other teaching situations, for language teachers, how we teach is also what we teach—we use language to teach learners language. • We need to be aware of how we and our students use language, and especially the target language, in our classes.

the observation. Second, in-service teacher observations conducted by administrators are considered to reflect a top-down approach to teacher development (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). With respect to language teachers, often administrators do not have sufficient knowledge of the language being taught. This alone makes the observation process difficult. Also, frequently administrators do not adequately share information resulting from the observation. Thus, the teacher is left without any feedback for further reflection.

As a professional development tool, peer-to-peer teacher observations can be powerful for encouraging reflective practice. For example, the goal of reflective teaching is to reverse the top-down approach, to empower the individual teacher in the developmental process. With peer-to-peer observations, the individual teachers are in control of their own actions: "Peer observation can provide opportunities for teachers to view each other's teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles and to provide opportunities for critical reflection on their own teaching" (Richards, 1991, p. 5). They mandate the focus of the observation, how to construct the feedback, and how to proceed after the observation. Sample observation foci include:

organization of the lesson, teacher's time management, students' performance on tasks, time-on-task, teacher questions and student responses, student performance during pair work, classroom interaction, class performance during a new teaching activity, and students' use of the first language or English during group work. (Richards, 1991, p. 5)

Again, peer observation is beneficial as a reflective practice because it allows the individual teacher to guide personal development.

Journaling

Richards and Lockhart (1996) suggest journaling is "a written response to teaching events" (p. 7). Much of what is written about journaling covers pre-service teachers' learning

how to teach, but in this context we refer to a teacher regularly writing (daily is best, but once or twice a week is also useful) about the work he or she does, mainly in the classroom. Richards and Lockhart (1996) give two reasons for journal writing: (a) to record events and ideas for later reflection and (b) to discover ideas and insights during the process of writing itself.

They also mention that journals can be kept as audio recordings, and with today's very convenient digital audio recorders that is indeed a possibility (however, reviewing the recordings can be more time-consuming than reviewing written journals). Journals should be reviewed regularly, with questions in mind such as: Why do I teach the way I do? What roles do learners play in my classes? Should I teach differently? They also suggest reflection questions that can be used as focuses for reflection during journal writing. Another consideration to take into account is the audience for the journal and reflections. If it is the teacher herself, then she is free to write what and as she wishes. Journaling for other purposes (such as for evaluation, for potential publication, for a teaching portfolio) would constrain both the style and content. Below is a list of questions (adapted from Richards & Lockhart, 1996).

General questions:

How did the day/lesson go? What were the high points? What were the low points?

Thinking of one lesson:

Did I achieve my aims? How do I know?
 What about the materials? Would I use them again? Why/not? How would I change them? What about the techniques I used? Were they effective? Why/not?
 What did I do differently today? What new thing did I do? Was there anything unusual that happened? How did I react? Was my philosophy of teaching reflected in the lesson/s I taught?

Thinking about the students:

How did the students react to the lesson(s)?
 Why was that? Did I involve all the

students at some stage? How did I respond to the students as individuals today? What did they get out of the lesson(s)?

Thinking about my teaching:

How am I developing as a language teacher? What am I particularly proud of? What would I really like to improve? How am I helping my students?

Informal Chatting, Blogs, and Listservs

Similar to peer observations, chatting provides language teachers a means of gathering information for personal use. Informal chatting is a natural occurrence that takes place between teachers in the hallways or the break room. By chatting with others, language teachers are able to serve as an information resource and to search for specific and detailed information. With the advent of the Internet, informal chatting has also spread to the World Wide Web. Using computers, language teachers have begun chatting through chat rooms, blogs, wikis, and listservs. Chat rooms are virtual sessions where people can exchange ideas in real time via text messages. Blogs are typically web sites containing a personal journal or diary, which can be updated by the host. Wikis are similar sites; however, all members can edit the content of the pages. Last, listservs use email to spread information to members who have subscribed to the mailing list.

The key to chatting, whether face-to-face or electronic, is that the language teacher drives the focus of the conversation. This type of idea exchange has few constraints and represents a low pressure means of gathering information. Electronically via the Internet, language teachers have access to information worldwide with convenience of time and location. Many sites have been created specifically for language teaching. A few are discussed in the subsequent section. As with all interpersonal communication, there is the potential for bad advice. Also, via the Internet it is sometimes difficult to recognize the level of expertise of

the participants. The following websites provide additional resources for blogs and listservs:

Blogs

<http://blog-efl.blogspot.com/>

Observations on the use of Web 2.0 tools for English Language Teaching & Learning.

<http://esl.about.com/od/blogs/>

A collection of the best ESL teacher blogs on the Internet. These sites provide insightful information, lesson plans, local cultural information on the countries they teach in, as well as reflections on teaching English as a second or foreign language.

<http://www.spanish-teaching.com/>

Blog for teachers and students of Spanish.

<http://www.blogger.com/>

How to blog.

<http://www.unf.edu/~tcavanau/presentations/elearn/blogPD/paper.htm>

Explanation of blogging as a professional development tool.

Listservs

<http://www.cortland.edu/flteach/>

This is a web-based listserv created for foreign language teachers. It covers issues in language teaching methods for all levels and languages.

<http://www.rcdiris.es/list/info/hispania.es.html>

This is an academic resource for all things related to the Spanish language

<http://teachers.net/mentors/french/>

This is a resource for French teachers related to linguistic and teaching needs.

<http://www.eslcafe.com/>

This is an international meeting place based on the web for ESL and EFL teachers.

Reflecting on a Lesson Plan

There are different ways of reflecting on lesson plans. For instance, one way is to review, reflect and revise before the lesson is taught. Another way is to use the plan to reflect on the lesson after it was taught. Either way, a list of reflection questions is useful to provide both focus and purpose to the reflection. Below are some sample questions (for a more comprehensive list of questions see Richards & Lockhart, 1996):

Did I achieve my aim(s) in this lesson?
How do I know?

What was I particularly happy with in the lesson?

What was I less than happy with in this lesson?

How well did the students respond to the lesson? Why was this?

How well did the materials work? Was this because of the materials themselves or the way I used them? What would I change with regard to the materials?

What did I learn about my students from this lesson?

The results of such reflection could be recorded for various purposes, such as evaluation or publication.

Some Ideas for Professional Development Activities

Teachers can engage in a wide variety of professional development activities, including attending conferences, membership in national organizations such as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) or state organizations such as Florida Foreign Language Association (FFLA) or Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within them, participating in in-service workshops and seminars at local schools, enrolling in graduate level classes at the local university, reading professional journals, serving on committees,

and a myriad of others. These activities are potentially very beneficial for several reasons. We can obtain a picture of the wider language teaching context, and situate ourselves in it; we can further our knowledge of techniques, theories, innovations, etc; we can contribute to the profession and learn about all aspects of the teaching job from other professionals in different contexts; we can also feel better about the job we are doing when we find that everyone in every context at every level experiences challenges similar to ours. It would be nearly impossible to avoid using these opportunities to reflect on our own teaching. Every article read, meeting or workshop attended, serves as a stimulus for reflecting on our own classroom and our own teaching context and provides a springboard to generate change and sustained renewal.

Audio or Video Recordings

Richards and Lockhart (1996) suggest that one of the advantages of recording lessons is that one can focus on all aspects of the lesson, on the teacher alone, or on an individual student or group of students. Also, all of the teacher's language can be recorded if the teacher wears a microphone or if the recorder is near the teacher's desk, for example. This technique provides very rich data that can be reviewed later for analysis. Video or audio-recording lessons, however, provides both advantages and disadvantages. Disadvantages include the potential disruption to class; the length of time needed to review material; and the difficulty of obtaining clear recordings of student activity in larger classes. Advantages include the possibility of reviewing the recording again and again; allowing the teacher an opportunity to see herself as students see her; the large amount and quality of data that even one recorded lesson affords. Regarding which is better, audio or video, the answer depends on the circumstances and indeed the teacher's preference, among other factors. Video, however, will supply much more data than audio-teaching is so much about visual performance, even though language is also crucial.

There are several ways in which a video or audio recording can be utilized. Pennington (1990) suggests reviewing all or part of the recording three times—once as an objective observer, just recording factual detail; then as a complimentary observer, making a list of as many positive aspects of the lesson as possible; and finally as a critical observer, noting evidence of poor performance. Other activities that could be carried out with a recording include deciding on one focus (such as questioning, directions for activities, where the teacher stands, teacher interaction with male and female students, etc.) and watching all or part of the lesson with this one focus in mind. Recordings could also be used as data for action research projects or investigations that lead to publications.

Portfolios

A teaching portfolio is a valuable tool for assisting language teachers in achieving reflective practice. For example, a teaching portfolio allows teachers to record classroom performance, track personal development as a teacher, and demonstrate potential for future growth. With the increasing capabilities of the personal computer and Internet-based technologies, electronic portfolios are becoming more popular. The available technologies now allow teachers to collect and organize teaching artifacts via audio, video, graphics, and text files. It is important to note, however, that “an electronic portfolio is not a haphazard collection of artifacts (i.e., a digital scrapbook or multimedia presentation) but rather a reflective tool that demonstrates growth over time” (Barrett, 2000). In this manner, the portfolio serves to track personal development, to document teaching practice for performance review, and to illustrate teaching approach for potential employers.

If composed properly, the portfolio will be much more than simply a snapshot of teaching; it will constitute a record of teaching development overtime. Most practitioners want to demonstrate their best teaching but portraying only the best will not demonstrate development over time. A

common mistake in creating teaching portfolios is to present a static collection that is developed once and never revised. Teaching portfolios should be reviewed and updated frequently so that they reflect growth as a language teaching professional. Among the benefits of creating an electronic teaching portfolio is that electronic artifacts are usually edited and adapted more easily than traditional portfolio artifacts. Below are a few electronic resources for the creation of teaching portfolios:

<http://ftad.osu.edu/portfolio/philosophy/Philosophy.html>

This site aims to provide faculty and graduate teaching associates with a practical and self-reflective guide to the development of a teaching portfolio.

<http://www.ncrlc.org/essentials/whatteach/portfolio.htm>

National Capital Language Resource Center recommendations for language instructors.

A Reflective Practice Action Plan for Committed Teachers

Now it is time to elaborate a blueprint for action. The first step is to select a topic (we have provided some topics earlier in the article) and to narrow it down to address your specific needs. Once a decision has been made to start systematically reflecting on one or more aspects of our teaching, it is time to begin to think about how we are going to reflect—in other words, which of the means of reflection discussed in this article we will chose. Selection at this point depends very much on personal preference, the resources available (such as time and recording equipment), and the purpose and focus of the reflection.

When considering reflective practice, it is essential to establish a timeline for the plan of action. To begin, we might ask, how quickly do I want results and what is the topic to investigate? This type of reflective practice is described more formally as action research (Haley, Midgely, Ortiz, Romano, Ashworth, & Seewald, 2005). Haley et al. identify the following steps in action research:

- Identify a puzzlement/inquiry
- Decide in a systematic way how to go about answering that question
- Develop a timeline to carry out the project— one week, a month, a grading period or even a full academic year
- Decide how data will be collected and analyzed
- Implement study— data collection and analysis
- Report and share findings.

This type of action research creates a cycle of reflection based on a definitive plan for collecting and processing information. Gibbs (1988) calls this the reflective cycle, which perpetuates constant changes in language teachers. Continuous introspection is the crux of reflective practice.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to provide some guidance to committed teachers who are seeking to enhance their teaching, their students' learning experiences, and by extension to advance their professional development. To this end, the first section provides an overview of reflective practice and its assumptions. The second section offer suggestions and specific examples for hands-on activities, while the last section prompts teachers to start their blueprint for action by providing some advice on where to start. It is important that practicing teachers start with small projects. Then, these projects can be refined and developed into action research proposals that teachers can use as part of their preparation for National Board Certification.

As we mentioned at the beginning of the article, the concept of reflective thinking has evolved through time and has now become an integral part of contemporary teaching practice. Its relevance and benefits have been widely discussed as they affect not only teachers' teaching and learning but also students' learning experiences. Because of the beneficial effects of reflective practice on both teachers

and students, it is important to include it within our professional endeavors.

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A Study on the Motivation of High School Spanish Students to Continue Language Study Beyond the Second Year

In the Florida public school curriculum, there lacks a foreign language graduation requirement. However, many colleges and universities, as well as scholarship programs like the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, require students to take a minimum of two consecutive years of a foreign language. In many schools, there is an abundance of Level 1 and Level 2 foreign language classes, but there seems to be a scarcity of students in upper-level language classes. Why is it that these few students are motivated to continue studying the language, even though it is not required of them? Through the use of focus groups, this study serves to show the variety of motivations held by high school students during the 2007-2008 school year. By understanding students' motives, educators can target other areas that might motivate students to continue their language study past the minimum requirement.

Introduction

The Florida public school curriculum does not require students to complete a foreign language credit in order to graduate from high school. However, students are required to take at least two years of a foreign language for admittance into a four-year public college or university. Once students fulfill the two-year requisite, few continue language study, as evidenced by the low enrollment in upper-level foreign language courses. The small enrollment in foreign language programs is an area of concern to foreign language educators and the global community (National Council of State Supervisors for Languages, 2006). Many of the reasons that students do not surpass the two-year requirement for college entrance or scholarship awards are related to the motivation, or lack thereof, to continue studying a second language (Ramage, 2006).

Why is it that some high school students opt to take an additional third or fourth year

of a language if it is not required of them? To determine the students' motivation(s), four focus groups were conducted with Central Florida high school upper-level (third year and beyond) Spanish students. These students were selected because they chose to go beyond the requirements necessary for college acceptance or to qualify for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

Literature Review

For decades, learner motivation has been one of the key issues studied in the second language acquisition process (Dörnyei, 1994, 2005; Gardner, 2001, 2002). Many of these studies found that motivation was a major variable in the enrollment in foreign language programs throughout the nation (Dörnyei, 1994, 2005; Gardner, 2001, 2002).

There are different motivational reasons why students take a foreign language. There are extrinsic sources of motivation like grade point average, college acceptance, and avoidance

of punishment, and there are intrinsic forms of motivation like personal satisfaction, self-efficacy, and personal goals (Dörnyei, 1994, 2005). A motivational variable considered by many theorists is the social aspect of language learning. This factor is comprised of constructs such as drive, instinctual behaviors, needs, and the attributes of anxiety and the need for achievement (Dörnyei, 1994, 2005). The social aspect is a unique facet in the language process because it builds on the first language of the student, thus complicating motivational factors. Thus, in addition to extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, social motivation could also have an influence on the student.

There are students who attempt upper-level classes because of self-efficacy, "personal beliefs in one's capabilities" (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2006, pp. 277); they choose to enroll in these courses for personal accomplishment (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martínez, 1992). This self-efficacy involves intrinsic motivation, which comes from the student, the parents, and the backgrounds of both. If parents instill self-efficacy in their child, then the student will likely strive for success in his or her subject matter, no matter the requirements expected from the school curriculum (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman et al., 1992). However, some of these goals can be extrinsically motivated because the pay-off can be grades or rewards from the parents.

It is important for educators to be able to pinpoint these differences; intrinsically motivated students are more internally motivated and need less coercion to succeed (Manami, 2003). According to Goldberg and Noels (2006), "students who are learning the language for intrinsic . . . reasons . . . will invest more effort and be more persistent in language learning than students who are learning the language for less self-determined reasons" (p. 425). Students who work primarily for rewards require a more extrinsically satisfying curriculum and learning environment.

Not only does one want to pinpoint sources of motivation in his or her students to attract

them to language study, but one must also want to maintain that motivation throughout the course of the students' studies. According to Oxford and Shearin (1994), motivation:

directly influences how often students use [second language] learning strategies, how much students interact with native speakers, how much input they receive in the language being learned (the target language), how well they do on curriculum-related achievement tests, how high their general proficiency level becomes, and how long they persevere and maintain [second language] skills after language study is over. (p. 12)

By being aware of the complexity of motivation in second language acquisition, educators can be better prepared to teach the students in a way that will maintain that motivation.

Methodology

Subjects

Seven students in Spanish 3 and Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish classes at a Central Florida high school participated in the study described in this paper. (Because of low enrollment, Spanish 4 was not offered by the school during the 2007-2008 school year.) This school was chosen due to its diverse community and large student body of 2,761 students: 76% white, 6% African American, 12% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 3% multiracial. It was one of only two "A" schools in its school district during the 2006-2007 school year and has been an "A" school for seven of the last nine years.

Five of the seven students were in Spanish 3, and two of the students were in AP Spanish. Of the students in Spanish 3, four of them were females and one was male. Of those in AP Spanish, one was female and one was male. Of the seven students in the study, four were heritage learners, or learners who came from a Spanish-speaking background; one was a native speaker, or a learner who was born in a Spanish-speaking country who now lives in the United

States; and two were neither heritage learners nor native speakers.

The seven students were separated into four focus groups. In the first focus group, there were two students. They were both in Spanish 3. Student A was female and considered a heritage learner; her mother was from Puerto Rico, and her father was from the United States. Student B was female and a heritage learner whose mother was Cuban.

In the second focus group, there were again two Spanish 3 students. Student C was male and a non-native speaker whose grandfather was from Spain. Student D was female and also a non-native speaker.

The third focus group consisted of only one student. Student E, also in Spanish 3, was female and a heritage learner. Her father's parents were from Puerto Rico and Colombia, but her mother was from the United States.

In the last focus group, there were again two students. These students were in AP Spanish. Student F was female and was considered a heritage learner; she learned Spanish in the United States and her parents were both from Colombia, although her father was born in the United States. Student G was male and was a native speaker whose country of origin was a Spanish-speaking country.

Instrumentation

The focus groups were asked a series of questions derived from a survey developed by Christopher E. Ely (1986) to collect data on student backgrounds and motivations in learning. Ely envisioned conceptualized clusters of questions; for example, Cluster A questions represented communicative goals. By using his own constructs, he developed a paper-and-pencil survey to find out why students were motivated in foreign language classrooms.

Ely's survey provided a resource from which this study's focus group questions were drawn:

1. What level Spanish are you in?
2. What levels have you completed from middle school until now?
3. Why are you still taking Spanish?
4. What is your motivation?
5. Do your grades have anything to do with your reason to continue with Spanish?
6. Does your culture have any effect on your choice to take Spanish?
7. Does your family have any effect on your choice to take Spanish?
8. Who has been your greatest influence?
9. Do you plan on continuing your studies in college?
10. Do you see yourself using Spanish in your future? 5 years? 10 years? 25 years?

Design and Procedure

Focus groups were selected as the means by which to collect the research data. While quantitative research has the benefits of exact figures and mathematical calculations, the qualitative nature of focus groups creates a more unique response in data collection. Today's researchers who use focus groups believe that "live encounters with groups of people will yield incremental answers to behavioral questions that go beyond the level of surface explanation" (Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2006, p. 11). The discourse generated in these groups drives the data. When employed correctly, focus group data can be used for the benefit of those who participated in the group (Krueger & Casey, 2000). By using focus groups, the researchers were able to be mediators of a conversation in which the interviewers' questions could spark a discussion.

Focus groups allow researchers "to better understand how people feel or think about an issue, product, or service" (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 4). In order to conduct an effective focus group, one must have a common theme that exists in the group; in this case, the common theme was the fact that the students were taking an upper-level Spanish course.

The participation of the students in this survey was completely voluntary and anonymous. Both parents and students were given letters to sign to give consent to participate in the study. To remove student identification, each student was assigned a letter in the order in which the permission letters were collected.

Students were informed that the teacher would not be privy to their responses and that their identities would remain confidential. During the focus group sessions, student responses were recorded. Each session lasted between 5-10 minutes, and each student was given equal opportunity to participate in the discussion. The discourse with the students was then transcribed.

Results and Interpretations

Overall, there was a great deal of variety in the focus group responses. However, there were a few common themes that could be extracted from the data. The motivational factors of cultural importance, parental and familial influence, and future applications of the language were present in all four of the groups. These factors are discussed in greater detail in the subsequent section of this paper.

Cultural Importance

In each focus group, it was evident that several of the students felt a connection to their heritage or culture. This connection seemed to be a motivation to continue studying Spanish. Many students wanted to seek out their cultural backgrounds, especially as they got older, and for many, the study of a language in school was the easiest way of accomplishing this goal.

For most of the students, cultural motivation came from familial influence. In Focus Group 1, when asked why she was taking Spanish 3, Student B responded: "Because my mom and her family are Cuban. They're from Cuba, so I want to understand what they're saying." When asked what she felt she had gained from language study, she stated: "I feel closer to my family. My mom's side."

In Focus Group 3, Student E's response reflected strong family ties as her reason for taking Spanish:

Well, my dad is Spanish, so he played a really big influence on my studying it; whenever I go to his grandma's house and my aunt's house, I want to know what's going on since he didn't teach me when I was little. That has a really strong influence on why I'm taking it.

Wanting to understand the language from one's family's culture was also prevalent in Focus Group 2. Grandparents were also mentioned as influences, as indicated by Student B's reason for pursuing language study: "Grandparents. I'm pretty sure my grandfather on my dad's side is from Spain." This respondent chose to pursue studies in Spanish because of his heritage. Even though he is not considered a heritage learner, since he did not know Spanish before entering the classroom, he still felt a calling toward his culture.

In the fourth focus group, when asked to provide an explanation for continuing to study Spanish, native speaker Student F answered, "My family, because we're Colombian and I'm really influenced by that and I have a great motivation to learn the language." Heritage speaker Student G responded: "My motivation? Just like I grew up with the language. I didn't grow up here in America so I start to forget some things about the language. The class actually helps me remember the language." Both students felt that continuing their studies in the upper-level classes would fortify their fluency in the language and help them maintain their cultures.

It is evident that culture was a great motivator for the high school students to continue their studies in upper-level Spanish classes. Whether they spoke Spanish fluently or not at all before starting formal classroom lessons, the heritage of those students had a great impact on why they continued language study past the second year. Although not the only motivational factor

in this study, culture appeared to be a major commonality observed among the students.

Parental and Familial Influence

Although culture was observed as a major motivational factor, the influence of parents was also seen as a major factor in those students continuing their studies in upper-level Spanish courses. This motivational aspect was considered as being different from culture because parents, no matter the culture, tend to have a major bearing on the classes students select. Parents do not need to be of Spanish-speaking heritage in order to want their children to study Spanish. The focus group data supported the influence that parents had on the choices students make with reference to their course choices. Some of the parental influences could be viewed as pressure, but the more important issue to consider was that parental opinions weighed heavily on their child's decisions.

Parental influence was obvious in the first focus group. Student A explained why she continued taking Spanish: "My mom. Seriously, my mom makes me . . . wants me to learn more Spanish. Even though she is Spanish and teaches me Spanish, she just wants me to learn the grammar and stuff." Student B agreed that her mother, like Student A's mother, was the person who encouraged her to take Spanish.

In Focus Group 2, there was also evidence that parents have an influence on students continuing to study Spanish. When asked if her family had any effect on why she was continuing to study Spanish, Student D stated:

I didn't want to take Spanish 3 this year, but they [my parents] really wanted me to because my dad feels that Spanish is like a second language here and he really wants me to learn it so I can be bilingual.

In this case, Student D was a non-native speaker, so her ethnic background did not play a role in her continuing her studies. However, it was evident that her family influenced her decision to continue.

Family influence was also apparent in the Focus Group 3 discourse. Student E shared that her dad was the greatest influence on her continuing language study. She further explained her mother's position: "Yeah. She wants me to continue it. She kinda wants me to know like what's going on too but it's mostly been my dad."

In the fourth focus group, students were asked who had the greatest influence on their studies of Spanish. Student F answered:

I would have to say my older brother because he was president of the International Club, and really helped with the influence of Spanish language and culture in the school and he has such a passion for it. I want to carry on what he started.

Unlike in the other groups in which parents had the greater influence, Student F's brother motivated her to study Spanish. She was a heritage learner, so her parents did have some bearing on her studies, but she felt that her brother was the greater influence. Her response supported the familial impact, specifically sibling influence, on her decision to continue language study.

College Acceptance

College acceptance was also a motivational factor for some of the students. Some were even aware that some colleges and universities require three or more years in the same foreign language in order to be considered a candidate for acceptance. Not only was the actual course requirement a factor, but grades and grade point average were also seen as factors leading to college acceptance.

When the second focus group was asked, "Why are you still taking Spanish?" Student D replied: "Because I hear it's really good for colleges if you do three years of Spanish, and sometimes they're a requirement, and I wanted to impress the college people." When later asked, "So what would you say is your biggest motivation to continue studying Spanish?" she

responded, "To get into a good college." She realized very early the importance of foreign language and the importance of college. She was motivated by the prospect of being accepted at a good college or university and that there was a possibility that her schools of choice would require that third year.

When the third focus group was asked, "Are there any other motivations?" Student E responded: "College. It looks better if you surpass what you're only required to do." She also realized the importance of appearing appealing to a college or university, especially with the large number of students applying for postsecondary education. She wanted to "look good" for the schools to which she will apply, and taking a third or fourth year of Spanish would indicate that she worked beyond the requirement in high school.

The students in this study planned early to satisfy the requirements of future colleges to which they would apply. Knowing that a third or fourth year might be required of them was a motivational factor in taking the upper-level courses because they wanted to ensure that they would attain that long sought-for college acceptance.

Other Motivations

Other than studying Spanish for the above reasons, some students cited other motivations for exceeding the two-year language study requirement. Some considered the possibility of getting a head start on working toward a major or a minor in Spanish. Others envisioned travel and acknowledged the importance of learning the language and culture in order to authentically experience the countries in which the language is spoken: "I love to travel. I really want to go to Spain and I want to learn the language and I think it [language study] will really help me" (Student D). Other students recognized the importance of knowing another language for professional reasons. According to Student C, "I think it will be real useful for getting jobs, especially since I want to become a

doctor and there's a chance that I might have a lot of Hispanic patients. That could help a lot."

Limitations

Components of this study could be changed in order to broaden the conclusions so that they could apply to other languages and other schools. Due to the low number of students who participated in the study, the generalizability of the study is quite limited. With a larger population, the conclusions could be applied to a broader population. Future studies could include upper-level high school courses of other major languages, such as French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Latin. It would also be beneficial to hold focus groups at other schools in the same school district as well as other school districts to increase the generalizability of the findings. With this data in hand, stakeholders in foreign language education would be better equipped to tailor the curriculum to be in tandem with student motivations for language study.

Future Implications

It is evident that high school students are very complex beings, and each one has his/her reasons for beginning and continuing their foreign language studies. Educators at all levels of instructors need to understand the complexity of these students and strive to address as many motivational factors as possible. If educators, administrators, and legislators were to take into consideration the variety of student motivations when making curricular decisions, perhaps the enrollment in upper-level foreign language courses would rise.

Future educators must realize the importance of contextualizing the language taught in the classroom in order to build motivation from the very beginning. Students need to see that learning a language is not just memorizing vocabulary and verb tenses; language study also entails learning about the music, food, customs, social norms, interaction modes, nonverbal communication, etc. of the target culture. Students must see language as a meaningful, relevant, beneficial, and enriching

part of life in a global world. They must see how it can contribute to *their* lives, *their* futures. We live in a country where knowledge of a second language is growing in value, so by motivating students from early on, there is a greater likelihood of students populating upper-level language courses.

To increase the relevancy of language study, educators must look for a variety of techniques to make the language come alive to today's students, who are more likely to play a video game than study. Such a technique is to embed the language in contextualized, meaningful scenarios that simulate real-life occurrences. For example, educators can create experiences in which students can interact with native speakers. According to Hernández (2006):

Such opportunities provide language learners with meaningful opportunities to use the language to explore the linguistic and cultural differences of the L2 culture, in addition to allowing them to reflect on their similarities and differences between their own culture and the L2 culture. (p. 611)

If students themselves can experience the benefits of interacting in the language, they will be more motivated to learn the language. Students will have the chance to apply in a meaningful way what they have learned. Students surrounded by the target language will be able to glean more benefits to learning the language since they would be using it in a real-life situation.

In conclusion, it is imperative that educators become aware of what is motivating students to study languages. While many students may initially be extrinsically motivated by grades and parental influences to begin language study, if language study is made meaningful to *their* lives, students may develop intrinsic motivation as they come to see that there is more to learning a language than vocabulary and grammar. The curricular inclusion of such activities would allow the students to see real-life applications and events in which to use the language, hopefully

motivating them to continue language study with fluency in mind. Knowing what motivates the students can help teachers develop rich, authentic, relevant, student-centered curricula and activities that inspire the continuation of language study into the upper-level classes and ideally beyond the high school years.

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Reinhold Schlieper

The Love of Language: Teaching Students in the Affective Domain

Teachers of language do deal with language also on the affective level. In other words, our students must not only love what they do with language, but they also must love the language in some way. We achieve that kind of increase of affection for language by designing projects for the discovery of the culture, the soul of which finds its expression in the language. The design of a Roman house, the culinary delights of French cuisine, the wall poster of Romantic Neuschwanstein, these all contribute to the affinity the student is to develop for the language and its culture.

A rudimentary appreciation of currents between languages is also part of the appreciation of linguistic diversity. We have classrooms that contain speakers of Spanish and English in many of our schools. We also have students of German. Here is one learning activity that may well help students converge by way of various origins to one common goal. Studying comparatively Jorge Luis Borges' "Al Idioma Alemán" [To the German Language] will introduce students not only to the love of one target language but also to a cross-cultural enjoyment of language. In a culturally diverse classroom, the comparative reading of Borges' poem is sure to delight speakers of various languages and to move them into the center of attention on the part of others. I have frequently been quite successful by asking students to research a particular issue and to share their findings with the classroom. Highly allusive, Borges' poem contains ample road signs toward new discovery for inquisitive students willing to read, research, and share. Borges writes:

AL IDIOMA ALEMÁN

Mi destino es la lengua castellana,
El bronce de Francisco de Quevedo,
Pero en la lenta noche caminada,
Me exaltan otras músicas más íntimas.
Alguna me fue dada por la sangre-

Oh voz de Shakespeare y de la Escritura-
Otras por el azar, que es dadivoso,
Pero a tí, dulce lengua de Alemania,
Te he elegido y buscado, solitario.
A través de vigiliás y gramáticas,

De la jungla de las declinaciones,
Del diccionario, que no acierta nunca
Con el matiz preciso, fui acercándome.
Mis noches están llenas de Virgilio,
Dije una vez; también pude haber dicho

de Hölderlin y de Angelus Silesius.
Heine me dio sus altos ruiseñores;
Goethe, la suerte de un amor tardío,
A la vez indulgente y mercenario;
Keller, la rosa que una mano dejó

En la mano de un muerto que la amaba
Y que nunca sabrá si es blanca o roja.
Tú, lengua de Alemania, eres tu obra
Capital: el amor entrelazado
de las voces compuestas, las vocals

Abiertas, los sonidos que permiten
El estudioso hexámetro del griego
Y tu rumor de selvas y de noches.
Te tuve alguna vez. Hoy, en la linde
De los años cansados, te diviso
Lejana como el álgebra y la luna.

Jorge Luis Borges
en *El oro de los tigres*, 1972 (Borges).

The following article by Professor Rennert elucidates the features of this poem that highlight the aspects of German culture and language that Borges admired. An English translation of the poem appears at the end of Rennert's essay. For the culturally diverse classroom, the poem exemplifies the admiration that one culture can bring to another. And the poem also gives occasion to practice this cross-cultural experience in and of itself. Spanish speakers can admire the eloquence of the poem in its native form as well as the admiration of the German language that the poem advocates. The same awe can be inspired in speakers of English and of German or in students of all those languages. For the culturally and linguistically diverse classroom, this poem offers a rich learning experience that will make minds desire cultural enrichment and further learning. Teachers should make this poem part of their set of motivational tools in the classroom.

Hal. H Rennert

An Argentine Connection: Jorge Luis Borges' Affinity for German

This article discusses the unusual poem by Borges "To the German Language," written in the early 1980s. The investigation is intended as a contribution to the cross-cultural side of the second language learning process. It affirms for the reader – as indeed Borges does in the poem itself – the connection of the language of another national tradition to its literature. The article further elaborates on the unusualness of the poem and in doing so makes a contribution to the interpretation of a lyric poem without employing a self-indulgent theoretical approach. Clearly, Borges' German was a life-long companion and as such an important part of his biography and Weltanschauung. For the general reader an English translation of the entire poem is included.

Borges' poem "To the German Language" is quite unusual in the tradition of the poetry of Modernism. If we survey in general the objects of affection or affinity by poets in the twentieth century, it may be a beloved person or a child, an element of nature, or, in the famous case of Rainer Maria Rilke, an ancient Greek sculpture, specifically "The Archaic Torso of Apollo." In the

Reference

Borges, Jorge Luis. "Al Idioma Alemán." Federación de Asociaciones de Germanistas en España, Domingo, 2 de noviembre de 2008, November 2, 2008. <<http://www.fage.es/borges.htm>>.

Biographical Statement

Dr. Reinhold Schlieper teaches ethics, philosophy, English language and literature, German language and literature, and a course in science fiction that spans American and East-European masterpieces at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Previously, he taught ESL in Libya and in Saudi Arabia and enjoys taking American students to study in Bremen, Germany.

wake of the two world wars, the poetic language of Modernism was also frequently expanded to serve ideological needs, as, for instance, in the poetry of Bertolt Brecht. But I know of no instance of a poem being devoted to another national language. Secondly, and equally unusual, How does one talk poetically and personally about another language? In all those

ways, Borges' poem "To the German Language" is unusual.

Thirdly, there is an element in Borges' poem that confirms the belief of those of us who subscribe to the notion that there is a viable connection and a continuum in the study of a second language to the study of the literature of a given national culture. Borges' affection for German transcends the use of language as merely serving every day purposes. There isn't a single reference in the poem that reduces the language to utilitarian needs.

No exact date of this poem can be ascertained. No doubt, Borges wrote it rather late in his life, probably in the early 1980s, as such phrases as "Goethe, the good fortune of late love," and "now at the far extreme of weary years," suggest. The main message is straight forward: Those things in life that we inherit or that we are born with or that are assigned to us in our educational and professional progress we pretty much take for granted, but those things we select ourselves and work hard at, we value more, even though, in old age, our grip on them may not be as firm.

Borges' affinity for Hölderlin, Goethe and Heine can be readily understood. He shares this admiration with many other writers and poets. For a poet who enjoys role-playing as Borges does, these three poets are particularly well chosen. Borges mentions Hölderlin in the same breath with Virgil. In other words, Hölderlin for Borges is an intermediary between the Greek gods and intellectual tradition of eighteenth century European culture. Goethe, in turn, is Borges' model for the abiding power of "late love" as is amply demonstrated in Goethe's poetic cycles, "West-östlicher Divan" and his "Marienbader Elegie." In contrast, Heine, although one of Germany's great love poets, is often credited for enriching the German literary language with wit, irony and levity. It is not surprising for Borges to seek out Heine's expanding voice as one of the first examples of the writer-in-exile and as one an example of the famous/infamous German-Jewish symbiosis. The seventeenth century Angelus Silesius and the nineteenth century Swiss-German writer [Gottfried] Keller, whose

primary genre is prose, are not so obvious and even a bit mysterious. The inclusion of these two more or less non-canonical German writers underscores Borges' determined individualistic, non-conventional choices.

We might ask why Borges chose the poetic form rather than, let us say, the essay form in talking about the German Language? The answer may lie in the fact that the emotive nature of affection and affinity requires the more intimate form of lyric poetry. And in order to flesh-out his ideas, the next step for the poet is in the direction of personification, as such phrases as "but you, gentle language," "I chose you" and "Once, I had you ... I feel you have become/as out of reach" suggest. We note parenthetically here, that the translator, Alastair Reid, skillfully renders the word "dulce" of the original Spanish in (line 8) into the equally human-like "gentle." But youthful desire has turned into resignation for the lyric voice, which, at the conclusion of the poem, sounds so much older: "Now, at the far extreme/of weary years." In the process of personifying that sought-after other language, which, as it were, turned into a lover, a lover who very human-like slips away, refusing to be just another possession.

A more detailed investigation of Borges connection to German, both on a linguistic as well as literary level, could very well be a rewarding research project. It is beyond the scope of this brief article devoted to the poem "To the German Language," but Borges has also commented and written repeatedly on German writers and philosophers that are not mentioned in this poem, particularly on Friedrich Nietzsche and Franz Kafka. But that, again, is the subject of a subsequent and more expansive exploration. Suffice it to say that in the Latin American context, Jorge Luis Borges is one of the most cosmopolitan writers of the twentieth century.

To the German Language

My destiny is in the Spanish language,
the bronze word of Francisco de Quevedo,
but in the long, slow progress in the night,
different, more intimate musics move me.
Some have been handed down to me by blood

voices of Shakespeare, language of the Scrip-
tures -

others by chance, which has been generous;
but you, gentle language of Germany,
I chose you and sought you out alone.
By way of grammar books and patient study,

through the thick of undergrowth and declen-
sions,

the dictionary, which never puts its thumb on
the precise nuance, I kept moving closer.

My nights were full of overtones of Virgil,
I once said; but I could have well as named

Hölderlin, Angelus Silesius.

Heine lent me his lofty nightingales;
Goethe the good fortune of late love,
at the same time both greedy and indulgent;
Keller, the rose which one hand leaves behind

in the closed fist of a dead man who adored it,
who will never know if it is white or red.

German language, you are your masterpiece:
love interwound in all your compound voices
and open vowels, sounds which accommodate

the studious hexameters of Greek
and undercurrents of jungles and of nights.

Once, I had you. Now, at the far extreme
of weary years, I feel you have become
as out of reach as algebra and the moon.

Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986)
(Translation by Alastair Reid)

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Borges: A Reader. A Selection from the Writings of Jorge Luis Borges. Ed. Emir Rodriguez Monegal & Alastair Reid. New York: E. P. Dutton (1981), pg. 320.

Biographical Statement

Hal. H Rennert was a professor in German language and literature at the University of Florida 1979-2007, and is now at Louisiana State University. Next to publishing papers on nineteenth and twenties centuries German literature, he has taught German to American students abroad and has provided in-service professional development seminars for teachers of German.



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Reviewed by Gregory Thompson

Introducing Second Language Acquisition.

Muriel Saville-Troike. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. v - 206. \$33.99 paper.

This monograph is a continuing part of the Cambridge University Press series titled *Cambridge Introductions to Language and Linguistics*. The author of this text is the well-renowned Muriel Saville-Troike, an emeritus Regent's Professor at the University of Arizona. As a pioneer in the field of bilingualism and ESL with a career that spanned over four decades, her research and books on bilingualism, the ethnography of communication, and her landmark work on the foundations of ESL have truly contributed to and expanded the field of second language acquisition (SLA).

This text takes the approach of introducing the field of SLA to the novice undergraduate student who has had little or no exposure to the linguistics and/or the terminology associated with the research and study in the field of SLA. This textbook has in mind an audience that would include principally those who are taking a course in linguistics or SLA for the first time. This book could be used by instructors of such introductory SLA courses or as one of the supplemental texts in a class with a large component on the tenets of SLA. The author states that her purpose in writing this text is threefold, "(1) to provide a basic level of knowledge about second language phenomena to students as part of their general education in humanities, the social sciences, and education; (2) to stimulate interest in second language learning and provide guidance for further reading and study; and (3) to offer practical help to second language learners and future teachers" (p. vii). She addresses the different areas of SLA from adult and child acquisition as well as presents in limited detail

many of the subfields of which SLA is composed. While impossible to treat all of these areas in great detail, the text organizes the material in such a way as to provide a structured approach to the field and is especially useful in defining the terminology associated with SLA as well as in providing many clear examples that will help the novice student.

The text is a very manageable length with 206 pages including the references, the index, and a very helpful glossary with succinct definitions of the major concepts discussed in the different chapters. Also, each of the chapters includes a summary of the major points at the end and given that the design of this monograph is that of a textbook, each chapter includes activities for self-study and evaluation as well as additional activities that could serve as review questions, topics for discussion during a class period, or written assignments that would require the students to evaluate the material and reflect on what had been presented. These questions and activities are very useful comprehension checks especially with the novice undergraduate student. An answer key is included for the activities that are labeled as self-study so that students can perform a brief self-evaluation of the main points.

The text is divided into seven chapters with each chapter including a chapter preview as well as a short list of key terms. Chapter 1 provides a very brief introduction to what is second language acquisition as well as provides definitions relating to types of languages i.e. first, second, native, etc. Chapter 2 provides the basis for SLA and research in the field addressing the quantity

of bilingual and multilingual populations throughout the world. She also introduces the concept of language learning for first language learners (L1) and second language learners (L2) as well as the frameworks from which linguists approach the study of SLA. A brief explanation here is also given of the differences in learning an L1 and an L2. Finally, a very general overview of Universal Grammar is given starting with the poverty-of-the-stimulus argument as well as basic information on principles and parameters.

Chapter 3 differs from the previous chapter in that it provides the different research perspectives to SLA that have been used since the 1950's. All of the major theories and veins of research are represented here from Contrastive Analysis to Morpheme Order Studies. In addition, the author provides a clear and understandable explanation of the concept of interlanguage and how it relates to SLA. Whereas Chapter 3 covers the linguistic influences in SLA, in Chapter 4, the author summarizes some of the influences from the field of psychology in SLA. This chapter proves to be overly ambitious in trying to summarize many of the influences from psychology in the field of SLA. The treatment of the Connectionist Model and Information Processing do not receive enough attention to make them clear to the inexperienced undergraduate. However, the inclusion of the section on learner differences including age, sex, personality, aptitude, etc. provides important information especially for the language student.

Chapter 5 delves into the social contexts in SLA through the division of the social framework according to the macro and micro levels. Especially well-written in this chapter is the information on input and interaction which covers Krashen's Monitor Model as well as input modifications such as foreigner talk. Chapter 6 further addresses the notion of communicative competence. This chapter offers a summary of the many other types competences that are needed in acquiring a second language i.e. pragmatic, academic, and interpersonal. These

are presented according to the different linguistic fields of study such as vocabulary, morphology, syntax, etc. The final chapter summarizes the aforementioned chapters in terms of their relevance in L2 teaching and learning offering practical suggestions for learners and teachers alike.

As previously mentioned, this text is meant to be a very broad overview of the field of second language acquisition. While some readers may complain of the lack of complexity of the seven chapters, as has been mentioned in this review in certain areas, one must keep in mind the intent to present this information to the beginning undergraduate student with limited exposure to these principles, ideas, and theories. An in-depth text in all of the areas presented in *Introducing Second Language Acquisition* would need several thousand pages and be inaccessible to most novice students. This is a very informative and easy-to-read introduction to the field of SLA that provides explanations in simple language that would well serve the audience for which it was intended as well as provide a broad review for the reader interested in exposure to the breadth and range of SLA. *Introducing Second Language Acquisition* is an excellent introduction that is likely to prime the interest of its readers to want to explore in greater detail the vast and varied fields and subfields of SLA.

Biographical Statement

Gregory Thompson is an assistant professor at the University of Central Florida. He has a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT) and conducts research in L2 acquisition and FL teaching.