

# Florida Foreign Language Journal



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## Florida Foreign Language Journal Fall 2010

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## Editors Acknowledgement

My sincere thanks go out to the review board and the authors of the manuscript in this issue of the Florida Foreign Language Journal issue. The mission statement of Florida Foreign Language Journal clearly states that the Journal is the official academic organ of the Florida Foreign Language Association, and that its objective is to serve as a vehicle for expression by teachers, students and the greater general public who have an interest in furthering the instruction and knowledge of foreign languages. This issue features a research article from Ransom Gladwin at Valdosta State University on his investigation on languages spoken in the Wiregrass, an area North Florida/South Georgia where he discusses the survey results on the maintenance of the languages spoken there. Geoffrey Revard offers the Latin teachers a treat in his contribution on the epic of Aeneid, which should please the Advanced Placement teachers in Florida's high schools. Alysse Rasmussen from Valencia Community College gives a historical perspective of who teaches American Sign Language (ASL) in Florida. ASL is on Florida's Department of Education list of languages accepted to meet foreign languages requirements. **Having Active Participation Prepare You (HAPPY Hour)** is the brainchild of Karen Verkler who describes the weekly professional development seminars and workshops highlighting Best Practices at the University of Central Florida's teacher education program. John De Mado, popular with FFLA conference attendees, offers a special activity on language learning with music that has proven successful, and is popular with foreign language teachers. Enjoy the reading and share them with your peers. I invite you to submit manuscripts on research and review-oriented articles in the area of: foreign language education and technology, program articulation, ESOL, culture, film, travel, FLES, national certification, multicultural instruction, multilevel teaching, diversity, foreign language advocacy, international programs and initiatives. See the guidelines in this journal on submissions, or visit the website [www.ffla.us](http://www.ffla.us) for more information.

## President's Corner

I am happy to introduce this issue of the Florida Foreign Language Journal. I sincerely hope you will enjoy the articles and find them of interest and that the readings will add to your professional development. Thank you to the contributors. I would like to thank you for allowing me to direct the course of the Florida Foreign Language Association Inc. from October 17, 2009 to October 16, 2010. At the beginning there were many doubts as to how to achieve the final goal of bringing to you many opportunities for academic and professional development. I was well aware of the financial situation that all of us have been going through; every school district had budget cuts, many of the companies who supported our mission had to evaluate their finances. We as teachers had to also review our financial situation. The future was financially uncertain in my eyes. These doubts encouraged me to speak for languages to the people with whom I came in contact; they also drove me to write to as many private citizens and private companies to ask for their support. The efforts helped FFLA a little bit; however, I also became aware that the conference came to reality because of its members. Members like you who took the initiative to submit a proposal because you wanted to share your knowledge and expertise with your colleagues. Members like you looking for opportunities to learn more about Foreign Language teaching and learning. Members like you who invite another educator to become a member. All

of you as members are the driving force of our association, your presence at the conference, your contributions to and your promotion of FFLA are essential to our organization.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve you as this year's president, and I also thank each individual of the Board of the Florida Foreign Language Association, your support and help during this year have been of great value. This year has been an incredible experience.

I hope you have many opportunities at the conference to expand your horizons. Enjoy the conference.

Respectfully,

Fernando Mayoral, President

Florida Foreign Language Association

October, 2010.

## **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 greater 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. The era where educational funding is often limited, where foreign, immigrant, and migrant students seek instructional equity, and where a 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 a foreign language 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 issue 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 fostering better learning conditions and results fro our students and teachers. FFLJ urges all readers and participants to become ardent advocates to further and safeguard foreign language practices.

## Manuscript Guidelines

The editor and editorial board welcome research and review-oriented articles in the area of: foreign language education and technology, program articulation, ESOL, culture, film, travel, FLES, national certification, multicultural instruction, multilevel teaching, diversity, foreign language advocacy, international programs and initiatives, availability of career positions etc.

We encourage you to submit previously unpublished articles for publication in the second issue that will feature pedagogical concerns, strategies, and successes in the language classroom, as well as methodologies, teacher preparation, ESOL, National Board Certification, and/or culture and diversity.

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 will communicate the comments and decision on acceptance to each author.

Please follow the manuscript guidelines and send your submission by June 1, 2011

### **Requirements - Manuscripts must:**

1. Appeal to the instructional, administrative, or research interests of foreign/second language educators at K-16 levels of instruction.
2. Be substantive and present new ideas or new applications of information related to current trends and teaching in the language field.
3. Be well written, clearly organized, and carefully proofed.
4. Include a complete reference list at the end.
5. Be formatted according to guidelines in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Ed. (2001). APA Style Resource.
6. Be no longer than 12-15 double-spaced pages in 12 pt. Times New Roman typeface, with 1½ inch margins, black text on white paper.
7. Be sent in triplicate (3 copies are necessary for review purposes).
8. Be submitted with no authors' names indicated (for review purposes).
9. 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.
10. Include an abstract of no more than 150 words.
11. Be sent with a biographical statement of 50 words or fewer for each author, including information on current job or title, institution, degrees held, professional experience, and any other relevant information.
12. Be sent in both hard copy and electronic formats. The electronic version must be saved as a Microsoft Word, .txt or .rtf document. Electronic versions may be submitted on a CD (PC compatible), or as an e-mail attachment.
13. Include any figures and tables in camera-ready format. Photographs, graphics, figures and tables must contribute to article content. Please be absolutely certain that all

materials are complete with caption/credit information. Figures and Tables must be appropriately labeled in the article.

14. Not have been published previously and may not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Manuscripts submitted to FFLJ cannot be returned, so authors should keep a copy for themselves. Submissions will be acknowledged within one month of receipt.

The editor of FFLJ reserves the right to make editorial changes in any manuscript accepted for publication to enhance clarity or style. The author will be consulted only if the editing has been substantial, though the author will be able to review the article prior to publication.

Please follow the manuscript guidelines and send your submission by June 15, 2011 to:

Dr. Betty Nielsen Green, Managing Editor  
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#### **Book Review Guidelines**

- Materials must have been published within the last three years.
- Review 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) bibliographical statement.
- Reviews should be submitted as an email attachment in Microsoft Word.
- Send review to Marcela Van Olphen e-mail [Vanolphen@coedu.usf.edu](mailto:Vanolphen@coedu.usf.edu)

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS OF REVIEWS IS May 1, 2011**



Ransom Gladwin

**Meso-American Languages in the Wiregrass: An Investigation of Language Maintenance in North Florida/South Georgia**

Abstract:

This study used oral survey methods to examine first the diversity of Meso-American languages and second the potential language maintenance or loss of these languages among Meso-American language speakers in Wiregrass country (North Florida-South Georgia). Language shift, the process of gradually changing from one first language to another first language over successive generations, often occurs among displaced immigrant populations (Fishman, 1967). In a similar study Gladwin (2004) predicted potential Meso-American language shift/loss among surveyed Meso-American language speaking respondents in Southeast Florida. The current study in North Florida/South Georgia also predicts potential Meso-American language loss, however, the present findings showed greater linguistic diversity and a stronger loyalty to Meso-American languages among the respondents in Wiregrass country.

Research Context:

Using oral survey methods, Gladwin (2004) examined potential language maintenance among Meso-American language speaking communities in Southeast Florida. The study surveyed seventeen Meso-American language speaking adults. Among these respondents, four Meso-American languages, K'iche', Q'anjob'al, Mam, and Tz'utujil, were reported. One hundred percent of those surveyed wanted their children to speak Spanish, and ninety-percent wanted their children to speak English, with economic and educational reasons cited in support of learning both languages. There were home-directed rationales stated to support learning Meso-American languages, but thirty-five percent were negative toward the maintenance of Meso-American languages among their children or future children. The study results were consistent with earlier studies of immigrant Meso-American language speaking communities (Penalosa, 1985; Light, 1995) in that they suggest eventual intergenerational Meso-American language loss among the Guatemalan-Maya of coastal Southeast Florida.

The study called for "similar studies to be done with larger sample sizes" (Gladwin, 2004, page 12) to establish reliability for the results among the Meso-American language

speaking immigrant community. The current study follows this recommendation. Using similar research questions and study methods, the present study examined forty-three Meso-American language speakers in the area of North Florida-South Georgia called “Wiregrass country” to first determine the variety of Meso-American languages spoken and to second investigate intergenerational language maintenance with regards to Meso-American languages.

Historical Context:

Meso-America as a geographic and cultural entity stretches from central Mexico to Honduras. The region included several of the most sophisticated cultures of the Americas, including the Olmec, the Teotihuacan, the Maya, and the Aztec. These pre-Columbian cultures flourished before the arrival of the Spanish in the 15th and 16th centuries, with the Maya and the Aztec still widely remembered today. The Maya, whose verified dwellings date to c. 1800 BC along the Pacific Coast of Guatemala, were known for their complex mathematical systems and their artisan tradition (McKill, 2004). The principle Mayan language, Cholan-Maya, was developed in the Yucatan area and parts of adjacent Chiapas and Guatemala c. 2100 BC (Campbell, 1984). The Aztecs were similarly known for their building skills and resourcefulness, along with their aggressiveness. The name Aztec was given by the Spanish to speakers of the Nahuatl language in the central Mexico area, but anthropologists date the Aztecs to c. 1100 AD (Blanton, Kowalewski, Feinman, & Finstein, 1993).

Thus, many modern day Guatemalans, Mexicans, and other Central Americans, residing in or near their ancestral homes, are direct descendents of Meso-American cultures. They speak Tzozil, Mixteco, Cajoval, and dozens more Meso-American languages – many direct linguistic descendants of the language(s) of the Maya and the Aztec.

However, the Guatemalan Civil War, the longest in modern Latin American History (from the 1960s to the 1990s), decimated these populations (Wilkinson, 2002). Indigenous peoples were targeted by all sides with premeditated mass murder, systematic rape, and forced relocation. This nearly half-century of sustained violence led to the “Maya Diaspora” in which hundreds of thousands of ethnic Meso-Americans sought legal refugee status in and/or fled to the United States (Wellmeier, 1998).

Many of these immigrants live and work in “Wiregrass country,” which extends across South Georgia and into Northwest Florida. The tall grasses found beneath the pine forests give the region its name. This historically poor, under populated region has long relied on farming as its principle means of survival (McGregory, 1997). Today farming continues as a major regional occupation and the population of new Latino immigrants continues to rise, as the region “relies on Latino migrant farm laborers to harvest several key crops . . . and many of them are choosing to settle in the area permanently” (McGregory, 1997, p. 36). José "Israel" Cortez, Coordinator for Southern Pine Migrant Education Agency for South Georgia and a member of the Latino Commission for a New Georgia, shared that many migrants come to North Florida and South Georgia from the extreme south of Mexico, primarily from the Chiapas area and the lands along the border of Mexico and Guatemala. Many of these immigrants speak a Meso-American language in addition to Spanish, and immigrant families often reside in Florida and work in Georgia, or vice-versa (J. Cortez, personal communication, April 4, 2008).

Issues of Language Maintenance:

Language bestows a sense of community, kinship, and value to a people and its loss is a significant cultural impairment (Fishman, 2000). However, language shift, the process of gradually changing from one first language to another over successive generations, often occurs among displaced immigrant populations. Language shift occurs to the language(s) of the dominant surrounding socio-economic forces (Fishman, 1967). The incentives linked to dominant languages include access to work and/or school. Language loss is a major linguistic issue today in the United States with even the most widely spoken minority language, Spanish, showing language loss (Fishman, 1996). Language loss of less-dominant languages is the common result of contact between linguistic groups (Paulstone, 1994), and language shift away from Indigenous languages is a reality for most Native American societies (Goodfellow & Pauline, 2003). Indigenous languages in the United States face a difficult future with forty-five of the one hundred and seventy-five Native American languages still spoken in the United States predicted to soon be extinct (Crawford, 1996).

Among Meso-American language speakers in the United States such language loss has been documented. Peñalosa (1985) concluded from his investigation of a Los Angeles, California

Guatemalan community that the members were in a state of transistional Spanish/Mayan/English trilingualism away from Spanish/ Maya bilingualism and towards Spanish/English bilingualism. Light (1995) investigated the community a decade later and verified much of what Peñalosa found, but with English increasingly utilized among the youth. Gladwin's (2004) study of Mayan language speakers in Southeast Florida similarly predicted a potential language shift/loss of Mayan languages.

Research Questions:

Using oral survey questions asked in Spanish, the study hoped to answer the following research questions concerning the Meso-American language speaking residents of Wiregrass country.

1. What characteristics do the respondents display in terms of age, gender, and number of children?
2. What languages do the respondents speak?
3. What languages do their children speak?
4. What are the linguistic attitudes of the parents toward their children learning specific languages?
5. Will intergenerational language maintenance among these communities occur with regards to Meso-American languages?

Where Interviewed:

After biographical information was assessed (gender and age), the following questions (in Spanish) were asked of each individual surveyed:

1. ¿De dónde es usted? ¿Where are you from?
2. ¿Tiene hijos? ¿Do you have children?

If the respondent answered no, the interviewer skipped questions three and six.

3. ¿Dónde viven sus hijos? ¿Where do your children live?

4. ¿Cuáles son los idiomas que habla? ¿What languages do you speak?

5. ¿Cuándo usa \_\_\_\_\_? ¿When do you use \_\_\_\_\_?

This question was repeated for each language spoken.

6. ¿Cuáles son los idiomas que hablan sus hijos? ¿What language(s) do your children speak?

7. ¿Quiere que sus hijos hablen \_\_\_\_\_? ¿Por qué?

Do you want your children to speak \_\_\_\_\_? Why?

This question was asked in regards to English, the Meso-American language(s) spoken by the respondent, and Spanish.

### Results:

Forty-three Meso-American language speakers were surveyed in Wiregrass country. The respondents were surveyed in multiple locations (for example, along the Florida/Georgia border near Lake Park, Georgia and between Tallahassee, Florida and Thomasville, Georgia) and in varied sites (for example, a medical clinic, church, and worksite).

Demographic results revealed a population sixty-three percent male and thirty-seven percent female. Three respondents appeared to be less than twenty-years of age, and three respondents appeared to be greater than fifty years of age. Thus, thirty-seven of the respondents, eighty-six percent, appeared to be between the ages of twenty and fifty. All of the respondents were from either Mexico (twenty-five respondents, fifty-eight percent) or Guatemala (eighteen respondents, forty-two percent). Thirty-seven of the respondents, eighty-six percent, reported having children, while six respondents, fourteen percent, reported not having children.

Only speakers of Meso-American languages were included in the study data. Forty respondents, ninety-three percent, reported speaking Spanish and were Meso-American/Spanish bilingual speakers. Six respondents, fourteen percent, also spoke English and were English/Meso-American/Spanish trilingual. Twelve Meso-American languages were reported. Thirteen respondents spoke Tzotzil (or a close linguistic variation) and ten respondents spoke Mam. Six respondents spoke Nahuatl, five respondents spoke K'anjo'al and four respondents spoke K'iche'. Two respondents spoke Zapoteco. One respondent each spoke Kaqchikel, Maya, Ixil, Tojolabal, Tarasco, and Mixteco.

The respondents reported varied times for when the languages are used. For Meso-American language use, twenty-one reported Meso-American language use with *family*; nineteen reported Meso-American language use at *home*, ten reported Meso-American language use with *friends*; two reported Meso-American language use at *work*. For Spanish speakers, nineteen reported Spanish use at *work*; eleven reported Spanish use at *home*, six reported Spanish use at *church*; four reported Spanish use with *family*; two reported Spanish use with *friends*. For English speakers, five reported English use at *work*; two reported English use with *family*; one reported English use at *school*. Responses of “always” or “never” were common with ten responding that they always speak a Meso-American language(s), thirteen responding that they always speak Spanish, and one responding that he/she always speaks English. Thirteen reported that they never speak English.

All forty-three respondents, one hundred percent, wanted their children (or future children) to learn English. When asked why, thirty-two responses linked to *work*; nine responses linked to *improvement*; nine responses linked to *education*; three responses linked to *live here*; two responses linked to *help others*. All forty-three respondents, one hundred percent, also desired their children to learn Spanish. When asked why, ten responses linked to *homeland*; five responses linked to *help others*; three responses linked to *education*; three responses linked to *work*; two responses linked to *family*. Thirty-two respondents, seventy-four percent, wanted their children to learn a Meso-American language(s). When asked why, nineteen responses linked to *homeland*; twelve responses linked to *family*; one response linked to *education*. Eleven respondents, twenty-four percent, did not want their children to learn a Meso-American language.

Thirty-seven respondents had children. Of these, twenty-three, sixty-two percent, reported that their children speak a Meso-American language. Fourteen respondents, thirty-eight percent, reported that their children do not speak a Meso-American language.

### Discussion:

The age and gender breakdown (a majority young and male) reflects a common gender breakdown found in immigrant communities in the United States. Also, Mexico and Guatemala are the two most common countries of origin of U.S. migrant workers (Passel, 2006) and many

migrants come to Wiregrass country from the Chiapas area of South Mexico and the lands along the border of Mexico and Guatemala (J. Cortez, personal communication, April 4, 2008).

The 2004 study respondents reported four Mayan languages, K'iche', Q'anjob'al, Mam, and Tz'utujil. The present study respondents reported twelve Meso-American languages. Thirteen respondents reported speaking Tzotzil and ten reported speaking Mam. Tzotzil is a major Mayan language spoken by over a quarter of a million people; similarly, Mam is a major Mayan language spoken by over half a million people. Five other languages were reported by multiple respondents: Nahuatl (six respondents), K'anjob'al (five respondents), K'iche' (four respondents), and Zapoteco (two respondents). Modern Nahuatl, of which the Aztecs spoke a classical variant, is the most commonly spoken Meso-American language in Mexico with over a million and half speakers. K'anjob'al and K'iche' are both Mayan languages. K'iche' is part of the same sub-family as Mam, with roughly the same number of speakers, while K'anjob'al is a less frequently spoken language. Zapoteco is a commonly spoken language in Mexico, with over half a million speakers, of the third major Meso-American linguistic family, Oto-Manguean (Campbell, 2000; SIL International, 2009).

Six languages each (Kaqchikel, Maya, Ixil, Tojolabal, Tarasco, and Mixteco) were reported spoken by just one respondent. Kaqchikel is a major Mayan language spoken by over half a million people. Maya, sometimes called Yucatec-Maya, is a major Mayan language spoken by almost a million people. Tojolabal is a much less frequently spoken Mayan language of the same sub-family as K'anjob'al. Ixil is a less frequently spoken Mayan language of the same sub-family as Mam. Tarasco is a less frequently spoken Meso-American language that is not a Mayan or Aztec language, as it does not share common linguistic traits with either linguistic groups. Mixteco, like Zapoteco, is commonly spoken in Mexico, has roughly half a million speakers, and is of the Oto-Manguean language family (Campbell, 2000; SIL International, 2009).

Thus, the study reported languages representing the three major Meso-American linguistic families: Oto-Manguean, Mayan, and Aztec-Tanoan. Specifically, Ixil, K'anjob'al, Kaqchikel, K'iche', Mam, Maya, Tojolabal, and Tzotzil are of the Mayan family. Nahuatl is of the Aztec family. Mixteco and Zapoteco are of the Oto-Manguean family. Tarasco, a linguistic isolate, was also reported. (Campbell, 2000; SIL International, 2009). These thirteen reported Meso-American languages represent a significant linguistic diversity among the Wiregrass country respondents, and they represent the reality of living Meso-American languages in the United States that are an ancestral linkage to civilizations that far predate the colonized Americas.

Language use data showed strong home-directed reasons for Meso-American language use with ninety-six percent of responses linking to family, home, or friends. Spanish use was more mixed with forty-eight percent of the responses showing home-directed rationales linking to family, home, or friends and fifty-two percent of the responses linking directly to work. English use was similarly mixed with seventy-five percent of the responses linked to school or work and twenty-five percent of the responses home-directed. Spanish and English, with evident economic incentives, are dominant languages.

The language use data combined with the desire for language maintenance seem to predict eventual intergenerational Meso-American language loss among the Meso-American speakers in Wiregrass country. With clear economic incentives attached to English, one hundred percent of the respondents wanted their children to learn English. For a variety of reasons, one hundred percent of the respondents also wanted their children to learn Spanish. Pride in Spanish and to its use as a lingua franca among Indigenous peoples of Latin America is common (Riegelhaupt, Carrasco & Brandt, 2003). Seventy-percent wanted their children to learn Meso-American languages, and sixty-two percent reported that their children speak a Meso-American language.

While this represents a substantial majority, strong loyalty to a language is vital to its maintenance (Hornberger, 1988), and thirty percent of the respondents had a negative attitude toward maintenance of Meso-American languages and thirty-eight percent of the Meso-American language speaking parents reported that their children do not speak a Meso-American language. The researcher recommends that future studies investigate specific reasons for why respondents do not desire their children to speak a Meso-American language.

In comparing the previous study to the current study, two differences in the groups emerged. First, those in Wiregrass country displayed greater linguistic diversity. The 2004 study reported four Meso-American languages among the seventeen respondents, while the present study reported twelve Meso-American languages among the forty-three respondents. Second, those in Wiregrass Country displayed stronger loyalty to Meso-American languages. Specifically, in the 2004 study forty-two percent of the respondents were negative toward the maintenance of Meso-American languages, while the current study reported only thirty percent of the respondents as negative toward the maintenance of Meso-American languages. This difference was also found in actual language maintenance. Forty-two percent of the Meso-American language speaking respondents in 2004 reported that their children speak a Meso-American language, while sixty-



two percent of the respondents in the present study reported that their children are Meso-American language speaking.

The study did not seek information on the length of time the respondents have been in the United States, but the researcher recommends this as an additional research question for future studies. The Guatemalan presence in towns such as Indiantown, Florida has been evident (and growing) since the 1980s (Burns, 1993). From the data collected, English was more prevalent among the respondents in Southeast Florida. Specifically, twenty-five percent reported speaking English compared to fourteen percent among those surveyed in this study. Perhaps the differences in language attitudes and language maintenance link to a longer time in the United State among the respondents, as those in the United States for a longer time would be further along the path to language shift.

Implications:

The researcher hopes this study serves to publicize the linguistic diversity of the immigrant community in Wiregrass country. Stereotypes abound of these Latino immigrants (for example, they are all Mexican and Spanish speaking) and they have been met with discrimination and persecution in some Wiregrass country communities (McGregory, 1997). In contrast, this study clearly depicts the reality of these immigrants as multi-lingual individuals connected to a proud ancient ancestry.

Unfortunately, the study data suggests eventual intergenerational Meso-American language loss among the Meso-American speakers in Wiregrass country. Compounding this threat, these immigrant groups are threatened with immediate survival needs that often supplant efforts to preserve native culture and languages. These needs have increased in the present economic climate, as the continuing recession significantly impacts all immigrants and their search for stable work to provide basic sustenance. (Sachetti, 2009).

In the 2004 study, the researcher reported on efforts in Southeast Florida to preserve Meso-American languages and culture, such as an after-school language program and a Mayan community festival. These efforts continue, with the festival now a larger annual Fiesta Maya held in Jupiter, Florida (Tejedor, 2008). And, the El Sol Neighborhood Resource Center, also in

Jupiter, recently opened as an employment facility, but it also serves as a cultural resource for thousands of Guatemalans in the area (Moffet, 2009). These activities are integral to Meso-American language maintenance and should benefit future generations – specifically the young in school, as “there is a link between knowledge of culture and language and overall academic success” (Riegelhaupt, Carrasco & Brandt 2003, page 134).

In Wiregrass country no such Meso-American language or cultural preservation efforts were found. Without fealty to their heritage and language and beset by immediate survival needs, the respondents face the potential reality of language shift/loss, which brings negative cognitive effects as well as familiar alienation (Riegelhaupt, Carrasco & Brandt, 2003). However, education is a beginning. Specifically, teachers can play a significant role in language support by acknowledging Meso-American language loss and advocating for Meso-American language learning (Cantoni in Reyhner, 1997). In fact, in other language preservation efforts, young people have proven pivotal, as they have shown themselves to be knowledgeable and responsible in passing on their heritage and language (Goodfellow & Pauline, 2003). This process begins with support and awareness: empathy for Meso-American language speakers young and old and an active awareness of the Meso-American languages alive and spoken among us.

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Geoffrey Revard

### Why Do You Deceive Your Son with False Images?

#### Abstract

One of the more enduring puzzles in the *Aeneid* occurs a little better than halfway through the first book of the *Aeneid* when the goddess Venus reveals herself to her son Aeneas and Aeneas asks her in frustration:

Quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis /ludis imaginibus?  
Why so often, cruel one, do you too deceive your son with false images?

(*Aeneid* 1, 407- 408)

Venus never answers the question and this, coupled with the unusual hunting garb, has caused readers and scholars to wonder at the relevance of the scene. In spite of this, no answer “has never been clearly articulated by critics” (Anderson, 2005). By focusing on the Homeric model from the sixth book of the *Odyssey* and the unusual split that Virgil employs in the use of this model, the article will attempt to provide an answer by proving that Venus’s deceptive appearance and her subsequent revelation of the deception are actually the answer to the puzzle and they provide it by using the normal symbolic speech that gods offer to mortals through omens.

After three decades of reading Virgil’s *Aeneid* myself and some fifteen years of teaching the Advanced Placement syllabus, I have met some passages and questions that repeatedly produce the same questions not only in me, but also in my students. It is one of those passages that I am considering in this article in the hopes that the discussions and possible solutions might be of some value to the many others who read the same syllabus and for whom the same questions also repeatedly occur. If nothing else, I will hope that they provide a stimulus to interesting discussions and debates that lead to a better understanding of the *Aeneid* itself.

A little better than halfway through the first book of the *Aeneid*, Venus appears to her son Aeneas in disguise (*Aeneid* 1. 315-320) “wearing the face and manner of a maid and carrying the equipment of a Spartan maid as well.” After 80 lines of this deception, the goddess suddenly drops her disguise and she departs. Why? And indeed, this is Aeneas’ reaction too as he

complains “Why so often do you, too, fool your son with false images?” It is not a question that has been ignored by scholars, but, as Anderson points out in *The Art of the Aeneid* (2005, p. 26) it is not one that has had satisfactory or definitive answers either. What I should like to propose in this article is a definitive answer that will also prove to be satisfactory. To do this I think one ought to do two things. First, one ought to consider the literary model for this scene, and second one ought to interpret Virgil’s use of the model as symbolic speech, much as one would interpret a simile or an omen of the gods, for it is one of the gods who is communicating in this scene.

To begin with then, let us consider some passages from the *Odyssey*, Virgil’s model for the scene. Scholars have long identified two different places in the *Odyssey* as inspiration for this scene: Book 6, where Odysseus encounters Nausicaa, and book 13 where Odysseus meets Athena in Ithaca. For the most part, the Homeric scene of the meeting between the deity and the mortal from book 13 provides structure for the scene, while the meeting between the maiden and the hero from book 6 in the *Odyssey* provides subject matter, dialogue, and a simile that clearly identifies the scene. For the purpose of this article, however, I would like to focus on two selections from book 6.

To remind the reader, in Book 6 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus has just managed to make it to the island of the Phaeacians and fallen asleep. Athena then inspires Nausicaa to go and do the laundry. After the girls do the laundry, the girls play some. Here is Homer’s description of what follows as the girls, led by Nausicaa play:

It was Nausikaa of the white arms who led in the dancing;  
and as Artemis, who showers arrows, moves on the mountains  
either along Taygetos or on high-towering  
Erymanthos, delighting in boars and deer in their running,  
and along with her the nymphs, daughters of Zeus of the Aegis,  
range in the wilds and play and the heart of Leto is gladdened,  
for the head and brows of Artemis are above all the others,  
and she is easily marked among them, though they all are lovely,

so this one shone among her handmaidens, a virgin unwedded.

(*Odyssey* 6.101-109 Lattimore)

Odysseus is awakened by the sounds of the girls and he decides to approach them and ask for help. Only Nausicaa stands her ground, and Odysseus decides to speak from afar rather than grasp her round the knees. Here is Odysseus' address to Nausicaa:

So blandishingly and full of craft he began to address her:

“I am at your knees, O queen. But are you mortal or goddess?

If indeed you are one of the gods who hold wide heaven,

then I must find in you the nearest likeness to Artemis

the daughter of great Zeus, for beauty, figure and stature”

(*Odyssey* 6.148-153 Lattimore)

So far the model. As usual, Virgil is no slavish imitator; instead he uses the charming original scene of Nausicaa along with the second scene of Athena to further his own purposes in the creation of his own original scene. In a kind of *contaminatio*, Virgil has the goddess Venus appear as the maiden and as the divine helper of the hero at one and the same time. The scene where Venus meets Aeneas:

uirginis os habitumque gerens et uirginis arma

Spartanae, uel qualis equos Threissa fatigat

Harpalyce uolucrumque fuga praeuertitur Hebrum.

namque umeris de more habilem suspenderit arcum

uenatrix dederatque comam diffundere uentis,

nuda genu nodoque sinus collecta fluentis.

Wearing the face and garments of a maiden, and having

the arms of a Spartan maid, or as Thracian Harpalyce



wears out her horse when she surpasses the Hebrus in flight.

For the huntress had slung a handy bow on her shoulders  
in accordance with custom, and she had allowed her hair to scatter  
in the winds, legs bare up to the knee and her flowing garments  
were girt up with a knot.

(*Aeneid* 1. 315-320)

What is interesting about the passage is that it recalls the way in which Homer introduces Nausicaa, but it is not so close as to make the passage a perfect fit. Virgil emphasizes that Venus appears as a maiden (*virgo*) by using the word twice, and his use of the adjective *Spartanae* is suggestive of Taygetos, the mountains that tower over Sparta. That Venus carries a bow and is a huntress also recalls “Artemis, who showers arrows”. And then finally, in the words with which Venus first addresses Aeneas (just after this) Virgil includes the telling phrase “*spumantis apri cursum clamore prementem*” (“following hard upon the course of a foaming boar with a shout” 1.324) and with this he recalls the Homeric phrase “delighting in boars and deer in their running.” Virgil has, essentially, given his audience the feeling of *déjà vu* and in so doing he has left them uncertain. Aeneas’ response continues along in the same vein for it, too, is less than a perfect match.

Nulla tuarum audita mihi neque uisa sororum,  
o quam te memorem, virgo? namque haud tibi vultus  
mortalis, nec vox hominem sonat: o, dea certe  
(an Phoebi soror? an nympharum sanguinis una?)

I have neither seen nor heard anything of your sisters-

But how should I address you maiden? For your face is

scarcely mortal, and your voice does not sound human: O surely

a goddess, could you be Phoebus’ sister? Or of one blood with the nymphs?

(*Aeneid* 1. 326-334)

Once again the words are similar, but Virgil has varied things enough to leave doubt. Each hero asks whether their interlocutor is a goddess, Aeneas with sincerity, Odysseus with guile. From that point the pattern of the Virgilian passage could be said to follow the Homeric passage from book 13 better as the two goddesses give out information to their respective heroes. Even so, one must also note the striking difference: Athena almost immediately reveals herself to Odysseus, Venus on the other hand, remains incognito up until the very end of the scene. Perhaps the combination of the two pieces brought Virgil's ancient audience to recognize Virgil's reference to the simile of Artemis, but again Venus' odd departure and revelation confuses things. It is not until another 100 lines have passed that Virgil makes it clear that he is playing with the Nausicaa/Odysseus scene from Book 6, for here Virgil describes Dido with a simile which is undoubtedly borrowed from the Homeric simile used to describe Nausicaa:

dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno,  
 regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,  
 qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi  
 exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae  
 hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades; illa pharetram  
 fert umero gradiensque deas supereminet omnis:  
 (Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus):  
 talis erat Dido, talem se laeta ferebat  
 per medios instans operi regnisque futuris.

While he wonders and clings fixed upon this one view,

The queen, Dido most beautiful in form [comes] to the temple,

As Diana trains the dancers on the banks of the Eurotas

or on the ridges of Cynthus, and a thousand following

mountain nymphs crowd round her on this side and that;  
 but she carries a quiver on her shoulder, and walking, towers over  
 all the goddesses: joys fill Latona's silent heart.  
 such was Dido, like this was she, happy, bearing herself  
 through their midst, pressing on the work and future kingdoms.

(*Aeneid* 1. 495-504)

Surely after reading this Virgil's ancient audience would have reviewed the earlier text and revised their opinion of the meeting of Venus and Aeneas, for the parallels here are legion and the differences few. Some differences are of no import, and some are instructive to Virgil's purpose. Here is a catalogue of them in brief:

First, we can see that both Dido and Nausicaa are compared to Diana/Artemis, both make Leto/Latona happy, both tower over others, both move among the mountains, both live within Laconia (Eurotas/Taygetos), both have nymphs/oreads around them and finally Artemis delights in arrows, Diana carries a quiver (and this last point also connects Dido with the earlier description of Venus). There are really only two substantive differences: Nausicaa leads the dancing, and is described as an unwed maiden (*parthenos* and *admes*) In contrast we see it is actually Diana who leads the dance in Virgil and Dido is not described as a maiden. The difference concerning the dance is probably of no importance, Virgil did, at least, take the time to make some reference to it, and any other reference would have been awkward within the scene he had set up; That Virgil chose not to make any reference to Dido's status as a maiden, however, is instructive. Given that Virgil was careful to include all the other elements, his choice to leave this detail out must be deliberate. Perhaps it is as simple as the fact that it would not match with the reality of the situation. The widowed Queen Dido, as Hornsby points out (2000), is no virgin. Neither is Venus, and yet her appearance as a maiden (as mentioned earlier) is emphasized both in Virgil's description of her (*uirginis os habitumque gerens, et uirginis arma Aeneid* 1.315) and in Aeneas' address to her (*quam te memorem, virgo* 1.327). This point is crucial, for it means that both of the women to whom Virgil has chosen to apply this scene do not fit within its constraints.

How should we take that fact that Virgil leaves us with a pair of females that do not fit the mold he has chosen to use? In Homer, the model fits. Nausicaa in Homer *is* the unwed

maiden, she is the girl who is expecting to get married soon; Athena mentions marriage (*gamos*) when she comes in Nausicaa's dream and Nausicaa herself is thinking of marriage (but too ashamed to admit it to her father) when she asks for the wagon. When Odysseus is flattering her he says how lucky the man who takes her as a bride will be (*Odyssey* 6.159) and prays that she may have a husband and a good marriage (*Odyssey* 6.181). There is great emphasis in Homer on Nausicaa's readiness for marriage. She is the perfect model and in Homer she is a kind of last temptation for Odysseus. Why then has Virgil chosen to use a model that does not fit the two women he has applied it to? Is it simply a botched job, or is there some purpose, some thing that this carefully adapted pattern is being used to accomplish? I would certainly choose the latter of these two options, and I think it is important to note that at each end of the scene, Virgil is careful in how he states things: At the beginning, Venus is "wearing" the "face and the appearance" of a maiden (*gerens os habitum*); at the end, Aeneas complains about the false image that Venus has shown to him. But I have jumped ahead. Let us first look briefly back to Aeneas' first speech where he is answering Venus as to who he is and where he has been:

'sum pius Aeneas, raptos qui ex hoste penatis  
 classe ueho mecum, fama super aethera notus;  
 Italiam quaero patriam, et genus ab Ioue summo.  
 bis denis Phrygium conscendi navibus aequor,  
 matre dea monstrante uiam data fata secutus;  
 uix septem convulsae undis Euroque supersunt.  
 ipse ignotus, egens, Libyae deserta peragro,  
 Europa atque Asia pulsus.'

'I am pious Aeneas, I carry with me in the fleet  
 the Penates, saved from the enemy and I am known  
 by my reputation beyond the heavens. I seek Italy  
 as a fatherland and my race is from highest Jove.

In twice ten ships I boarded the Phrygian Sea with  
 my mother, the goddess, showing the way; scarcely  
 seven ships shattered by the waves and the East Wind  
 survive. I myself, unknown, in need, wander the desert  
 places of Libya, driven from Europe and Asia.'

(*Aeneid* 1. 378-385)

There are many important items in here, but what is most important here is the telling statement Aeneas makes about his mother: *matre dea monstrante uiam, data fata secutus*. "With my mother the goddess showing the way, I followed the fates that were granted". For all that Aeneas complains at the end of this scene, even he will admit that Venus has helped him. Indeed, there are many examples of the gods telling Aeneas what to do and where to go. The problem is understanding what the gods are telling you. Throughout the Trojan wanderings in Book 3, the Trojans just do not know where to go – Thrace, Crete, Sicily – just where is the Hesperian land? The real problem for mortals is that gods tend to speak to mortal in dreams and in metaphor. Take for example Venus's interpretation of the swans:

'namque tibi reduces socios classemque relatam  
 nuntio et in tutum uersis aquilonibus actam,  
 ni frustra augurium uani docuere parentes.  
 aspice bis senos laetantis agmine cycnos,  
 aetheria quos lapsa plaga Iouis ales aperto  
 turbabat caelo; nunc terras ordine longo  
 aut capere aut captas iam despectare videntur:  
 ut reduces illi ludunt stridentibus alis,  
 et coetu cinxere polum cantusque dedere,  
 haud aliter puppesque tuae pubesque tuorum  
 aut portum tenet aut pleno subit ostia uelo.

For I announce that your allies are restored to you  
and your fleet brought back to you, and driven to safety  
by the wheeling north winds – if my powerless parents  
have not taught me augury in vain. Look at the twelve swans  
rejoicing in a line, those which the bird of Jove, having swooped  
down from the heavenly region, scattered from the open sky.  
Now they either take to the ground in a long line or they seem to  
look down on those who have already the ground. As they, restored,  
play with their whooshing wings and circle the sky in a group and  
have given forth song, not otherwise than this do your fleet and  
your young men either hold the harbor or with full sail approach  
its mouth.

*(Aeneid 1. 390-400)*

And of course, Venus' interpretation is true. Aeneas' ships have come into the harbor at Carthage and they will be restored to him. But it is only with inspiration from the gods that men could interpret such a commonplace event as foretelling the fate of the Trojan fleet. Effectively, this is what Venus is doing here: turning Aeneas' attention to the speech of the gods and making it directly accessible for him, the type of "ueras uoces" that Aeneas longs for but rarely obtains.

What Venus has not done, however, is to interpret the entire message she has to convey. Essentially, Venus's self-revelation to her son is one more omen. When Venus stops her son from complaining more and focuses his attention to the omen of the swans it is an attempt to get him to open his eyes and look at the omens that the gods are revealing. Just as Venus learned to interpret omens from her parent, so Aeneas should listen to Venus, his own parent. Her

revelation of the false image is the last message. The false image is part of her message. But what does it mean?

What I propose is the following: Venus deliberately comes to her son in false guise as a maiden and then reveals herself as a false maiden in order to show Aeneas that Dido, who also seems to be a maiden, is a false match. Ancient readers would not only be aware of the Homeric models and the deliberate variations that Virgil was making from them but they would also have minds more attuned to seeing their gods as speaking in the metaphor of omens and would be inclined to understand it almost intuitively. Unfortunately for Aeneas, he does not follow intuition and misses the meaning of his mother's visual speech because he is so focused on her deception. Like so many omens and prophecies, it is only afterwards that the meaning is clear and one can understand the fuller truth. This of course is the essence of tragedy, a place where humans strive for control without a true means of reaching it. Just as Oedipus is blind to the truth because of his own arrogance, so Aeneas cannot see what he ought to do because he is blinded by the love he feels and that he hopes to gain in the arms of Dido.

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Alysse Rasmussen

**Who's Teaching ASL in Florida**

Abstract

The article examines the historical roots of teaching ASL and reports demographic data on current teachers of ASL in Florida. The 38 Florida ASL teachers who completed this survey represent 60% of 41 individuals who hold FL-DOE ASL K-12 endorsement. The majority belongs to one or more professional teaching organizations and teaches in the public school system, most often in high school settings. Only one respondent held ASLTA Professional Certification, but 9 had completed all six endorsement courses and another 15 were endorsed through a combination of coursework and other measures (i.e. HOUSSE).

*Historical Roots of Teaching ASL*

The education of the deaf has been of considerable interest to scholars over the years, yet it is only within the last few years that a similar interest has been taken in the teaching of sign language as either a first language (L1) or a second language (L2). Please note the use of “little d” deaf refers to an individual’s physical condition; “big D” Deaf refers to a socio-linguistic collective (a community). The term “D/deaf” will be used when either term could be applicable. Although deafness remains a leading disability (9%), the Deaf community, which maintains its own language and culture, is much, much smaller. Mitchell (2010) reports that there are no accurate figures, but the best guess available puts the number of Deaf ASL users at closer to 0.24% (Mitchell, 2010). Given these small numbers, it is not unreasonable to assume that the majority of hearing individuals may never met a Deaf person in the course of their daily life. Unlike spoken languages, ASL is not always passed down from parent to child. Approximately 10% of the Deaf are born into Deaf families. The remaining 90% of the Deaf are born into hearing families. So, the question arises: How does one learn sign language? Obviously, Deaf parents teach their Deaf children and, in many instances, to their hearing children as well (Preston, 1998). But what happens if you don’t have Deaf parents?



Historically, Deaf individuals taught (and still teach) their language to their peers in residential schools – either openly or covertly. Deaf individuals also have taught (and still teach) their friends and interested co-workers and family members.

As for more formal instruction, in the past it appears to have been limited to a few curious hearing individuals who had a particular interest in the Deaf community (i.e. missionaries and/or educators). Cokely and Baker (1980) in *The Green Books*, go so far as to state that “there is reason to believe” that Laurent Clerc, who was the first Deaf teacher of the Deaf in the United States, may have also been the first person to offer formal instruction in sign language to hearing individuals here in the United States (Cokely and Baker, 1980). “The Green Books” is a term commonly used in the field of ASL to refer to a collection of 5 books, first printed in 1980, which have become classics in the field of teaching ASL. One of these books is cited in the references at the end of this article.

In 1888, when the Milan Conference issued a position paper declaring that sign language was “bad for the deaf”. The Milan Conference is notorious within the Deaf community. Only 1 Deaf person was in attendance (Per Eriksson, 1998). His advice was not sought or wanted. The arguments of the US contingent, which actually had more Deaf schools than any other country in the world, were overruled by the European majority, whose educators preferred the oral, rather than manual methods for teaching the D/deaf. From that point on, the interest in learning how to communicate with the Deaf on their own terms decreased as well. For a while deaf children were even subjected to corporal punishment if they tried to sign.

However, after 80 years of educational decline, manual communication (signs) was allowed, reluctantly, back into the educational arena and, once again, a few curious individuals, with a particular interest in the Deaf community (i.e. teachers, researchers) began to look at the language of the Deaf community.

In the late 1950’s and early 1960’s, the majority interest, however, was not in the language of the Deaf itself, but rather in ways make spoken languages visible (Baynton, 1998). This led to several coding systems that would allow a spoken language, such as English, to be encoded manually (signed). Coded versions of English (SEE: Seeing Essential English, SEE II, LOVE: Linguistics of Visual English, Cued Speech—a system of phonetically coded hand signals, etc.) sprang up, almost overnight, and began to appear in educational settings. The mistaken belief

that the language of the Deaf community was nothing more than “bad English” persisted and no formal effort was made to learn the language of local Deaf communities.

At the same time, running in a parallel, but on completely separate track, a linguist, William Stokoe (1965), began to realize that there was more to Deaf communication than the “broken English” that was observed in the classroom. Extensive research led to him to conclude that the Deaf community had a fully functional language of their own. What’s more that language, based on a visual modality rather than an auditory one, was not, in any way, shape, or form, based on the spoken languages that surrounded them. Please note, this does not mean that visual languages cannot or do not borrow from spoken languages (or vice versa). It does, however, mean that visual languages do not belong to the same “branch” of the language family tree as spoken languages. Or, if you prefer, think pine (evergreen) vs. oak (deciduous).

This discovery gave hearing people added impetus for wanting to learn the languages of the Deaf community. As always, members of the Deaf community shared their language with curious hearing individuals, most of whom, still came into the community because of a vested interest (deaf family members, vocational-rehabilitation counselors, some teachers of the D/deaf, etc.). However the “just curious” were still a very small percentage and frequently viewed with caution, if not concern by the Deaf community.

As the Deaf community prospered, it also came into the public eye – especially following the 1988 Deaf President Now movement. DPN, as it is known within the Deaf community was, in essence, a civil rights march spearheaded by students at Gallaudet University (the first and only liberal arts college for the Deaf). It began as a protest against the hiring of a hearing person as president of the college over two highly qualified Deaf applicants. At any rate, after DPN more and more hearing people without a vested interest in the Deaf community started looking for classes in the languages of the Deaf community.

As the demand for more classes grew, the challenge of meeting those demands became more and more difficult. The obvious linguistic role models – the Deaf – often lacked the academic credentials required by the hearing world. The irony here, of course, is that the lack of academic success within the Deaf community was largely, if not fully, engendered by the lack of comprehensible communication provided to young deaf children, whose primary caregivers and instructors had little or no functional ability in the languages of the Deaf community.

The people who possessed the requisite academic credentials, on the other hand, often lacked fluency in the natural/native language of the Deaf community. This, unfortunately, was not always common knowledge to those who were in charge of locating and hiring “sign language” teachers. Nor did it even seem like common sense when so informed. After all, these individuals were the very ones the academic community hired to work with D/deaf children.

What is even more unfortunate is that many of these academically qualified, but linguistically naïve signers did not realize that the manual forms of communication that they used were not, in fact, those used by members of the Deaf community.

The Deaf community is exceedingly accommodating to all forms of manual communication. Many deaf individuals were prohibited from learning the natural language of the Deaf community in their formative years. Because of the enormous language delay, there is a wide variety of linguistic ability demonstrated by individual members of the Deaf community. The collective is certainly able to distinguish between the variations, just as members of the hearing world distinguish between articulate and not-so-articulate speakers.

### *Professional Certification*

In 1975 the National Association of the Deaf established the Sign Instructors Guidance Network (SIGN) which later changed its name to American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA). One of the key goals of ASLTA has been to encourage the professional development of instructors of American Sign Language (ASL). ASLTA has been evaluating and certifying instructors of ASL since 1976. In a personal communication (July 17, 2010), Dr. Keith Cagle, the current Chair of the ASLTA Evaluation & Certification committee, reports that more than 600 individuals have received ASLTA certification.

Valid ASLTA certification is maintained through periodic re-certification and requires that the individual maintains good-standing in ASLTA through the payment of annual dues. Because of this, certification numbers fluctuate annually, but tend to range between 155 and 227 (Dr. Keith Cagle, personal correspondence, July 17, 2010).

As of June, 2010, there are 3 levels of certification: Professional, Qualified, and Provisional. Reporting solely on the current year’s numbers, there are currently 210 individuals who hold

valid ASLTA certificates. Of those 67 (32%) hold Professional certificates, 56 (28%) hold Qualified certificates, and 88 (42%) hold Provisional certificates.

It should be noted that ASLTA certification is an independent certification process and not connected with any governmental agency. ASLTA certification may or may not be recognized by individual Departments of Education and/or colleges and universities.

### *Post-Secondary Requirements*

To teach ASL in a college or university, one generally needs a Masters and a minimum of 18 graduate credits in ASL. Some colleges and universities will ask for or accept ASLTA certification (levels vary). If one is teaching interpreting, most colleges and universities also require national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) certification.

### *Florida K-12 Requirements*

In Florida, in 1991, the legislature passed a law stating that ASL could be substituted for a foreign language in the state educational system. This placed an enormous burden on the already ill-prepared academic system in that they were now being asked to locate qualified teachers when there was nothing that defined “qualified” except for ASLTA, which they either knew nothing about or dismissed because it did not appear to have ties to the academic community.

In addition, at that time the Florida Department of Education (FL-DOE) maintained ASL underneath the category of Language Arts and made no serious distinction between classes that were taught in ASL and classes that were taught in some form of signed English. This was eventually corrected when the legislature stepped in once again (in 2003) and passed a law stating that ASL was to be accepted as a foreign language and requiring the FL-DOE to set up a task force to establish credentials for teaching ASL.

After several meetings and much debate, the task force, which included 2 Deaf individuals (both members of the local Florida ASLTA and one of them a member of the national ASLTA), made their recommendations to the FL-DOE. FL-DOE moved ASL to World Languages.

While private schools may require more or less stringent standards, in order to teach ASL in public K-12 schools, the Florida Department of Education requires that a potential teacher have a Bachelors degree from an accredited school and hold a current teaching certificate in any

academic coverage area, i.e. math, science. Once this criterion has been met, the potential ASL teacher may then apply for the endorsement.

In order to obtain the ASL endorsement, ASL teachers (K-12) are required to hold *either* ASLTA Professional Certification *or* have completed 6 specific, 3-credit courses, totaling a minimum of 18 semester hours (<http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/rules/6A-4-02431.asp>).

According to the FASLTA website, [www.fasлта.org](http://www.fasлта.org), as of July 2009, the FL-DOE has permitted local districts to use teachers with a HOUSSE plan for ASL. (HOUSSE is a national, portfolio-based plan that denotes a “highly qualified” teacher.) According to Christine Eppers (personal communication, July 19, 2010), the local (county) DOEs may make certain exceptions, i.e. allow a teacher to teach “out of field”, especially if that teacher is actively seeking endorsement and/or certification in another area. However, the teacher (or teachers) in these positions are not considered to be endorsed at the state level.

Last year, in 2009, all ASL K-12 teachers were required to have their Florida ASL K-12 endorsement if they wished to continue teaching in the public K-12 system. ASL appears under Academic Endorsements on the FL-DOE’s Florida Education Certification Statistics page, [http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/public\\_stats.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/public_stats.asp), and as of July 18, 2010 (Cheryl Eppers, personal communication) shows only 41 teachers who hold that endorsement in the state of Florida.

### *Current (2010) Status in Florida*

Reviewing ASLTA’s data regarding ASLTA certification, it can be seen that there are 24 individuals who hold valid ASLTA certificates in the state of Florida. This represents 11% of all ASLTA certificate holders. However, only 5 hold Professional ASLTA certificates which would allow them to use their ASLTA Certification to meet FL-DOE requirements (11 Qualified, 8 Provisional). Of those 5 only 2 ever taught in the K-12 system.

The 6 courses that are required for FL-DOE ASL K-12 endorsement are: ASL IV (ASL 2140), Deaf Culture / Community / History (ASL 2150), ASL Linguistics / Structure (ASL 2300), ASL Methods (ASL 2600), 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Language Acquisition (ASL 2601), and ASL Literature (ASL 2701).

The first three courses appear to be readily available at Florida colleges and universities where ASL and/or Interpreting Studies programs are offered. The second set of three (Language Acquisition, Methods of Teaching ASL, and ASL Literature) are more difficult to locate. It is not clear to the author of this article if any course in first or second language acquisition fulfills the FL-DOE endorsement requirement or if the course must be ASL specific to the acquisition of visual languages. On the other hand, according to Dr. Karen Verkler of UCF (personal communication, June 16, 2010), the ASL Methods course must be specific to the teaching of ASL. Course work in a general Foreign Language Methods is not being accepted by the FL-DOE for ASL endorsement.

FASLTA, the Florida chapter of ASLTA ([www.fasлта.org](http://www.fasлта.org)), is attempting to compile a list of all colleges and universities where these courses are taught. At the moment, it is believed that Valencia Community College (VCC), [www.valenciacc.edu](http://www.valenciacc.edu), is the only college to have offered all 6 of these courses in an online format. Currently VCC offers 5 of these courses online (all but ASL IV).

### *TeachASL Pilot Study*

TeachASL is an informal non-profit that was established in the early 1990's. It is primarily an email discussion list that encourages interaction and the exchange of ideas among teachers of signed languages. TeachASL's listserv is housed at Valencia Community College and may be accessed through [www.listserv.valenciacc.edu](http://www.listserv.valenciacc.edu).

In order to acquire additional data regarding Florida ASL teachers and the methods they used to meet the FL-DOE ASL K-12 endorsement requirements, TeachASL launched a pilot research study in June 2010.

An online survey was created using Survey Monkey. Question 1 explained the purpose of the survey. Question 2 asked about the participant's FL-DOE ASL K-12 Endorsement status. Question 3 asked about professional development. Question 4 gathered demographic information. Question 5 asked for contact information in case clarification was needed. The link was sent, via email, to TeachASL (approximately 238 subscribers), Florida ASLTA (approximately 60 members), and to approximately 300 individuals who were personally known to or who had contacted the researcher in the past about teaching ASL in Florida. Effort was

made to reduce the number of duplicate emails that went out. But there was no way to guarantee that someone might not receive two or more copies of the same email. In addition, none of these lists were/are exclusive to Florida teachers since FASLTA membership is not restricted to Florida. However, the subject header and body of the email made it clear that the survey was aimed at Florida ASL teachers. A few emails (less than 25) were returned as undeliverable.

Of the 600 some individuals who were successfully contacted, 52 (8.9%) individuals started the survey and 38 (6.3%) completed the survey.

*Educational settings.* In response to “Where do Florida ASL teachers work?” 39 participants responded. Of those 32 (82%) teach in public schools, 6 (5%) teach in private schools, and 1 (3%) teaches in both public and private settings. It is clear from the data collected, that several of the study participants teach in multiple venues. Future studies may want to delve further into this issue.

Forty (40) participants identified the educational levels where they taught. Of those 37 (93%) teach in high schools, 6 (15%) teach in community colleges (2-year colleges), 3 (7.5%) teach in universities (4-year colleges), 3 (7.5%) teach in adult education programs (non-credit programs), 2 (5%) teach in middle schools, 2 (5%) teach in elementary schools, 1 (2.5%) teaches in Pre-K or kindergarten programs, and 1 (2.5%) teaches private classes.

When the answers were examined in detail, it was clear that there was a great deal of overlap in this area. One individual indicated that they taught all levels with the exception of 4 year colleges. One individual taught in high school, 2-year and 4-year college settings. One individual taught in high school, adult-education, and 2-year College settings. Two more individuals reported teaching in high schools and adult-education settings. Two taught in high schools and 4-year college settings. Three taught in high schools and 2-year college settings.

*Need for endorsement.* When asked if the schools where the participants taught required FL-DOE ASL K-12 Endorsement, 43 study participants responded to this question. Of those 31 (72%) worked for schools that required endorsement, 8 (19%) worked for schools that did not require endorsement, and 4 (9%) were not sure. These responses appear to be fairly consistent with the “teach in K-12” vs. “teach in colleges & universities” responses in another question. Teachers without FL-DOE Endorsement were asked about their interest in pursuing Endorsement. Eighteen (18) responded. Ten (10) were currently interested in pursuing endorsement. Four (4)

planned to pursue it within the next 2-3 years. Four (4) were not interested in endorsement at this time. Eight (8) of the 18 respondents offered further insight either clarifying that they were going through the endorsement courses and/or process at this time (5), were not required to have the endorsement (1), had used HOUSSSE (1), or found it extremely difficult to locate courses either due to the limited number of sites where the courses were available or due to the timing of the offerings (e.g. college summer courses generally start one month before K-12 spring sessions end).

*Satisfying endorsement requirements:* Teachers with FL-DOE Endorsement were asked how they had completed the requirements. Twenty-five (25) study participants responded. Of those 1 (4%) used ASLTA Professional Certification, 9 (36%) completed all 6 endorsement courses, and 15 (60%) used a combination of endorsement courses and other measures.

As noted earlier in this article, FL-DOE reported that there are 41 teachers who currently hold FL-DOE ASL K-12 endorsement certificates (Christine Etter, personal correspondence, July 18, 2010). Christine Etter (personal correspondence, July 19, 2010) also noted that not all teachers who hold a particular endorsement are teaching in that subject area, i.e. a teacher might be on leave, retired, etc.) Even so, this study appears to represent a large percentage (60.9%) of the total number of teachers who hold ASL K-12 endorsement in the state of Florida. Comparing the responses with the total possible number of teachers holding ASL K-12 endorsement, one finds that 1 (2.4%) used ASLTA Professional Certification but no longer teaches in the K-12 system, 9 (21.9%) completed all 6 endorsement courses, 15 (36.5%) used a combination of endorsement courses and other measures, and 16 (39.2%) did not respond to the survey.

In terms of which courses had been used to satisfy the endorsement process – or were in the process of being used to apply for endorsement, 30 survey participants responded. Of those who completed the endorsement courses, the breakdown is as follows ASL IV (19), Deaf Culture (23), ASL Linguistics (20), 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Language Acquisition (12), ASL Methods (15), and ASL Literature (12).

*Current teaching assignments.* When asked about their current teaching assignment, 41 participants responded to the question. Of those 34 (83%) currently teach ASL, 4 (10%) plan to teach ASL in the future, 3 (7%) are not currently teaching ASL.



*Professional affiliations.* When asked what professional affiliations 35 participants responded. Of those 22 (63%) are members of ASLTA, 31 (89%) are members of FASLTA, 10 (29%) are members of FFLA, 4 (11%) are members of other professional organizations. Eight (8) study participants shared additional information. Half of them, 4 (11%), reported that currently they did not belong to any of the organizations listed above. The other half, 4 (11%) reported belonging to the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or its Florida chapter (FRID). RID and its chapters focus on interpreting and, to a lesser extent, on interpreter training. No one reported being a member of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT), which is ASLTA's sister organization, dedicated to the preparation of interpreter trainers.

*Hearing status.* The current survey did not ask about the participant's hearing status. However, based on the 34 individuals who shared their names, it could be determined that 19 are hearing, 6 are Deaf, and 3 were unknown.

### *Summary*

In summary, the 38 Florida ASL teachers who completed this survey represent 60% of the 41 individuals who hold FL-DOE ASL K-12 endorsement. The majority belongs to one or more professional teaching organizations and teaches in the public school system, most often in high school settings. Only one respondent held ASLTA Professional Certification, but 9 had completed all six endorsement courses and another 15 were endorsed through a combination of coursework and other measures (i.e. HOUSSE).

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Karen Verkler

**Cheers! ;Salud! Santé! Prost!**

**Foreign language education majors enjoy a different kind of HAPPY Hour**

### **Abstract**

Promoting professional development is a major goal of the teacher education program at a large metropolitan university. Armed with the vision of developing its pre-service teachers into life-long learners, college of education faculty created a unique, highly interactive, and collaborative professional development initiative. The author describes the weekly professional development seminars and workshops highlighting Best Practices. These workshops are conducted by university and PreK-12 faculty with expertise in topics pertinent to current educational practice. Also shared is an in-house conference highlighting its pre-service teachers as the presenters. Student presenters work under the tutelage of faculty mentors throughout the entire presentation process. Reflective student feedback from questionnaires indicated enhanced teacher preparation. The author also shares future plans for the growth of this professional development initiative. Although all of the college's undergraduate education students may participate, the author concentrates her discussion on her foreign language education students.

Cheers! ;Salud! Santé! Prost!

Foreign language education majors enjoy a different kind of HAPPY Hour

### **Introduction**

The mission of the College of Education in a large, metropolitan university in Central Florida includes the directive to “support lifelong learning” (College of Education homepage). According to Dennis Sparks (2000), “If teachers are to successfully teach all students to high standards, virtually everyone who affects student learning must be learning virtually all the time” (p. ix). Engaging in professional development has been linked to teacher competence and efficacy (Parsad, Lewis, & Farris, 2001) and may offer promise for Colleges of Education seeking to enhance their existing undergraduate programs.

A small group of College of Education faculty banded together to put this directive into action by developing an innovative, collaborative, and interactive professional development initiative for the College's undergraduate education majors. Designated HAPPY (Having Active Participation Prepares You) Hour, the new program was formulated on the philosophy that “individuals learn best when the content is meaningful to them, they have

opportunities for social interaction, and the environment supports learning” (Brandt, 2003, p. 12). Within this article, the two main components of HAPPY Hour – the weekly professional development workshops and the annual conference – will be explained, with special attention paid to the mentoring relationship between the author and foreign language education undergraduates.

### **Literature Review**

Campbell and Campbell (2007) describe a mentor as “a person with experience who guides, advises, and supports a less-experienced person with the intention of fostering the latter’s career growth. Mentoring of higher education students is not a new phenomenon. Mentoring has been used to increase retention of students (Campbell & Campbell, 2007; Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh, & Wilss, 2008), to support at-risk students like first generation, low-income students (Ishiyama, 2007), and for the development of students as researchers (Bauer & Bennett, 2002; Boenninger & Hakim, 1999; Nagda, Gregerman, Jonides, von Hippel & Lerner, 1998). Campbell and Campbell (2007) reported “enhanced academic and postgraduate success” as the anticipated outcome of successful mentoring relationships.

Some higher education mentoring programs utilize faculty in the role of mentor (Davis, 2008) while others position college students, both undergraduate Campbell & Campbell (2000) and graduate (Rose, 2003) to serve as peer mentors. The mentoring relationship has been examined from both perspectives. It has focused on the mentor’s experience (Monte, 2001; Shultz, 2001) and in other studies the mentee or protégé’s experience has been examined (Ferrari (2004).

Similar to the studies done on mentoring relationships that foster undergraduate research, the present study examines a unique mentoring relationship that has as its goal the professional development of undergraduate foreign language education (hereafter called FLEd) students. This study examines how undergraduate students perceived the mentoring relationship that was encouraged during their preparation as presenters at an all-college conference.

### **Background Information**

HAPPY Hour consists of weekly 1-1 ½ hour-long, interactive, and hands-on professional development workshops conducted by university faculty and PreK-12 personnel on areas of relevance to the field of education. Each workshop instructor provides a workshop

handout for attendees to serve as a reference for the implementation of the strategy in their future classrooms. The workshops require no pre-registration; students simply show up and participate.

HAPPY Hour workshops cover a large spectrum of topics. One HAPPY Hour faculty, whose area of specialization was reading, regularly shares literacy strategies at her workshop. A HAPPY Hour committee member known for cooperative learning engages her workshop participants in numerous ways to group students. Another presentation deals with the use and creation of rubrics. Other committee members and PreK-12 personnel likewise share their areas of expertise at their respective workshops.

The HAPPY Hour Student Showcase, the latter component of this initiative, offers students the opportunity to hone their presentational skills as student presenters. After a successful pilot year of HAPPY Hour workshops, HAPPY Hour faculty felt that a natural progression would be for students to be presenters. Instead of solely attending workshops, undergraduates would now be afforded the opportunity to serve as experts of their chosen topics while teaching their peers. In addition, since most undergraduate students – much less in-service teachers - often are not aware of the existence of professional conferences, the committee decided to take HAPPY Hour to the next level and create an opportunity for students to experience an in-house professional development conference.

### **The HAPPY Hour Student Showcase**

The HAPPY Hour Student Showcase was developed to approximate a professional conference. Supported by the university's Teaching Academy, which "prepares and renews competent, caring and qualified professional educators, counselors, administrators, and researchers who create the future for students of all ages," (Teaching Academy home page), the Showcase includes a minimal conference registration fee, a dynamic keynote speaker, teacher supply vendors, door prizes and refreshments, and numerous educational resources. Within this forum, undergraduate students share assignments of which they are proud, strategies they learn during their courses, field experiences, or workshops, or talents/experiences beneficial to the teaching profession. The 30- to 45-minute student presentations representative of Best Practices in Education form the core of the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase.

The HAPPY Hour Committee chair, who is also the author of this article, begins the recruitment of student presenters for the Showcase by announcing at the College of Education's first faculty meeting of the year the need for faculty to encourage students to present. In addition, the chair

reiterates this need for faculty support and involvement via the distribution of HAPPY Hour fliers at the meeting and mass emails to faculty just prior to and after the beginning of the new academic year.

To give students a sense of what is involved in presenting, the first workshops during the new academic year consist of an overall introduction to HAPPY Hour by the HAPPY Hour Committee chair. These workshops provide an overview of the weekly HAPPY Hour workshops and the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase. Once student interest is piqued, students are then encouraged to attend workshops two weeks later that focus entirely on the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase and the presentation process. During these workshops, the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase is touted as the ultimate form of professional development in which students can enhance their presentational skills, scholarship, and teaching credentials. Students are informed of additional benefits of presenting: (a) Inclusion of this experience on their professional resumes demonstrates to future employers that they (as future teachers) have initiative and the desire to become life-long learners. (b) They will participate in an actual conference experience by learning how to write conference presentation proposals, how to submit a proposal online, and how to implement their presentation.

Via an interactive session, the HAPPY Hour Committee chair discusses in detail the steps involved in presenting so that students can conceptualize the expectations, activities, and time commitment involved in the process. Documents detailing the process are distributed. Students are informed that, if desired, assistance is available in the form of HAPPY Hour faculty mentors. Faculty mentors are made accessible via email, phone, and office appointments. In addition, faculty mentors make themselves available at some of the HAPPY Hour workshops, such as “Writing a Conference Proposal,” designed specifically for student presenter assistance. Students appreciate that they would never work in isolation, as evidenced in several of their comments on the workshop evaluation form:

- *It's comforting to know that we will always have help.*
- *I feel reassured that someone will always be there to help me.*
- *Knowing that I won't be alone has convinced me to present.*
- *I'm glad to have a mentor to guide me along, since I've never done this before.*

### **HAPPY Hour Workshop on Writing a Conference Proposal**

The mentoring process informally begins at the HAPPY Hour workshop focused on helping interested future presenters write a conference proposal. Students are provided with comprehensive handouts replete with directions on creating a creative title and an enticing presentation description that would accurately represent their workshop in a conference program. In addition, the HAPPY Hour Committee chair distributes programs collected from professional conferences for students to refer to as they write their proposals. HAPPY Hour faculty mentors are also on hand to assist students in the process.

The session begins with brainstorming a suitable topic to present. After students brainstorm, they share their topics and receive feedback from their peers and faculty mentors about the interest level and feasibility of the topics. Topics range from course assignments to strategies students have learned from other teachers during their internships. The discussion typically leads to free-flowing ideas that spin off from the students' ideas; these ideas in turn become additional topics for presentation.

After the majority of the students select topics, the HAPPY Hour chair elaborates on each of the steps involved in presenting. During this portion of the workshop, the student fills out the conference proposal form with the assistance of faculty mentors. This process is very interactive as students are invited to ask questions to clarify the meaning and purpose of the different sections of the proposal form.

Understandably, the most time-consuming part of this process is developing a creative workshop title and description that will entice Showcase attendees to come to their presentation. Giving examples of their own past workshops, faculty mentors work with small groups of students to brainstorm clever titles and descriptions. Students are also invited to peruse titles and descriptions of workshops of professional conferences. If they are unable to complete this task during the time frame of the workshop, they are instructed to do so within the next few weeks and contact any of the HAPPY Hour faculty for feedback.

Student feedback reflects the students' appreciation of the guidance and support provided by the faculty mentors, as indicated by the following comments:

- *I feel that I will never be alone in this process. I like that.*
- *The professors' assistance made writing this proposal SO easy.*

- *I can't believe how easy it was to write my proposal. The professor who helped me was awesome!*
- *These professors really care about my success as a presenter.*

### **The Mentor-Mentee Relationship**

Shortly after the workshop on writing a presentation proposal, the College of Education student population is invited to submit conference proposals. The submission time frame is approximately one month, after which the proposals are reviewed and students are notified of their acceptance. Based on their indication of faculty mentor on their proposal form, students are assigned mentors. The chair contacts each of the mentors requested, notifies them of their mentees, provides them with their names and contact information, and asks them to establish initial contact with them. With mentor-mentee matches formed, the formal one-on-one mentoring relationship begins. This relationship can be very powerful, for “when mentors assist, support, and guide professional inquiry and development, they steer newcomers toward enduring scholarly success” (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2000, p. 85).

In the interim between the creation of mentor-mentee pairs and the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase, students and faculty work closely in creating a presentation that will be both engaging and professionally delivered. Students and faculty communicate by email, phone calls, and one-on-one discussions in faculty offices and in coffee shops. Faculty provide guidance in all facets of presentation preparation – suggesting ideas for interactive workshops that will deliver the message in the most engaging, enjoyable, and memorable fashion possible; lending students instructional materials to reduce the students’ expenditure of money to purchase needed materials; proofing presentational handouts for clarity; making copies of said handouts; watching students do trial runs of their presentations and providing feedback; helping students select a delivery mode most appropriate for their topic; and assisting students in the correct usage of technology they would need for the most effective delivery. Since most of the students have never attended, much less presented at, a conference before, the HAPPY Hour Committee chair emails them on a regular basis to inform them what the Showcase will entail and to give them words of encouragement.

Student presenters also receive additional mentoring during a mid-January workshop called “Presenting Your Presentation,” which is designed specifically for them. During this workshop,



which is run by the HAPPY Hour Committee chair and facilitated by HAPPY Hour faculty mentors, students are given additional tips to enhance their presentations and the opportunity to practice in front of other presenters and faculty mentors. This workshop serves to ready them for the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase scheduled for the end of January.

Although faculty mentors provide the bulk of assistance to the presenters, technology lab personnel also serve as mentors as they instruct students in the correct usage of the technology they needed for the delivery of the presentation. The week before the Showcase, technology lab personnel make themselves readily available to work one-on-one with the presenters to provide assistance that the presenters deem invaluable.

As can be noted by the following comments, student presenters reflected very positively on this workshop:

- *Learning about other tips in presenting helped to finalize my preparation.*
- *Being able to get feedback from my peers and other faculty gave me some fresh perspectives.*
- *This workshop helped me know that I am so ready for the Showcase!  
Bring it on!*
- *I'm going to be so good at the Showcase. I'm doing all of the things the professor said I need to do.*

### **Mentoring the Foreign Language Education Majors**

In addition to the above mentoring activities, the author provides additional opportunities to ready her FLEd advisees to present at the Showcase. In one of her required FLEd courses, at the end of a unit on professional development, a summative assignment challenges students to write a conference proposal for the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase. The students brainstorm topics appropriate for presentation and then learn how to write a proposal. Many of these students actually submit their proposals to present at the upcoming Showcase. The professional development unit also includes discussion about professional organizations, including attending and presenting at their annual conferences. Since the author regularly submits proposals to present at state professional conferences, she invites her FLEd majors to present with her and works closely with them as they prepare for their workshop. Co-presenting

at the professional conference in front of in-service teachers typically occurs prior to presenting at the Showcase. Thus, by the time of the Showcase, presenting to their peers can be rather anticlimactic.

In addition, when teaching her students particularly creative or unique strategies, the author will plug them as particularly good Showcase presentation topics, regularly stressing the importance of continuous improvement. The fact that the students themselves have just had hands-on experience learning a new strategy and can utilize the resources the author offers them increases their confidence in being able to successfully convey that material to their peers.

Each Showcase yields additional students who have successfully completed the presentation process and who possess valuable information from which potential future presenters could benefit. Consequently, past presenters are now being invited to share their testimonies at the HAPPY Hour workshops dealing with presenting, writing a conference presentation proposal, and presenting one's presentation. Several of the author's FLEd graduates now effectively and impressively function in leadership and mentoring roles with future student presenters.

### **Student Presenter Feedback**

Each individual presenter, at the conclusion of the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase, completes an evaluation form that asks for feedback from a presenter's perspective. Student presenters overwhelmingly appreciate the support they receive from their mentors. They consistently assert that the mentor-mentee experience allows them to build confidence, and, in their words, "grow as a person and to face their fear of speaking." When asked to elaborate on the effectiveness of the mentoring they received, FLEd students have responded as follows:

- *I trust the dedication, the professionalism, and the help from everyone in the HAPPY Hour Committee. I feel that you each and every one of the members goes above and beyond to make these activities possible. I feel that they are getting better and better every time.*
- *My mentor was excellent and I know that it was her motivation that helped me to see that I was capable of presenting.*
- *My mentor always let me know what to expect; I felt comfortable in my ability to do a good job. There were no surprises.*

- *What a great experience! My mentor was always available to help me – she even came to my house to help me with my presentation!*

As suggested by the above comments, FLEd students overall expressed satisfaction regarding the mentoring relationship they had with their faculty mentor.

### **Future Plans for HAPPY Hour**

Based on student feedback, HAPPY Hour professional development has become a welcome addition to the teacher education program at [the university's name]. However, along the lines of continuous improvement, the committee plans to make modifications to enhance the breadth of professional development afforded its education majors. The foremost modification entails expanding HAPPY Hour to the university's numerous regional campuses by having each campus served by a HAPPY Hour faculty liaison from the HAPPY Hour Committee. This representative could work closely mentoring the regional campus students, who tend to progress through the teacher education program in cohorts. Another option is that regional campus student educational organizations be an active entity in bringing HAPPY Hour workshops to their campus. Students on regional campuses often feel like the stepchild of the main university; having a HAPPY Hour presence on each campus could enhance student participation in this initiative.

Finally, the HAPPY Hour Committee hopes to take the mentoring-mentee relationship to yet another level. HAPPY Hour serves to model life-long learning (i.e., the importance of continuous improvement) and create highly credentialed teacher education graduates. Graduates who have presented at the HAPPY Hour Student Showcase have been mentored by faculty. Some of these graduates have also mentored future student presenters. The next tier of mentoring would involve these graduates – as beginning or eventually experienced teachers - returning to the university to conduct a HAPPY Hour workshop for the pre-service teachers . . . beginning a cycle of life-long learning distinguished by a strong mentoring relationship.

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# VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND MUSIC

By ☺ □ ⚡ ■ 🙌 ♫ 🔮 🔮 🔮 □

I believe the following to be true:

- We acquire vocabulary within the crucible of situation and problem-solving.
- We acquire vocabulary as we need it.
- We acquire vocabulary in context.

Simply put, it appears that vocabulary is primarily ‘self-selected’ and acquired when the situation is *compelling* enough to warrant the selection. Accordingly, it would then behoove the classroom teacher to deploy methods and activities that would create a degree of ‘urgency’ or ‘immediacy’ in the classroom. How might this be done? By way of example, I would like to offer the following activity to you.

### ***Function-al Rap Activity***

It is conjectured that, at one time in human history, music and communication were one and the same; much like birdsong. Some linguists feel that Chinese, a highly intonal language known for its ‘musicality’, is the last remaining vestige of this phenomenon in today’s world. At some point, due to natural selection, music diverged from primary communication into a separate genre.

The following activity is designed to fuse language learning and music together once again. ‘Raps’ will be created by students based around specific language tasks, also known as ‘functions’. Certain expressions and vocabulary words, selected for their applicability to the function, are provided to help them compose the lyrics.

## **STEP 1: Acquire the music**

This step is critical to the set up of the activity. Original rap background instrumentals by contemporary artists, without the controversial lyrics, are available for purchase on line at music download sites such as iTUNES, RealOne Rhapsody, Music Match, Napster, etc. *Please note that we are working to acquire original background instrumentals, not re-recorded backgrounds done by other artists. Students do not take well to elevator music.*

The music download site will have a search engine available. Simply type in 'rap instrumentals', hit enter and the download of background instrumentals will begin. The offerings will be varied and spread among several recording artists. If you are partial to a particular artist, type in 'rap instrumentals' followed by the artist's name and the download will be limited to backgrounds associated with that artist. At present, songs may be purchased for \$.99 each.

## **STEP 2: Burn a master CD**

Once you have selected the background instrumentals you are interested in, it is time to burn them to a CD. I suggest that you vary the backgrounds based on beat and speed. Although you will have many to select from, I suggest that you limit your selection to no more than 18 songs. This number will provide you with variety and will fit comfortably on a CD.

If you are not able to burn the CD yourself, you might consider offering the task to a student for extra credit.

## **STEP 3: Burn a CD for each student**

It is important that each student have his/her own personal CD. As a result, this step has a number of options to consider.

- **If you have the time and the funds**
  - Buy blank CDs and burn a copy of the master CD for each student.
- **If you have the time but are on a budget**
  - Have each student provide you with a blank CD and burn a copy of the master CD for each one.
- **If you have neither the time nor the budget**

- Have each student provide you with a blank CD and ask a student to burn the master CD to disk for extra credit. You might also ask that this be done by your school's media/IT specialist.

**STEP 4: Organize the task**

- Now that everyone has music, it is time to set to the task. The first homework assignment is a simple one. Ask students to listen to the background instrumentals and to rank their top 3 favorites.
- The next day, divide your class into groups of 4 to 5 participants based on their ranking of the background instrumentals. When the first choice cannot be accommodated, move to the second or third choice.
- Arrange to have an audio CD player available for each group.
- Provide the following instructions IN PRINT to each student:
  - A rap will be written and eventually performed by each group.
  - The rap will be of a specific length. (*Initially, 3 stanzas of 4 lines each or 12 lines of lyrics is recommended.*)
  - The rap will focus on a specific linguistic function or tasks, such as 'identifying and describing members of your family'.
  - Certain vocabulary words, idiomatic expressions and structural items will be provided as prompts. Students, however, may not use these words *exclusively* in building their raps.
  - Have the students turn on their respective audio CD players and begin the process.
  - Depending on your situation, The activity may be spread out over weeks and need not be done every day.

Figure 1 below will serve as a rubric for implementation:

Linguistic Function: *Describing and discussing family members*

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**Helpful vocabulary:**

- la familia
- el abuelito
- el gato
- los ojos
- los lentes
- castaño
- alto
- el tío
- callado
- dormir

**Helpful Expressions:**

- cuenta chistes
- a mi lado
- de color café
- un poco alto
- conmigo

**Sample Rap:**

En mi familia somos cinco:

mi mamá, papá y yo,  
el abuelito y tía María,  
el perro Tico, el gato Limón.

Mi mamá tiene los ojos azules,  
el pelo negro y usa lentes también.

Mi papá es un poco alto, con el pelo castaño,  
es delgado y se viste muy bien.

Mi tía María es muy bonita,  
con los ojos de color café.

El abuelito es gracioso, con el pelo canoso,

Cuenta chistes, duerme hasta las diez.

El gato Limón es muy callado,  
sólo quiere jugar y dormir.

Mi perro siempre está mi lado,  
y conmigo él quiere salir.

Figure 1

**STEP 5: Perform the raps**

As recommended by ACTFL, activities should be performance-based. Accordingly, when ample time has been given to creation of the raps and to practice of the respective performances (this includes not only the vocal piece but any choreography as well), each group will be assigned a particular date upon which to perform its rap. Hip-Hop gear should be encouraged. Although grades may be given, it is recommended that initially this not be done. Extra credit might be more appropriate.

**John De Mado** has co-authored several language acquisition textbook programs. He also writes and performs Spanish and French raps designed to help students at various levels to acquire vocabulary and important idiomatic expressions. These raps may be viewed at his website: [www.demado-seminars.com](http://www.demado-seminars.com) and may be purchased there as well. John is the director of John De Mado Language Seminars, Inc., an educational consulting firm that provides quality, on-site staff development for language teachers.

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