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# *Applied Language Learning*

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## **The Role of the Lexicon in Learning Second Language Stress Patterns\***

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*Within the field of second language acquisition, the acquisition of phonetics and phonology has generally taken a back seat to studies of morphological and syntactical acquisition. Although the lacuna is slowly being remedied by a growing interest in the phenomena of second language (L2) phonology, investigations into the acquisition of suprasegmental features such as stress, pitch and rhythm are scarce. This study investigates the second language acquisition of Spanish stress by English speakers in order to provide insights into the role of the lexicon and issues of learnability. By analyzing the oral production data of three proficiency levels of English-speaking learners of Spanish, as well as those of native Spanish speakers, we show that the Spanish stress system relies more heavily on the lexicon than accounted for in previous studies. Stress production involves lexical storage and analogy, and these processes are shown to be utilized by native speakers and language learners alike. These findings are important to language teachers and learners and additionally hold potential pedagogical implications.*

The second language acquisition of the suprasegmental features of language (stress, pitch, rhythm) is far less understood than the acquisition of other areas of pronunciation, such as consonants and vowels. There are a number of possible reasons for the relative lack of research in this area. For one thing, suprasegmental features are more difficult to quantify than segmental aspects that can be measured (i.e., voice onset time of occlusive sounds, formant measurements of vowels, etc.); rather, they depend on relative values or judgments on the part of the hearer. Further, the role of these suprasegmental characteristics in the second or foreign language classroom is undetermined. How can we teach language learners the intonation patterns of a language? How can we make learners hear the difference between a stressed and unstressed syllable if this isn't something they can naturally perceive? These difficulties have led to the current state of affairs, in which suprasegmental aspects of language are neither taught nor considered in most classrooms or textbooks. But the central questions remain: Can L2 learners acquire these features of language? If so, how do they go about learning the patterns and rules for suprasegmentals in their second language?

\*Examples have not been fully transcribed phonetically but only phonemically for the purpose of showing stress location.

This study attempts to answer these questions by investigating the second language acquisition of Spanish stress by English speakers in order to provide insight into the nature of second language suprasegmental acquisition. The results highlight the important role that the lexicon plays in the learnability of the Spanish stress system in particular and, perhaps, in suprasegmental acquisition in general. The paper begins with a brief summary of the facts of Spanish stress, and then discusses previous investigations into the acquisition of L2 stress patterns. The study is then described and the outcomes are analyzed in terms of the system of stress acquisition and production in second languages, as well as for their implications regarding language acquisition and teaching.

### *Spanish Stress*

This section is intended to provide a purely descriptive account of the behavior of the Spanish stress system, from the basic observations to the special conditions of the system. It is commonly accepted that primary Spanish stress invariably falls within the last three syllables of a word; that is, all Spanish words have one and only one stressed syllable, located either on the final, penultimate or antepenultimate syllable. Stress placement further to the left in the word is not possible.<sup>1</sup> Secondary stress in Spanish is often indistinguishable from unaccented syllables and does not have any communicative or interpretive consequences; therefore it is rarely discussed or transcribed in Spanish (i.e., Guitart 2004) and will not be considered further here. The words below illustrate the three-syllable window for primary stress in Spanish, where the stressed syllable and all syllables to the right are underlined in order to illustrate this window. Note that here and throughout, a written accent mark in the gloss indicates the stressed syllable, regardless of whether standard Spanish orthography requires it or not.

- a. *animal*  
[a.ni.mál]  
'animal'
- b. *canica*  
[ka.ní.ka]  
'marble'
- c. *sábana*  
[sá.Ba.na]  
'bed sheet'

Observing this three-syllable 'window' can result in stress alternations across related words, as can be seen in the singular/plural alternations in these examples:

- a. *régimen*  
[ré.xi.men]  
'regimen'
- b. *regímenes*  
[re.xí.me.nes]  
'regimens'

Within this window, penultimate stress is by far the most common pattern of Spanish stress. In spoken speech, according to figures provided by Quilis (1982: 335), penultimate stress occurs 79.5% of the time (compared to final stress at 17.68% and antepenultimate stress at 2.76%). In written texts (i.e., newspapers), penultimate stress is still the most common pattern in Spanish (64.70%), with antepenultimate (23.52%) and final (11.76%) stress far behind.

While the three syllable window does indeed limit the potential possibilities for placing stress the preantepenultimate syllable, it must be noted that most researchers consider stress placement within the window somewhat idiosyncratic or random. Others (for example, Harris, 1995; Roca, 1991) point out a number of conditions that can “narrow” the window; in other words, certain syllabic structures tend to favor a particular stress location. For example, a diphthong or a final consonant in the penultimate syllable tends to attract stress to itself, as in *jamaica* ([xa.máj.ka], ‘hibiscus’) or *alarma* ([a.lár.ma], ‘alarm’). These conditions in the final syllable of the word can deflect stress back to the penult, as in *caricia* ([ka.rí.sja], ‘caress’) or *canibal* ([ka.ni.Bal], ‘cannibal’), but can also lead to final stress (i.e., *animal* ([a.ni.mál], ‘animal’) or *caray* ([ka.ráj], exclamation)). Ideally, these conditions reduce the window and therefore reduce the ambiguity of stress location within the window. The evidence presented by these window-narrowing conditions indicates that Spanish stress is to some degree quantity sensitive, preferring to stress heavy syllables (made so by a consonant or a glide), although not to a predictable degree.<sup>2</sup> It is precisely this idiosyncratic nature of the Spanish stress system that makes it ripe for study, from a theoretical viewpoint but also especially from an acquisitional approach.

The facts just presented reflect the standard “default patterns” that are assumed by Spanish speakers and are generally taught to L2 learners. An examination of first-year Spanish textbooks reveals that those that mention pronunciation and stress at all (many do not) will produce very similar descriptions of stress, often found in an Appendix rather than in the text itself. (See, for example *Mosaicos* (Olivella de Castells, Guzmán, Lapuerta and García 2002: A2-A3) or *Puntos de Partida* (Knorre, Dorwick, Pérez-Gironés Glass and Villareal 2005 71-72).) The lesson usually reads something like: if the word ends in a vowel, the consonant –n or the consonant –s, the word receives penultimate stress; if the word ends in a consonant other than these, the word receives final stress. Antepenultimately stressed items are always marked with orthographical accent marks. These generalizations are, of course, accurate generalizations, but are they sufficient? The following section reviews what we know so far about how students of Spanish learn and produce these stress patterns.

### Literature Review

The task facing an L2 learner of Spanish is multifaceted. A learner not only has to realize the limitations of the three syllable window, but must also discover the extent to which syllable makeup and quantity sensitivity affect stress placement. Further, the idiosyncratic exceptions must be learned and memorized. It seems more than likely that there are multiple processes at work in this acquisition process. Nonetheless, most of the previous work on L2 stress acquisition, as will be reviewed in this section, has focused only on the ultimate success and accuracy a learner can achieve rather than investigating the specific techniques a learner uses in the acquisition process.

Without a doubt, some of the most extensive work in this field has been carried out by Archibald (1992, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998), who investigates speakers of Hungarian, Polish and Spanish learning English. He finds varying degrees of accuracy in stress production and claims that influence from the first language (L1) can account for a great deal of the errors learners make, although he also supposes certain universal constraints that are active. Similarly, Flege & Bohn’s (1989) work on Spanish speakers learning English finds that although learners are ultimately able to locate stress

with considerable accuracy, they remain insensitive to the process of reducing unstressed vowels in English. Mairs (1989) also finds that the ability of L1 Spanish speakers of English to place stress correctly is minimized with certain heavy syllable structures, and also attributes these problems to L1 and L2 interference. Work by Pater (1993) investigates French speakers learning English and finds additional support for the interference of the L1.

Additionally, work in the area of a speaker's native language stress production and use is worth mentioning here as it will be shown to be relevant to the present investigation. Studies of Spanish, such as those by Aske (1990) and Eddington (2000b, 2004), following Skousen's (see 2002 for a review) work on the Analogical Modeling of Language, find empirical evidence in favor of a claim that stress is achieved through analogy. These studies maintain that learners determine stress placement through a system in which mental representations consist of generalizations rather than rules, so that unknown forms are produced by creating connections to known forms. This type of system suggests that stress may not be represented in the mind of the native speaker by rules or even specific lexical entries but rather by generalizations that that speaker has made about the surface stress patterns observed in Spanish, and by somehow marking the exceptions in the lexicon. Face (2004) carried out a study of stress perception in which learners were presented with nonce words that had no acoustic prominence, and found evidence in favor of non-acoustic cues (such as morphological class or the existence of similar Spanish words) at work in the perception process. What is clear from these studies is the great importance that analogical modeling appears to have in the production of native stress patterns in Spanish.

Relatively little work has been carried out investigating stress acquisition in Spanish as a second language, although these studies tend to indicate that there is more to consider than simply the role of the L1. Bullock & Lord's (2003) study found that English learners of Spanish at different proficiency levels, when confronted with unknown words in Spanish, often exhibited the use of analogy in their non-target like production. These learners pronounced nonce words with the pattern of a similar Spanish word already in their lexicon or even with the pattern of an English word if they did not have any Spanish pattern with which to draw analogy. However, not all of the responses in this experiment are explained by analogy, so there are clearly other factors involved, which will be discussed further below. In the area of perception, studies have also shown that learners appear to take into account a variety of factors. Most research (i.e., Archibald 1992) finds that perception proceeds more rapidly and more accurately than production. For example, Lord (2003) found that accuracy of stress perception among L2 Spanish learners increases with proficiency and exposure to Spanish, regardless of where stress falls. Nonetheless, Face (2005) discovered that English speakers are more likely to accurately perceive stress on the default penultimate syllable than on final or antepenultimate syllables, and that they do not appear sensitive to issues of syllable structure.

The study discussed here will not only shed light on how learners of Spanish approach the acquisition of stress but also on the process or combination of processes that are involved in stress production.

## Method

In addition to examining the success of L2 learner stress acquisition in Spanish, this study also aims to clarify what processes are used by learners in their production of both known and unknown words. In other words, different treatment of known and unknown forms should indicate that different processes are used by speakers under different circumstances. The ultimate goal of this study was therefore to speak to the system of stress production itself, as it is used by learners of the language, and to establish if certain types of words were more problematic than others.

### *Participants and Materials*

In order to accomplish these goals, an oral production experiment was administered to a total of 70 participants. There were 56 English-speaking learners of Spanish: 16 Beginning learners in their second or third semester of Spanish at the university level; 24 Intermediate<sup>3</sup> learners, who were all majors or minors and had studied 5 or 6 semesters beyond the language requirement; and 16 Advanced speakers, all highly successful learners of Spanish who worked as teaching assistants or professors of Spanish. Proficiency levels were determined based largely on the courses in which these participants were currently enrolled, although information on their previous experience with Spanish (i.e., how many years studied and in what context) was also taken into consideration. Additionally, 14 native Spanish speakers served as a control group. These participants came from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries and were in the United States to pursue academic or other professional careers.

All participants took part in the same experiment, for which they were seated at a computer, wearing a headset. They were visually presented with 120 sentences in random order, 60 of which contained real-word tokens, and the other 60 contained invented words. These words were chosen or created based on syllabic structures that affect stress, as discussed above, and all words were incorporated as nouns or adjectives in contextualized phrases. All sentences were of approximately the same length and complexity in terms of grammatical features involved. Participants were instructed to read each sentence out loud as it appeared on the screen, as quickly and accurately as possible, while the computer recorded their utterances. These examples provide two sample items to illustrate the nature of the task, with the token item underlined:

- a. Real word  
*La sábana es para la cama.*  
 the sheet is for the bed  
 'The sheet is for the bed.'
- b. Invented word  
*Mi mamá es pabira y amable.*  
 my mother is [pabira] and friendly  
 'My mother is [invented word] and friendly.'

In order to establish the native-like target response for these invented words, the responses of the Native group were compared to the predictions made by syllable structure and the window-narrowing conditions discussed above. In virtually all cases,

the Natives confirmed those predictions, and therefore those patterns were considered the target. Although not all Native speakers agreed 100% of the time on the pronunciation of invented items, the great majority (98%) did consistently concur, with no discernable token or pattern that caused the minimal discrepancy. The Native group's data also served to confirm the standard pronunciation of the real words and were thus considered the target answers for that subset of tokens as well.

Following this portion of the experiment, participants responded (in writing) to four short follow-up questions, which asked how comfortable they were with their own level of spoken proficiency in Spanish, if they knew the “rules” for stress placement in Spanish, if they were conscious of those rules while speaking, and which portions of the speaking experiment – if any – they found most difficult. Students could answer these questions in English or Spanish.

### *Data Analysis*

Three judges listened to and rated all production utterances for accuracy of stress placement (according to the predictions of syllabic structure in the case of unknown words). Two of the raters were English speakers with advanced levels of Spanish, and the third was a native Spanish speaker. All were students of Spanish Applied Linguistics, had studied Spanish phonetics and phonology, and were teachers of Spanish. In cases of non-agreement by one rater, the majority answer was chosen; in the very rare cases of total disagreement among the three judges (most often a result of prominent secondary stress influenced by English), that example was eliminated from analysis.

In addition to establishing accuracy of stress placement for each participant's utterances, the length of each sound file (each sentence) was noted, as measured by the computer that administered the testing. This measurement was the amount of time between the instant in which the sentence appeared on the screen and when the participant pressed the space bar to continue to the next item. The average accuracy scores and the average file length for each participant were then calculated. It is necessary to point out here that equipment designed to measure exact reaction time in milliseconds was not used, but instead these file lengths represent general tendencies in the length of time it took the participants to see the sentence on the screen and read it out loud. They can be interpreted –albeit very cautiously– as trends in the time it took the participants to process the phrases, as will be discussed below.

For all statistical analyses, the significance level was preset at .05, and for both analyses described here the between-group factor was proficiency level. To determine different performance on real and invented words, a 2-factor repeated-measures ANOVA was performed on the mean accuracy percentages, where the within-group factor was whether the word was real or invented. A similar ANOVA was also performed on the mean production times of the sentences, again contrasting those with real and those with invented words.

### **Results**

The first analysis performed examined the accuracy percentages between groups on real and invented words. Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations for each group, while Table 2 provides the statistical information from the ANOVA.

Table 1. *Mean Accuracy and Standard Deviation on Real and Synthetic Words*

| Group        | All real words | All synthetic words |
|--------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Beginner     | 62.5% (2.64)   | 64.4% (2.87)        |
| Intermediate | 79% (2.28)     | 69.8% (2.49)        |
| Advanced     | 92.5% (2.48)   | 87.5% (2.70)        |
| Native       | 96.6% (2.73)   | 90.6% (2.97)        |

Table 2. *Results of the Word x Group (accuracy) ANOVA*

| Source of Variation       | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F       |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|
| Word (real vs. synthetic) | 5422.86        | 1   | 5422.86     | 24.083* |
| Group                     | 144613.03      | 3   | 48204.342   | 30.183* |
| Word x Group              | 4280.93        | 3   | 1426.98     | 6.34*   |
| Error                     | 80515.42       | 434 | 185.52      |         |

\* $p < 0.05$ 

The ANOVA revealed that both word type (real or invented) and group (proficiency level) were significant factors, leading to the conclusion that accuracy is crucially related both to the learner's experience in the classroom and also to whether the word is one they could have encountered previously or not. Additionally, there was also a significant word x group interaction. Post-hoc tests (Tukey's) indicated that there was significant interaction between all groups with the exception of Advanced and Native, which performed similarly. In other words, the different levels of learners performed differently on words that were invented versus words that were real. By the Advanced learner level, participants performed as accurately as Native speakers on both real and invented words.

These results are noteworthy in a number of aspects. Our first observation is that there are different accuracy rates for real versus invented words, which tells us that learners engage in different processes to assign stress to words they know and words they don't know. The real and invented words shared the same syllable structure, so if a learner were applying a rule based on the syllabic structure, this rule would theoretically apply in all cases, for all words, resulting in the same stress patterns for real and invented words. The other implication of this result is that prior knowledge of the lexical item permits accurate stress placement, evidenced by the different accuracy rates for real and nonexistent words. Also worth mentioning is the clear progression in accuracy across proficiency groups, both for real and invented words, indicating that although L2 classrooms do not treat stress assignment in great detail, somehow the students are acquiring this knowledge. These possibilities will be discussed in greater detail in the Discussion section.

The statistical tests on production times also revealed significant results. In this case, group turned out to be a significant factor, indicating that learner level is closely related to the amount of time it took participants to produce the sentences. However, word type was not a significant factor in this test. There was again a significant word x group interaction. Table 3 shows the mean production times and standard deviations for real

and invented words as produced by all groups, and the statistical information is provided in Table 4.

Table 3. *Mean Production Times (in seconds) and Standard Deviation for Real vs. Synthetic Words*

| Group        | Real Words   | Synthetic Words |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Beginner     | 5.40 (0.26)  | 4.55 (0.22)     |
| Intermediate | 4.61 (0.22)  | 4.44 (0.19)     |
| Advanced     | 4.10 (0.23)  | 4.62 (0.19)     |
| Native       | 3.348 (0.26) | 4.115 (0.22)    |

Table 4. *Results of the Word x Group (production times) ANOVA*

| Source of Variation       | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|
| Word (real vs. synthetic) | 1.065          | 1   | 1.065       | .272  |
| Group                     | 178.96         | 3   | 59.65       | 6.83* |
| Word x Group              | 92.314         | 3   | 30.77       | 7.87* |
| Error                     | 80515.42       | 434 | 185.52      |       |

\*p < 0.05

Post-hoc testing (Tukey's) revealed significant interaction between Beginners and Natives, but that production times for other groups (Beginner-Intermediate, Intermediate-Advanced, Advanced-Native) did not differ significantly.

These results are somewhat less transparent than the accuracy rates, and require further explanation. An examination of the average production times for the Beginner and Intermediate groups reveals that these two groups took approximately the same amount of time to produce the sentences containing real words and those containing nonce forms. While the difference between real and invented word times for the Advanced group were not significant either, it is clear from the data that production times are greater on sentences containing invented words for the Advanced and Native speakers. These results can again be attributed to the lexical knowledge of each learner level. The lower levels - Beginners and many of the Intermediates - are constrained by a limited lexical inventory, and therefore the distinction between real and invented words is blurred: for them, all tokens on the experiment were similar, since they most likely knew very few of them. The greater lexical knowledge of the more advanced groups (Advanced and, obviously, Native) allowed them to distinguish between words they recognized, which were produced relatively more quickly, and those they didn't, which were produced with more hesitation.

Corroboration for this presumed role of lexical knowledge can be found in the answers the participants provided to some of the follow-up questions. The second question asked about knowledge of stress rules. In selected responses below, not a single participant in the Beginner group was able to give generalizations or rules about Spanish stress, while Intermediates, Advanced and Natives all gave the correct descriptive information.

Selected responses to follow-up question regarding stress rules:

Intermediate: "For words without accents, the stress goes on the last syllable if the word ends in a consonant other than *n* or *s*. If the word ends in a vowel, *n* or *s*, the stress goes on the second-to-last syllable."

Advanced: "Any word ending in *n*, *s*, or a vowel is naturally stressed on the second to last syllable. All others (without written diacritical marks) are *agudas* and should be stressed on the last syllable. Any exceptions will have a written accent mark."

Native: "The division between '*llanas* (*penúltima*), *agudas* (*final*, *si no termina en 'n', 's' o vocal*), and *esdrújulas*'. I learnt it when I was in Elementary School."

These responses indicate that most speakers know the generalizations of stress in Spanish. The Beginner group has minimal knowledge of the system of stress placement, a reflection most likely of the pedagogy of our basic language classrooms, in which stress generalizations and rules for written accent marks are typically not presented at the beginning levels.

The next question asked the participants if they were conscious of any stress placement rules while speaking. It was not anticipated that learners or natives would consciously consult rules during speech, although the answers they provide do give some insight into how they approach new words.

Selected responses to follow-up question regarding conscious stress placement:

Beginner: "I'm not very conscious. I just try to pronounce it the way I think a native speaker would say it, but it usually doesn't come out that way."

Intermediate: "I don't usually stop to think about this rule while I'm speaking aloud; but if I'm encountering a new word I might think about it."

Advanced: "Yes and no. I generally monitor the stress I place on words but in many cases it has become very automatic."

Native: "Not really. Sometimes when I read new words I need to think about where the stress goes."

These answers provide further evidence in favor of the fact that learners and natives alike consciously approach unknown words in a different and more thoughtful way than words they know, which they clearly do not think about. The last question reiterates this finding, as it asked which parts of the experiment were the most difficult.

Selected responses from follow-up question regarding difficulty of task:

Beginner: “I found the words that I already knew from using them in . . . class were easy to pronounce because I already knew how to pronounce them, but the words I had never seen before were much more difficult.”

Intermediate: “The words I’d never heard of were definitely more difficult. Some words looked very similar to words I did know, and I would start to say the word I did know before looking more carefully.”

Advanced: “Yes, the words I had never seen before were difficult to know how to pronounce and caused a discernable pause in my speech . . .”

Native: “What I found more difficult were invented words with diphthongs. I always have problems trying to figure out when I have to place an accent on diphthongs . . . I tried to think of a Spanish word that has a similar diphthong, and I pronounced it in the same way.”

Thus, even at the lower levels, the effect of lexical familiarity is clear. At the Intermediate level we also find evidence of an analogical process – even if accidental – at work. It becomes increasingly evident, therefore, that learners feel the need to “stop and think” before pronouncing unknown words, and that even the Native speakers must engage in some additional processes to pronounce unfamiliar lexemes. In light of these findings and those from the production portion of the experiment, we propose that stress production can be viewed as a system that ensures accurate stress production of known/stored lexical items, but also provides the mechanisms necessary for producing unknown forms through analogy to other items. In the following section we propose some possible explanations for these findings.

## Discussion

The performance of the participants here shows that the lexicon plays a vital role in stress assignment: if a word is known, it is produced more quickly and more accurately than a word that is unknown. Additionally, certain learner errors indicate that in the absence of lexical knowledge, speakers draw analogies to other words, either in Spanish or English. While we can not predict what words learners choose in this analogical process, we define an analogy here (as described in Bullock & Lord 2003) as determined by the phonological similarity between the word initial onset-vowel of the produced form and an existing form in Spanish or English. In many cases, there were entire substitutions of a real word for an invented stimulus, and these are also considered analogies by that definition. For example, there were cases of full or partial overlapping segments in the first syllable, such as when participants produced [trjúm.fo] (‘triumph’), an existing word, for invented *trinto*, or English “cardinal” for invented *cradinul* (with expected stress *cradinúl* or *cradínul* according to the window-narrowing conditions). Further, we also found cases of apparent morphological similarity, such as the response [tra.Ba.xár] (‘to work’) for the invented word *tabar*. In this case, it appears that the common infinitival *-ar* suffix, along with the similar word-initial onset consonant, led speakers to produce a common *-ar* verb. Lastly, there were cases of analogy based on identical or similar stress

contours. For example, many non-native participants said [dor.ma.tó.rjo] (→ *dormitorio*, ‘bedroom’) instead of the invented target *darmatrio*.

It is also worth noting here that the learners showed a general reluctance or difficulty in pronouncing both diphthongs and closed syllables. The data reveal productions of forms such as [frá.go] or [frí.go] instead of the invented *friago* (target = [frjá.ɣo]), and [pa.lá.do] replacing the invented target *palaldo* (target = [pa.lál.do]). This difficulty is most likely due to the more complex nature of the syllable structure in these cases.

These errors, as well as the follow-up question responses, indicate that the learners engage in analogy, which again provides evidence for the primary role of lexical familiarity in stress assignment. As was discussed above, previous research into the role of the lexicon in native stress production (Aske 1990; Eddington 2000b, 2004) found that lexical knowledge may act to a certain degree as a potential supplement to a rule-driven system, providing information regarding irregularities or idiosyncrasies of such a system. The current findings, however, indicate that the role of lexical knowledge in foreign language stress production is greater than previously suggested. A system in which stress placement is checked against current lexical forms would allow us to suppose lexical storage of all stress patterns encountered by the speaker as well as an option to look up unknown forms.

The first option for all speakers when confronted with a word is to observe, if possible, any metrical information that is already stored in the learner’s lexicon and to maintain that information in the output. This option reflects the crucial role of lexical knowledge that was witnessed in accuracy levels of production. For Native and Advanced speakers this is possible with many real words. For the lower levels of proficiency, however, a limited lexicon prevents learners from matching the real-word input to any existing entry, and they therefore cannot use any existing knowledge to determine the correct stress placement of the unknown form.

In the absence of a match in the lexicon, speakers do the next best thing: look for something similar. This was seen above in the errors learners committed on invented or unknown words that were shown to be the result of drawing analogical connections. This technique allows speakers to produce a pattern whose stress contour matches, or is similar to, an existing pattern in the inventory. Such a process explains the responses such as [trjúm.fo] (*triunfo*, ‘triumph,’) for the non-existent *trinto*, as discussed previously. Advanced and Native speakers may use these two lexical tools – direct look-up and analogy – to enable their stress production, provided that their lexicon is ample enough to supply matching or similar items. In the case of Beginner and Intermediate learners, however, these options are not always available, since both require relatively extensive knowledge of lexical items in the target language. For these groups, with their limited lexicon, it is likely that there is no match or analogy possible. Therefore, in this last scenario, they tend to fall back on their native language patterns and preferences to make these analogies or connections.

## Conclusion

The acquisition of second language stress patterns in Spanish appears to involve a number of factors, such as the makeup of the lexicon and the choice of exemplars used for analogical modeling. This project provides insight into the nature of the stress system not as a theoretical abstract entity, but instead as a system of lexical processes at work.

These findings generate promising avenues for future work to investigate in greater detail the role of the lexicon and of analogy in other aspects of L2 phonological production, and in different languages.

In turn, this opens up interesting prospects in terms of pedagogical approaches to suprasegmental feature acquisition. Increased exposure to and experience in the language allows learners to build a larger lexical inventory which in turn leads to more accurate stress patterns, and perhaps also to better techniques for achieving native-like stress production on unknown words. Teachers may be able to overcome the fact that most textbooks and language programs neglect stress by providing rich lexical input. After all, we have seen that greater lexicons are associated with more accurate stress placement on unknown words, so perhaps this would indeed be a more valuable tool than teaching learners the abstract rules of stress placement. An additional option might be to focus on those lexical items that are not only semantically relevant to the learners, but that also represent the common patterns of stress placement. In this way, even learners with a limited vocabulary would have a strong enough basis from which they could make accurate analogies when confronted with unknown lexical items. This approach would be in line with the tenets of learner centered approaches to teaching, such as the communicative approach (i.e., Littlewood, 1981) or task-based instruction (i.e., Ellis, 2003). Furthermore, the emphasis on the central role of the lexicon is also in keeping with recent research into second language acquisition (i.e., Gass & Selinker, 2001), as well as theoretical approaches to morphology and syntax (i.e., Chomsky, 1995; Eddington, 2000a). Any research that can bridge the theoretical and the applied in such a way is indeed a promising path to follow.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> A necessary assumption for the postulation of this window's existence is that the lexical word is the domain of stress, excluding clitic additions. In other words, a word such as *explicamelo* ([eks.pli.ka.me.lo] = 'explain it to me') does not violate the window because the clitics *me* and *lo* are not counted as part of the window.

<sup>2</sup> This research investigates only the acquisition of substantive stress. Verbal stress differs crucially from substantive stress in that it follows regular and paradigmatic patterns and is therefore not subject to the idiosyncratic irregularities of substantive stress and thus provides less interesting testing ground for an investigation into L2 acquisition.

<sup>3</sup> It is possible that the Intermediate group is not entirely homogenous taken as a whole, but rather represents a variety of abilities, given the varying backgrounds of students enrolled in courses at this level. Further, a number of the Intermediates had studied abroad, which might potentially impact their lexicon (see, for example, Díaz-Campos 2004; Lafford 2004, 2006; Lord 2006). These are factors that should be controlled for in future work.

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## **Teacher-Student Partnership in Evaluating and Revising a Multidisciplinary Sustained-Content English Language Course**

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The belief that students can make valuable contributions to course design through continuous feedback leads to the consideration of alternative methods of learning that involve students in this process and inspire the development of a new relationship: student-teacher partnership in course evaluation and revision. In this partnership, students provide continuous oral and written feedback to the teacher who is interested in revising the course content and methodology in response to students' views. This article discusses the rationale, procedures, techniques, and findings of a case study carried out in the freshman English program of an English medium university in Ankara, Turkey. In this study, the students and teacher evaluated and revised a multidisciplinary sustained-content English language course. The results show that student-teacher partnership model led to better meeting the students' needs, wants, and interests, and improved the communication between the students and the teacher.

### **A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Sustained-Content Instruction**

Content-based language instruction refers to the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second or foreign language skills. In this kind of approach, the language curriculum is based directly on the academic needs of the students and generally follows the sequence determined by a particular subject matter in dealing with the language problems the students encounter. The focus is on acquiring information via the second language, and in the process, developing their academic language skills. Ultimately, the main goal of content-based instruction is to enable students to transfer these skills to other academic courses given in their second language (Brinton et al., 1989). Sustained-content instruction refers to dealing with the same theme as content of a language course over an extended period of time such as one semester and according to Kasper (1996), sustained-content study immerses students in meaningful and authentic language processing through planned, purposeful, and academically-based activities.

There are different types of content-based curricula, some of which will be discussed here. Topic or theme-based language instruction is the most commonly used type of content-based instruction. Thematic curricula have been implemented in U.S. elementary schools (Walmsley, 1994; Kovalik with Olsen, 1997), special education programs, and for second language learners. In the theme-based model, selected topic or themes provide the content from which teachers extract language learning activities (Snow, 2001). These topics form the backbone of the course curriculum. A theme-based fifteen-week course might be organized around several topics which may be linked to each

other by “threads”- unifying concepts across topics or themes (Stoller & Grabe, 1997, p. 87). Another approach to organizing the content in a theme-based course is to design the whole course around one theme, for example marketing, which may be divided into more specialized topics such as product development, advertising strategies, or consumer behavior. In university settings where the main aim is to develop students’ academic skills, theme selection carries great importance as it needs to reflect the general curriculum. Ideal themes for English language courses in academic contexts should encompass a variety of academic disciplines and allow students to expand their own knowledge base (Fein & Baldwin, 1986). These themes should also allow for logical development of ideas (Bycina, 1986) and should help facilitate students’ adjustment to and success in subject-area courses (Allen & Howard, 1981).

A multi-disciplinary approach investigates the theme of an English language course through a variety of different texts from different fields of study, such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, history, culture, and literature. When materials and activities used in content-based instructional programs are grounded in one or more mainstream academic disciplines, they present students with intensive study of and practice in linguistic and rhetorical structures in a meaningful context. As a result, students are given the opportunity to acquire sufficient and cumulative background knowledge in the disciplines of interest, enabling them to handle the topics on sophisticated levels (Black & Kiehnhoff, 1992). In addition to this, when students are continually faced with academically oriented linguistic and rhetorical tasks, they learn to use the English language not only literally but also interpretively and critically (Raphan & Moser, 1993). Therefore, such tasks and focus on multiple disciplines not only foster sophisticated use of language but also teach the students the skills they need to be academically successful by providing them exposure to academically-oriented linguistic and rhetorical activities they will engage in later on in their studies.

Employing a multi-disciplinary approach to sustained-content instruction is advisable for a variety of reasons. First, dealing with the same topic for an extended period allows students to develop theme-related vocabulary. In addition to the advantages of a sustained-content curriculum, using a multi-disciplinary approach diversifies the input students get by providing different perspectives on the theme. Reacting to texts from different disciplines encourages students to articulate their understandings of and connections to that text. Students are encouraged to relate the texts to their own experience, knowledge, ideas, and reflections. Through this process, students learn how to synthesize information drawn from different texts, that is, to make inter-textual and inter-disciplinary connections (Kasper, 1996). Another advantage of a multi-disciplinary sustained content course is that giving the students the chance to deal with a theme parallel to courses other than English that the students are currently taking allows transfer of both language and knowledge across such courses.

From the teacher’s perspective, the advantage of employing a multi-disciplinary approach to sustained-content instruction is that teaching language skills through a relatively or totally unfamiliar content is a motivating challenge for the language teacher. Thus, teachers are encouraged to learn more about the theme which is a way to “bump up” their knowledge- that is, “to learn something about a topic and to bring their knowledge up to date, leading to enrichment of the theme by the additional knowledge of the teacher” (Walmsley, 1994, p. 24).

## **Student Involvement in Course Evaluation and Revision**

In a learning-centered approach to language course design, Munby (1978) and Hutchison and Waters (1987) stress the importance of addressing learners' needs, lacks, and wants. In the process of identifying the learners' specific needs, wants, and lacks, Nunan (1988) stresses the importance of consulting learners about how and what they should be learning. Jordan (1997) describes the contribution of strategy analysis to learning-centered approaches as the identification of learner preferences regarding group size, correction techniques, and methods of assessment. He states that identification of cultural differences, academic conventions, and learning strategy differences assist the course designer and the teacher in preventing frustrations.

Information about learners' needs, lacks, and wants can be obtained through studies that are conducted prior to designing the course (needs assessment), during the course (formative course evaluation), and after the course (summative course evaluation) (Smith and Ragan, 1993; Dick and Carey, 1996; Posner and Rudnisky, 1997). One of the most detailed and systematic models for needs assessment process proposed by Kemp, Morrison, and Ross (1994) emphasizes that needs assessment should not be conducted only in the pre-instruction phase but should be a thorough study that is flexible enough to assess learners' both learning-related and future needs, lacks and wants.

Obtaining continuous student feedback is an integral component of course evaluation and revision for two main reasons:

1. Obtaining feedback from the students encourages teachers to look deeper into their courses and their teaching.
2. Contributing ideas and suggestions to the structure of the course encourages student ownership in the learning process (Vygotsky, 1986; Bruner, 1990).

Interacting with the instructor and providing feedback about the course have significant impact on the learning process since they add value that results in improving quality and success in the course (Moore & Kearsley, 1996; Cornell & Martin, 1997). Such communication also enhances relationships and defines roles, leading to a positive partnership between the teacher and the students. Therefore, interaction and partnership lead to ensuring high quality teaching, thereby meeting learners' needs. Finally, the communication between the teacher and the students regarding the course informs executive action, policy developments, and resource allocation as part of quality assurance procedures.

## **Background to the Study**

In the sustained-content English language course, ENG 102 *Dangerous Minds vs. Social Control: Socially Deviant Behavior*, that is the focus of this article, a multi-disciplinary approach to sustained-content English language education was used. The content centered on the theme of socially deviant behavior, investigating it from sociological, psychological, cultural, and historical perspectives. While doing so, literary and contemporary texts, and real-life examples were utilized. A wide variety of content sources such as articles from magazines and newspapers, movies, and a novel were included as course materials. Such diversity in text types and disciplines served to

enable students to realistically evaluate socially deviant behavior, to compare different cultural values, and therefore, to reach a holistic understanding of the theme.

The ENG 102 course also employed a model based on teacher-student partnership to evaluate and revise the course. This model viewed the course in two main components: a fixed part which included the pre-determined course skeleton and an open part that consisted of modifiable elements that were revised in response to periodic student feedback. The fixed part of the course consisted of elements that were identified before instruction and could not be immediately revised in response to student feedback. These included aspects of the course such as the course objectives, the reading texts, and the course requirements which consisted of a paper and a research project. The open part referred to the course components that could be altered, deleted, or revised as an immediate response to student feedback. Specifically, pacing of teaching-learning activities, interaction patterns in the activities, student groupings, and quantity of individual monitoring and support were among such modifiable aspects of the course. In this study, the open part of the course was revised in response to student feedback collected at regular intervals.

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do the students perceive the development of their listening, reading, writing, reading, and research skills in the ENG 102 course?
2. What needs to be added to, deleted from, or revised in the ENG 102 course?

The students enrolled in the sustained-content English language course (ENG 102) were in the second semester of their freshman year in an English-medium university in Turkey where English is the most commonly used foreign language. The students had to demonstrate adequate English language proficiency (minimum 213 on the TOEFL exam or equivalent in other international exams) to be able to start their freshman year in this English medium university and took a sustained-content English language course (ENG 101) which centered around another theme in the first semester of their freshman year.

In both ENG 101 and 102 courses, a skills-based syllabus was employed and the course objectives fell under three main categories: writing/research skills, reading skills, and speaking/listening skills. Table 1 outlines the skills and the objectives focused on in ENG 102.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

In ENG 102, the students contributed their ideas and suggestions through five questionnaires administered periodically during the course, semi-structured interviews and an end-of-course questionnaire administered in the last week of the course.

Table 1. *Course Objectives and Skills Covered in ENG 102*

| Writing/Research Skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Reading Skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Speaking and Listening Skills                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div><input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrasing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Summarizing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Writing a well organized essay related to content of course</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Employing organization appropriate to purpose and audience</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Integrating and synthesizing work/research of others into own writing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Using APA documentation style</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Taking notes and utilizing them in research-based writing</div> | <div><input type="checkbox"/> Skimming/scanning</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Critical analysis</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating and assessing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Synthesizing information obtained through reading</div> | <div><input type="checkbox"/> Participating in discussions</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Listening to lectures with the aim of taking notes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Delivering presentations</div> |

### *Participants*

The participants in the study were 30 business administration freshman students enrolled in the ENG 102, Dangerous Minds vs. Social Control: Socially Deviant Behavior course.

### *Instruments*

#### *The Questionnaires*

In the study, five questionnaires were administered. The main purpose of the first four questionnaires that were administered periodically through the semester was to obtain formative evaluation information on the amount of progress students believed they made in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research skills. The information obtained through these questionnaires could be used to remedy the problems the students were experiencing and to better suit the course to their needs. All four of these questionnaires contained statements to which the students responded on a Likert scale of 1 to 4 as well as short answer questions. The majority of the 30 students filled in the four questionnaires.

The fifth questionnaire was administered in week 15 which was the last week of the course. The aim of this questionnaire was to obtain summative feedback that could be used when revising the course for subsequent semesters. Specifically, this questionnaire aimed to identify what aspects of ENG 102 the students thought needed to be added to, deleted, or revised. Therefore, since the semester was over when this last questionnaire was administered, the information could be utilized only when planning long-term action and revision. Since the semester had nearly ended, student attendance was low and only 10 students who were present on the last day of class filled it in.

#### *Journal Entry*

As a course requirement, the students wrote weekly journal entries and the topic of the last journal entry was commenting on the effectiveness of the course. In this journal entry, students had a chance to choose any aspect of the course to comment on holistically and expressed their opinions on its effectiveness and value.

Students were asked to comment on the following when providing feedback:

- the reading pack which included 30 contemporary texts from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, and literature,
- the response journal tasks,
- the research project,
- aspects of the course that helped them to learn the most,
- aspects of the course that they thought did not help them to learn much, and
- effectiveness and value of the model used (teacher-student partnership in course design).

### *The Semi-Structured Interviews*

The semi-structured interviews aimed to obtain in depth and diagnostic information about the students' perceptions of the course. Six students were randomly selected and interviewed at the end of the course. The domains that were provided as journal entry guidance (stated above) were used as questions.

#### *Students' Written Evaluation of the Course*

As the last task during the course, 14 students wrote an essay evaluating the following domains of the course:

- Texts in the course pack
- Keeping a response journal.

Table 2 presents a summary of data collection instruments.

## **Results**

### *Formative Evaluation Results about Students' Skills Development*

Students' feedback obtained through the first four questionnaires aimed to formatively evaluate the open part of the course that included modifiable components. In all of the four questionnaires, students reported developing nearly all of the five skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research (Table 3). When a comparison of skills development was made over the weeks, it was observed that students reported developing their reading skill the most in the first four weeks of the course and their writing skill in weeks five through seven. They reported developing their speaking and listening skills the most in weeks eight through ten. In weeks 11-13, all of the students reported improving their research skills, while they believed that they developed this skill considerably less in the previous weeks. However, it is worth noting that listening was the skill students thought they developed the least through the semester, and reading and writing are the skills they believed they developed the most. The students' perception of the skills self-development was parallel to the amount of emphasis the syllabus placed on these skills.

### *Summative Evaluation Results*

Results were taken from the fifth questionnaire that was administered in week 15, the interviews, students' written feedback through their essay, and the journal entry aimed to obtain students' summative feedback on the course.

### *Students' Skill Development*

The students' responses to Questionnaire 5 (Table 4) demonstrate that, overall, they thought the course helped them to develop their writing skill the most and their listening skill the least.

Table 2. *Data Collection Procedure and Instruments*

| Data Collection Instrument | Week | Type and Number of Items                       | Number of Students | Aim of the Instrument                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Questionnaire 1            | 5    | Total = 23 items<br>(17 Likert & 8 open-ended) | 23                 | To identify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interest value of the texts,</li> <li>• usefulness of activities,</li> <li>• amount of progress students think they made,</li> <li>• the skills students think they needed to focus more on in the future, and</li> <li>• interaction patterns they would like to take part in more.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Questionnaire 2            | 7    | Total= 21 items (12 Likert & 9 open-ended)     | 25                 | To identify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interest value of the texts,</li> <li>• usefulness of activities,</li> <li>• amount of progress students think they made,</li> <li>• skills students think they needed to focus more on in the future,</li> <li>• interaction patterns they would like to take part in more,</li> <li>• students' views on the usefulness of the group-peer review, and</li> <li>• students' satisfaction with the progress they made on the first drafts of their essays.</li> </ul>                                     |
| Questionnaire 3            | 10   | Total = 28 items (19 Likert & 9 open-ended)    | 23                 | To identify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interest value of the texts,</li> <li>• usefulness of activities,</li> <li>• amount of progress students think they made,</li> <li>• skills students think they needed to focus more on in the future,</li> <li>• interaction patterns they would like to take part in more,</li> <li>• students' views on the usefulness of instructor feedback they received on their second drafts, and</li> <li>• students' satisfaction with the progress they made on the second drafts of their essays.</li> </ul> |

|                           |    |                                             |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|----|---------------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Questionnaire 4           | 13 | Total = 23 items (11 Likert & 8 open-ended) | 26 | To identify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interest value of the texts,</li> <li>• usefulness of activities,</li> <li>• amount of progress students think they made,</li> <li>• skills students think they needed to focus more on in the future,</li> <li>• interaction patterns they would like to take part in more</li> <li>• students' satisfaction with their grades on the assignment, mid-term exam, and oral presentations, and</li> <li>• students' views on the usefulness of instructor's feedback and their progress on the second draft of their research paper.</li> </ul> |
| Questionnaire 5           | 15 | Total = 32 Likert items                     | 10 | To identify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students' views on which skills and sub-skills the course focused on and developed, and</li> <li>• what aspects of the ENG 102 the students think need to be added to, deleted, or revised.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Semi-structured interview | 15 | Total = 8 items                             | 6  | To obtain in-depth evaluative information about the course.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Journal entry             | 15 | Total = 8 items                             | 30 | To obtain in-depth evaluative information about the course.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Course evaluation essay   | 15 | --                                          | 14 | To obtain in-depth evaluative information about the course.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

Table 3. *The Skills Students Improved Through the Course*

| Skills    | Weeks 1-4<br>(N= 23) |     | Weeks 5-7<br>(N=25) |     | Weeks 8-10<br>(N=23) |     | Weeks 11-13<br>(N= 26) |     |
|-----------|----------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
|           | Yes                  | No  | Yes                 | No  | Yes                  | No  | Yes                    | No  |
| Reading   | 91%                  | 9%  | 71%                 | 29% | 65%                  | 35% | 67%                    | 33% |
| Writing   | 74%                  | 26% | 96%                 | 4%  | 57%                  | 43% | 67%                    | 33% |
| Speaking  | 70%                  | 30% | 17%                 | 83% | 70%                  | 30% | 33%                    | 67% |
| Listening | 35%                  | 65% | 17%                 | 83% | 43%                  | 57% | 17%                    | 83% |
| Research  | 35%                  | 65% | 60%                 | 40% | 74%                  | 26% | 100%                   | --  |

Table 4: *Students' Perceived Skills Development at the End of the Course*

| This course has helped me to develop my ... | Mean score out of 4<br>(N= 10) |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| writing skills                              | 3.7                            |
| research skills                             | 3.6                            |
| reading skills                              | 3.4                            |
| speaking skills                             | 3.2                            |
| language proficiency                        | 3.1                            |
| vocabulary                                  | 2.9                            |
| listening skills                            | 2.3                            |

The students reported improving the sub-skills associated with the main skills above in varying degrees (Table 5). The sub-skills of writing students believed they improved were highest in number as students reported improving eight sub-skills of writing but only three sub-skills of listening. Among the writing sub-skills, students believed they improved their APA style writing the most. Three components of academic writing, namely using quotations effectively, organization, and mind-mapping, were the sub-skills students improved through the ENG 102 course. When they considered their development in the sub-skills of reading, viewing a topic from different points and identifying main ideas were the ones they believed they improved. In addition to these, improved self-confidence when speaking was a gain the students believed they made through the course. When listening, identifying key words/phrases easier was a sub-skill students developed. Improved note-taking was mentioned as a sub-skill of both writing and listening as this activity requires the use these two main skills.

Table 5. *The Sub-Skills Students Improved in ENG 102*

| Writing sub-skills                              |                       | Reading sub-skills                              |                       | Speaking sub-skills                              |                        | Listening sub-skills                              |                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| This course improved my writing skills of ..... | Mean out of 4<br>N=10 | This course improved my reading skills of ..... | Mean out of 4<br>N=10 | This course improved my speaking skills of ..... | Mean out of 4<br>N= 10 | This course improved my listening skills of ..... | Mean out of 4<br>N=10 |
| APA style writing                               | 3.5                   | Viewing a topic from different points           | 3.2                   | Improved self-confidence when speaking           | 3.7                    | Identifying key words/ phrases easier             | 2.9                   |
| Using quotations effectively                    | 3.4                   | Identifying main ideas                          | 3.1                   | Comprehending others' thoughts                   | 3.5                    | Effectively note-taking                           | 2.9                   |
| Essay organization                              | 3.4                   | Identifying supporting ideas                    | 3                     | Expressing my thoughts                           | 3.4                    | Easily understanding different accents            | 2.8                   |
| Mind-mapping                                    | 3.4                   | Comprehending the overall message easier        | 3                     | Fluent speaking                                  | 3.2                    |                                                   |                       |
| Self-expression in writing                      | 3.2                   | Identifying the intended audience               | 2.9                   | Improved pronunciation                           | 2.9                    |                                                   |                       |
| Summarizing                                     | 3.2                   | Reading faster                                  | 2.9                   |                                                  |                        |                                                   |                       |
| Paraphrasing                                    | 3                     | Widened vocabulary knowledge                    | 2.7                   |                                                  |                        |                                                   |                       |
| Note-taking                                     | 3                     |                                                 |                       |                                                  |                        |                                                   |                       |

*Aspects of the Course that Helped Students Learn the Most*

When asked which aspects of the course helped the students to learn most, a majority of the interviewees said that presentations and the research project were the most useful. They thought the research project contributed to their learning as it covered reading, writing, and research skills as well as teaching them how to paraphrase and to read selectively. Another reason for benefiting from the research project was that it provided students an opportunity to relate their experiences to the readings, enabling them to form the link between deviant behavior in various parts of the world and real-life contexts of these behaviors. Half of the interviewees stated that the content of the course helped them to learn the most as it aroused their interest and motivated them read and discuss the issues in the readings. One interviewee said that the instructor's "attitude towards mistakes" helped her to learn the most. She further pointed out that the instructor "corrected them indirectly which raised students' self-confidence and gave the message that they should not worry about making mistakes when communicating in English".

Table 6. *Aspects of the Course that Helped Students Learn the Most*

| <i>Aspects of the Course that Helped Students Learn the Most</i>       | Frequency<br>(n=6) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Completing the research project                                        | 4                  |
| Delivering presentations in class                                      | 4                  |
| The sustained-content covered in the course- socially deviant behavior | 3                  |
| The in- and outside-class activities related to readings               | 2                  |
| Instructor's attitude towards students and mistakes                    | 1                  |

*Aspects of the Course that Helped Students Learn the Least*

When asked what aspects of the course were the least useful, interviewees' comments centered around one of the main readings, the novel *In Cold Blood*. Nearly all of the interviewees thought that the novel was the least useful aspect of the course as it was too dense in terms of content and its language was above students' language proficiency, making it too difficult to comprehend. The high amount of mind-mapping activities used in the course was another aspect that was viewed to be less useful.

Table 7. *Aspects of the Course that Helped Students Learn the Least*

| <i>Aspects of the Course that Helped Students Learn the Least</i> | Frequency<br>(n=6) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| The novel <i>In Cold Blood</i>                                    | 5                  |
| The high amount of mind-mapping activities                        | 3                  |
| Pop quizzes on the readings                                       | 1                  |

*Students' Reactions to the Course Evaluation and Revision Model*

Upon asking students how they felt regarding the course design model described, most of the students said that they, at first, did not think their comments and suggestions would be taken into consideration and that they saw it as an additional burden as too much time was spent filling in questionnaires. However, later on in the semester, students said that their perceptions changed as they observed immediate changes in the course. One of the students said that it was “good to feel that someone cares about our suggestions and wants to make you happy as a student”. In addition to this, some said that filling in questionnaires and being interviewed by the instructor motivated them to attend classes and, as a result, they were more interested in the lessons. The students also pointed out that such a dialogue between the students and the instructor was beneficial as they were able to experience the immediate changes made to the course and, therefore, were able to benefit from the feedback they provided. One student pointed out that the communication between him and the instructor was effective in building a partnership by saying that “the teacher is aware of what the students think about the course. Also, she makes an effort to help the students learn. Students and the teacher work like partners for a common cause”. Based on their feedback, it is possible to conclude that students perceived the communication channel between the instructor and themselves as a tool that stimulates their learning.

## **Discussion**

In response to the first research question which investigated what aspects of the sustained-content English language course (ENG 102) the students think need to be added to, deleted, or revised, two kinds of action results: immediate action and long term action.

*Immediate Additions, Deletions, and Revisions to the Course*

In response to student feedback obtained through the four questionnaires and the interviews, additions, deletions, and revisions that do not fall under the fixed part of the course were made. The main addition to the course was increasing the quantity of activities that aim to improve the speaking skill and activities that involve the practice of oral presentation skills. Specifically, activities that incorporate listening with discussions and group practice for the presentations were added to the set of activities that were planned before the semester started. By combining the listening activities with discussions, students were provided with more opportunities to engage in group work, an addition they had also requested. Another major addition in response to student feedback was increasing the emphasis placed on the reading and writing skills by increasing the number of activities that cater to the development of these skills. Apart from these, since the students reported benefiting from peer feedback and wanted more group activities, review of first and second drafts of paper assignment was added as an in-class activity in weeks six and twelve. Also, in response to students request to do more in-class activities directly related to their research project, an input session on how to write a research proposal was added.

In their feedback through the questionnaires, the majority of students indicated that the number of reading texts was high, and thus, students reported not being able to allocate sufficient time to comprehend the texts in detail due to time limitations. In response to this feedback, of the 30 contemporary multi-disciplinary texts on socially deviant behavior, five were eliminated.

Student feedback in the fourth week demonstrated that texts used to analyze APA style in-text citations were not appealing to the students. Therefore, one revision on the course materials was, in weeks subsequent to week four, replacing the texts chosen for this purpose with ones that the students would find interesting. Another revision concerned the amount of teacher support provided to individual students. In the third questionnaire, the students reported that they were not proficient in using APA style of referencing, the instructor worked with students on a one-to-one basis with while they were working on their second drafts.

### *Long-Term Additions, Deletions, and Revisions to the Course*

Students' responses that were not addressed immediately are to be taken into account when revising the course for subsequent semesters. One major conclusion that can be reached from the results is that, since the majority of students reported benefiting from and enjoying the use of this multi-disciplinary approach to sustained-content instruction, the same course can be offered again with some minor revisions in future semesters.

All students reported that they benefited from learning through poems. In response to this feedback, poems can take a larger proportion of the course by allocating more time to them. The number of poems used in class and the variety of activities that are used in exploiting the poems can be increased. Apart from adding more poems and a wider variety of activities to the course materials, a more systematic way of teaching vocabulary needs to be incorporated into the course. This can be achieved by allocating at least one hour every week to vocabulary development throughout the course and making vocabulary practice an integral part of the response journal students are required to keep.

Another addition to the course should focus on the objectives of the course. That is, at the beginning of the semester, sufficient time should be allocated to explaining the objectives of the course in detail. The main aim of the course was to improve students' reading, writing and research skills. Therefore, the speaking and listening skills were emphasized less. However, the majority of the students viewed improving their speaking and listening skills as a need and expected to develop these skills in this course. Offering another English language course that primarily addresses the skills of speaking and listening to the freshman curriculum or offering an elective course that meets these requests can be considered in the future.

Both formative and summative feedback on the texts demonstrates that students did not find the novel and the movie *In Cold Blood* interesting. As a result, the next time the course is offered, using another primary text with a recent movie needs to be considered. Another aspect of the course the students reported benefiting less from concerned the number of journal entries. In general, students found the work load to be rather heavy. Therefore, reducing the number of journal entries to seven or eight from eleven can reduce the amount of writing the students are expected to do through the course.

Students' feedback through the course demonstrated that they had difficulty with the texts used to provide practice with the APA style of documentation. Therefore, when the course is offered again, the course designers need to seek alternative materials and activities when presenting and practicing APA style documentation. Another aspect of the course that needs to be revised concerns the length of texts to be used as reading materials. Some of the texts, the sample research paper in particular, were very long (exceeding 25 pages) and these texts de-motivated the students as they set unrealistic expectations of what students needed to process and comprehend. To optimize students' participation and comprehension, reading texts should not exceed 15-20 pages. Dividing lengthy passages and related task into manageable chunks can improve student participation and success.

When asked to comment on the usefulness of the research project, the majority of students reported learning from working in groups as well as feeling frustrated in the process. To help students cope with their frustrations, a support system can be structured. Students can be provided with interpersonal and communication skills that will aid them when working with their peers. Also, setting the research task and forming groups earlier in the semester can reduce the time pressure students felt towards the end of the semester.

### **Conclusions**

The results of the study show that students were motivated and interested in the course as their views were taken into consideration and immediate revisions were made to better suit the course to their needs and wants. In addition to this, the communication between the instructor and the students that was initiated for the purposes of gathering information for course revision led to improving students' commitment. As a result, the course evaluation served as a tool to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Based on this study, it is possible to conclude that the students benefited from the multi-disciplinary nature of the course as it broadened their understanding of human behavior, especially socially deviant behavior. The deepening in their conceptualization of the topic was largely due to the fact that the content was explored through a wide variety of texts over an extended period of instruction. As Kasper (1996) points out, sustained-content study was able to immerse the students in meaningful and authentic language processing through planned, purposeful, and academically-based activities, which contributed to maintaining student interest and commitment at high levels through the course.

Another aspect of the study is that the theme of course, socially deviant behavior, was perceived to be appropriate since it was able to encompass a variety of academic disciplines and could allow students to expand their own knowledge base. Besides allowing for logical development of ideas, the theme also helped facilitate students' adjustment to and success in subject-area courses. Another advantage of employing a multi-disciplinary sustained content course was to give the students the chance to deal with a theme that parallels the courses other than English that the students were currently taking to allow transfer of both language and knowledge across such courses. In addition to these, it is worth noting that student-teacher partnership in the process of course design contributed to improving ownership and commitment to learning by both the students and the teacher. Munby (1978), Hutchison and Waters (1987), and Nunan (1988) emphasize addressing learners' needs, lacks, and wants and in the process of identifying the specific needs, wants,

and lacks, consulting learners is crucial. Similar to conclusions of Kemp, Morrison, and Ross (1994), this study has demonstrated that formative and summative evaluations of the course have acted as needs analyses that provide valuable information about what needs to be added, deleted, and revised in the course content and methodology. Contributing ideas and suggestions to the structure of the course encouraged student ownership in the learning process. Interacting with the instructor and providing feedback about the course have significant impact on the learning process since they add value that results in improving quality and student success in the course. Such communication also enhanced relationships and defined roles, leading to a positive partnership between the teacher and the students. Therefore, interaction and partnership led to ensuring high quality teaching, thereby meeting learners' needs.

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## Issues of Validity of SAT Subject Test Korean with Listening

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*This study investigated some issues regarding the validity of the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) Subject Test: Korean with Listening. The SAT Korean has been administered just once a year since its inception in 1997. As of March 2006, it had been administered nine times. However, SAT foreign language tests are not as rigorously researched as other high-stakes tests such as SAT or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Neither Educational Testing Service (ETS) nor the College Board provides information on validity even though the College Board states that the test is highly reliable. The SAT Korean deserves more research and attention in order to be established as an appropriate, meaningful, and useful standard of Korean ability measurement.*

*In the present study, the SAT Korean Sample Test was administered in 2005 to 12 non-native Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLI) Korean students and seven Korean heritage students living in Los Angeles and Monterey, California. Based on their test results, quantitative item analyses were shown to lead to important comments on content and construct validity of the SAT Korean. The results suggest that several fundamental considerations should be kept in mind for future modifications in the SAT Korean.*

The SAT has provided a standard measure of ability in making decisions on college admissions in America since its introduction in 1926 (Frisch-Kowalski, 2003). Together with the SAT I tests, which measures verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities, SAT Subject tests have provided a measure of students' knowledge and ability in specific subject areas such as foreign languages, history, biology, and other subjects. Subject tests are now required by more competitive schools for admission in addition to the SAT I tests. For example, Subject tests are used for admissions in the University of California (UC), which requires all applicants to submit three Subject test scores (Kobrin, Camara & Milewski, 2002). Asian language tests were introduced in Subject tests in the 1990s with the increasing number of Asian immigrants in U.S. schools (Frisch-Kowalski, 2003). The SAT Korean has been administered as one of the Subject tests since 1997, following Japanese in 1993 and Chinese in 1994.

Subject tests in foreign languages are being used for two purposes: admission to higher education and placement in college language courses (College Entrance)

Examination Board, 2002). In most colleges, however, language test scores are being used for students' placement in language courses rather than for admission screening. Thus, the Korean with Listening test (henceforth, SAT Korean) should provide colleges with an accurate measure of students' Korean language ability, which means the test should place test takers at the appropriate proficiency level in the Korean language.

The SAT Korean illustrates James Paul Gee's (2005) view that language-in-use or any language-related policy is inevitably "political." The College Board had not recognized the strong need for the development of the SAT Korean, unlike European languages such as French or Italian. In response, Korean American communities in 1993 launched a well-organized nationwide campaign which included petitions from 15,000 US residents and raised funds to cover the required costs of test development by 1995. Korean American communities needed such a test to satisfy their needs. Those needs boosted test development (Henning, 1987).

As of 2004, SAT Korean has more test-takers than the French, German, and Japanese listening tests and is outnumbered only by Spanish and Chinese. Overall, SAT foreign language tests are not as well financed or rigorously researched as higher-stake tests such as SAT or TOEFL. SAT Korean, the newest of all SAT foreign language tests, deserves more research and attention.

In addition to serving as placement instruments, language tests can serve as sources of information in evaluating the effectiveness of language teaching and learning (Bachman, 1990; McNamara, 2000). However, language tests are mistrusted because they often fail to measure language ability accurately (Hughes, 2003). Even though the College Board cites Subject tests as "highly reliable," it does not provide any information on content and construct validity of the SAT Korean. We contacted several people who were involved in the test as either developers or consultants, but no one changed our impression as to the validity of the research.

High reliability does not necessarily guarantee high validity. Validity involves how appropriate a test's content is (content validity), how well a test represents the construct it intends to measure (construct validity), and how useful a test is for predictive purposes (predictive validity). The test should be valid in the interpretation and use of test scores, and measure accurately what it is intended to measure (Bachman, 1990). However, not much attention has been paid to validity research on the Subject tests, much less the SAT Korean.

The present study was designed to address some issues of the content and construct validity of the SAT Korean. As experienced teachers, we have come in contact with largely non-heritage learners. Our independent review of the SAT Korean Sample Test raised an issue of test bias. Some items seem to contain what is called "content schemata," which refers to background knowledge that leads one to predict what information a text would contain or one that leads one to anticipate the structure of the text (Bailey, 1997).

The official Sample test was downloaded from the College Board website. The number of items in the Sample test is smaller than the full test, but the Sample test has the same format as the full test. The SAT Subject Tests Preparation Booklet provides prospective test-takers with a Sample test for test preparation. Therefore, despite the small size of the test items, the Sample test is the only accessible tool for our test review which represents the full test of the SAT Korean.

The official Sample test was administered to 12 non-native Defense Language Institute (henceforth, DLI) Korean students and seven Korean heritage students living in Los Angeles and Monterey.<sup>1</sup> The target audience for the SAT Korean, according to the College Board, is high school students or graduates who have studied Korean as a second or foreign language in high school for two to four years or the equivalent. The DLI populations, full-time foreign language students, have already studied the equivalent of two years of high school Korean. Many of them also wish to earn a college degree, so they can take the Korean SAT in the future.

Quantitative item analyses such as item difficulty, item discrimination, and distracter analysis were shown to engender important concerns about the content and construct validity of the SAT Korean. Specific research questions for the present investigation include the following:

1. Does the test have bias? Does it contain items that favor a particular group: the non-heritage Korean group over the Korean heritage group, or vice versa?
2. The College Board claims that the SAT Korean measures academic classroom language rather street language (College Entrance Examination Board, 2002). Does the test content reflect academic classroom language instead of everyday street language?
3. Does the test truly measure students' ability to communicate "in the context of contemporary Korean culture" as it claims?

In the study presented here, we address those questions and suggest ways to reduce the drawbacks of this test and realize its full potential so the SAT Korean test can be reliable and valid in measuring Korean language ability accurately.

## **Method**

### *Participants*

As this study seeks to investigate whether or not the SAT Korean is suitable for non-heritage speakers of Korean, a majority of the test-takers represent non-heritage speakers of Korean, DLI students. For the purpose of this study, the major selection criterion for the DLI students reflects the length of their Korean training and familiarity with the multiple-choice format upon which the SAT Korean is based. The students in the Korean Basic Course are not officially exposed to multiple-choice format until the 43<sup>rd</sup> week of a 63-week long program. It is important to note that most DLI students are non-heritage learners and have a limited exposure to the language outside the classroom, whereas Korean heritage learners represent over 80% of the Korean language learners at most civilian universities in the U.S. (You, 2001).

Two different groups ( $n=19$ ) participated in our test administration. The first group consisted of Korean heritage students ( $n=7$ ) living in California, and the second group ( $n=12$ ) was made up of non-heritage DLI students in their 48<sup>th</sup> week. These DLI students represent an intact class available for this pilot testing. Taking into account the fact that DLI students study Korean intensively for more than 6 hours a day, we believe that their 63 weeks of exposure to Korean more than exceed that of the intended audience of the SAT Korean. According to the College Board, the intended audience

for the SAT Korean is high school students or graduates who have studied Korean as a second or foreign language in high school for two to four years or the equivalent.

The test administration was conducted between February and July 2005. From the start, it was extremely difficult to identify enough Korean heritage participants. There were few ways to contact Korean heritage students willing to take the Sample Test. In addition, some participants who fit into the intended audience had already taken the Sample Test, and were therefore eliminated from consideration. Therefore, the Korean heritage participants vary in their backgrounds. Four Korean heritage participants were chosen from those studying Korean at the Yonsei Korean Language Institute (KLI) in Los Angeles, California. They had not learned Korean at school but spoke Korean at home. They had just started learning Korean at KLI and were placed in the 4<sup>th</sup> level class by KLI placement test. Two other Korean heritage students were selected from young children who left Korea in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Kang (2004) mentioned that the difficulty level of the SAT Korean is appropriate for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in Korea. One Korean heritage student was selected from the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) program at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. She came to the U.S. when she was in junior high school. Again, the diversity of Korean heritage participants is not by design; it represents the difficulty of selecting good candidates.

### *Materials and Procedures*

A 16-item sample test was downloaded from the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) and used for this study. The Sample Test consisted of three listening questions, eight usage questions, and five reading questions. The listening tape was not available on the website, and was therefore digitally re-recorded by two Korean native speakers for this study and used for both groups. For the DLI group, the test took about 20 minutes, including time to read the instructions.

For the Korean heritage students, however, the test took about 10 minutes less to complete. As we will discuss later, some of the test content (i.e., immigration) is familiar to heritage speakers, and thus required less time. A questionnaire (Appendix A) was distributed to elicit the students' biographical information and their thoughts about this sample test. A teacher who works at KLI in Los Angeles administered the test on behalf of the researchers. The questionnaire and answer sheets were collected through the mail.

### *Analyses*

The tests were scored based on the answer key; one point was awarded for each correct response. No points were awarded for incorrect or non-responses. That is, we adopted a different scoring method from the real SAT Korean test for convenience. On the official SAT Korean tests, students' raw scores are calculated in the following manner: One point is added to each correct answer, but one-third of a point is subtracted from each wrong answer and no points are subtracted from omitted questions. The raw scores are converted on the 200-to-800 scale for the total test, and sub scores for listening, usage, and reading sections are converted on a 20-to-80 scale.

Based on the test outcomes, item difficulty was calculated for total group, DLI group and Korean heritage group and item discrimination was calculated for total group. We also conducted a distracter analysis for each group. In addition, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated for both the total score and each section of the sample test.

### *Results and Discussion*

As mentioned earlier, both groups differ vastly. The Korean heritage students had not undergone formal classroom instruction in an academic setting, but they spoke Korean at home. In contrast, the DLI students received extensive formal classroom instruction in academic setting but limited exposure to the language outside the classroom. In this study, we compared the listening and reading scores of the two groups. The College Board claims that the SAT Korean measures “academic classroom language” as opposed to “on-the-street” use (College Entrance Examination Board, 2002). If this were the case, one could expect the DLI students to score as high as the heritage group. The descriptive statistics for the DLI group and Korean heritage group are shown below in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics*

| Group            | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean  | Std. Deviation |
|------------------|----|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Heritage         | 7  | 10      | 15      | 11.43 | 1.718          |
| Non-heritage DLI | 12 | 5       | 9       | 7.75  | 1.288          |

Table 2. *Scores per Section*

|                  | Listening | Usage | Reading |
|------------------|-----------|-------|---------|
| # of Items       | 3         | 8     | 5       |
| Heritage         | 2.14      | 5.71  | 3.57    |
| Non-heritage DLI | 1.91      | 3.23  | 3.68    |

The groups varied the most in their scores in the Usage section of the test. Shown in Table 2, the mean of heritage students was 5.71 and that of non-heritage DLI students was 3.23. The mean difference of the Usage section was 2.48 between two groups, and it was much broader than that of Listening section, 0.23 and Reading section, 0.11. Most items in the Usage section are informal and colloquial, which we believe are relatively easier for heritage learners and more difficult for non-heritage learners like DLI students. In order to find out how heritage students and non-heritage DLI students performed in each item, we calculated item difficulty of the Sample Test taken by heritage students and non-heritage DLI students separately.

The difference in item difficulty between two groups is shown below in Table 3 and Table 4. The whole chart of item difficulty is shown in Appendix B.

Table 3. Item Difficulty of the Sample Test Taken by DLI Students

| Item            | 1         | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5     | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13      | 14  | 15 | 16  |
|-----------------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|----|-----|
| Section         | Listening |     |     |     | Usage |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | Reading |     |    |     |
| Item Difficulty | .58       | .50 | .33 | .33 | .67   | .50 | .17 | .75 | .08 | .08 | .25 | .42 | .50     | .83 | 1  | .75 |

Table 4. Item Difficulty of the Sample Test Taken by Korean Heritage Students

| Item            | 1         | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5     | 6   | 7   | 8 | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13      | 14  | 15 | 16  |
|-----------------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|----|-----|
| Section         | Listening |     |     |     | Usage |     |     |   |     |     |     |     | Reading |     |    |     |
| Item Difficulty | 1         | .29 | .86 | .71 | 1     | .71 | .57 | 1 | .29 | .57 | .86 | .57 | .71     | .71 | 1  | .57 |

As you can see in Table 2, the difference between DLI students and Korean heritage students was the largest in the Usage section. Looking at the item difficulty in Tables 3 and 4, the disparity on item difficulty between the two groups is too big on items 7, 10, and 11. Heritage students are more likely to answer these items correctly. In this section, the examinees were asked to fill in blanks with appropriate words or phrases from the answer sheet. The paragraph and questions are shown in Table 5 as an example:

Table 5.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| nanun elyeseppwute sengkyeki kuphay sedwurundanun malul manhi tulessta. Ilen<br>sengkyekttaymwuey elundulkkey kkwucwungto 8. _____ tulessko,<br>nul hakkyoey kaciko kayahal kesul tembengtayko cipey twuko kakena, eti<br>nolekalttaynum isamil cenpwute cwunpihay nohulako yatanpepsekul 9. _____<br>_____ emeni sokul muchek 10. _____ tulyessta. kulena i kuphan<br>sengkyek ttaymwuey swukcey manun hakkyoeyse ocamaca mence hay nohko nolki<br>ttaymwuney swukceylo kekcing 11. _____. |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

| Item # | Korean                 | English Equivalent             |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 8      | kkwucwungul tutta      | to be scolded/chewed out       |
| 9      | yatan pepsekul ttelta  | to fuss around                 |
| 10     | Sokul ssekye tulyessta | to harden one's mother's heart |

These items, especially items 8 to 10, tend to cover colloquial expressions, which are rarely used in academic language. For example, item 8 may be familiar to heritage participants who speak Korean with their parents because this expression is often used in the parent-child setting in Korean families. The paragraph content in Table 5 contains schemata, which consist of stereotypical scenarios heritage students are most likely to have in the course of their life experience while non-heritage student are less likely to have. According to Bell (2003), non-native speakers have difficulty in making connections between text and background knowledge and rely more on linguistic cues. However, the content in Table 5 has many colloquial expressions, which make it hard for non-heritage students to rely on linguistic cues. Moreover, items 8 to 10 deal with collocation, which might be one of the most difficult parts in foreign language learning.

The College Board states that test content in foreign language tests stresses academic achievement. Therefore, the gap between native speakers and non-native speakers should be insignificant because the test emphasizes academic language use rather than “on-the-street” use (College Entrance Examination Board, 2002). However, the Usage section is highly colloquial for non-heritage speakers and may broaden the score gap between heritage speakers and non-heritage speakers. Another problem with the sample items is that some answer choices are not authentic and realistic but made-up. It is hard to determine whether or not the test content is biased based on this small sample of test results. Content bias is said to exist when a test measures knowledge that is relevant only for a particular group. Therefore, it is important to review the test content thoroughly whether the test content favors one specific group over the other group with respect to the experience of test takers. More importantly, we need to review whether the test measures what it is intended to measure and whether what it measures is appropriate, given the purpose of the test.

Overall, the content of Usage and Reading sections indicates some bias towards certain cultural backgrounds. For example, the texts for items 14 to 16 are from the diary of a young immigrant or student who just came to the U.S. four months prior. Therefore, in theory, heritage learners should find these items easier than the DLI group. However, these items are not particularly well written, and most heritage and non-heritage students answer them correctly. These items do not discriminate heritage students and non-heritage students, which makes it hard to identify the test bias that favors a specific group.

According to the College Board, the SAT Korean seeks to measure students' ability to communicate "in the context of contemporary Korean culture." We argue that contemporary Korean culture is quite different from Korean American culture, or any other Korean ethnic culture abroad.<sup>2</sup>

Several factors seem to have an influence on the differences between "contemporary Korean culture" and Korean American culture. First, almost all immigrants or expatriates face language attrition, which refers to loss of their first-language over time in favor of a local language of wider currency (Brewer, 2003; Seliger & Vago, 1991). Second, cultural anthropologists such as Clark Wissler used the term "age-area hypothesis" as early as a century ago, but this hypothesis still has some usefulness. It plotted cultural "traits" as originating from a center, in this case Korea, and then, radiating out to form a circle, so that the oldest traits were on the periphery like Korean ethnic communities in the U.S. Culture traits at the periphery are therefore characteristic of an earlier period of the center. For example, Korean Americans who left Korea in the 1970s tend to be more conservative in terms of political ideology than those still in Korea.

In addition, the culture of expatriates may be influenced by what is known as the "frozen phenomenon," closely related to the age-area hypothesis. This term is often used in psychology and anthropology to refer to the phenomenon of immigrants whose cultural understanding of the motherland or cultural norm is "frozen" at the moment they left for the "New World." In addition, any immigrant or ethnic culture abroad is inevitably influenced by the language of dominant culture. For example, Korean ethnic newspapers published in the U.S. use many English "loan words" (e.g. Medicare, mortgage, etc) that are not used in papers in Korea proper. About one third of questions in the official sample test are in the context of Korean American culture.

Another problem with the test is that it assesses students' ability to use honorifics. We feel some of the Usage questions require a high understanding of honorifics, which makes it extremely difficult for non-heritage students. For a non-heritage learner of Korean in a KFL situation, understanding Korean honorifics requires advanced-level proficiency, due to their complexity and their socio-pragmatic implications. More specifically, Korean honorifics not only are extremely rich in morphological variation, but also highly complicated in such areas as speech levels, honorific suffixes, vocatives, euphemistic words, and various discourse sentence-ending particles (Byon, 2004). Therefore, items that require more than a basic understanding of honorifics need to be minimized.

In addition, considering the main purposes of placement and admission, the SAT Korean should distinguish students' levels and place them at an appropriate level of instruction. The result of our item discrimination<sup>3</sup> analysis indicates that the items may not discriminate across the students' levels. Efforts should be made to construct items that discriminate across the students' ability. The item discrimination and item difficulty for the total group are shown in Table 6. The complete charts of item difficulty and item discrimination for the total group are shown in Appendix C.

Table 6. Item Discrimination and Item Difficulty for the Total Group

| Item       | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15 | 16  |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| Item Diff. | .74 | .42 | .47 | .47 | .79 | .63 | .37 | .84 | .21 | .21 | .47 | .42 | .58 | .79 | 1. | .68 |
| Item Dis.  | .4  | .1  | .3  | .4  | .3  | .2  | .4  | .1  | .3  | .1  | .4  | -.1 | .1  | .0  | .0 | -.1 |

Table 7. Comparison of Difficulty Level

| Item                                             | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15   | 16  |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|
| Item Diff.<br>(Estimated<br>by College<br>Board) | 2   | 3   | 4   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 4   | 3   | 2   | 3   | 3   | 4    | 4   |
| Item Diff.<br>(This<br>study)                    | .74 | .42 | .47 | .47 | .79 | .63 | .37 | .84 | .21 | .21 | .47 | .42 | .58 | .79 | 1.00 | .68 |

Items 1, 4, and 11 are not only appropriately easy or difficult but also discriminate between those students who scored high and low. Items 15 and 16 are too easy and fail to discriminate between the students' levels. Items 9 and 10 are too difficult, and Item 10 also fail to discriminate. According to Turner (2005), the following guidelines are suggested for interpreting item discrimination on norm-referenced tests.

- > .40 Great
- .30- .39 Ok, maybe revise
- .20- .29 Marginal; revise
- < .19 Poor, reject or revise and re-pilot

There are two items that show negative discrimination: items 12 and 16. In negative discrimination, the lower-third of students outperform the upper-third. It is interesting that for some items, the item difficulty value of our research does not match the estimated difficulty level given by the College Board. The estimated difficulty level is provided on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 the easiest and 5 the most difficult, shown in Table 7.

In the present research, item 15 turned out to be the easiest item for all 19 participants. However, the College Board estimates this item as difficulty level 4, "difficult." Examinees in our research found item 16 somewhat easy, but the estimated difficulty level is shown as "difficult." We doubt that item 16 measures language reading ability because many savvy test takers might get this item correct just by looking at the answer choices and choosing the most plausible answer even without reading the passage. The answer choices of item 15 and 16 are shown below.

15. What did the writer learn that is important in American society?
- a. To accept cultural diversity;
  - b. To speak many languages;
  - c. To help international students;
  - d. To befriend many people.
16. What does the writer think is the best way to become proficient in English?
- a. Memorizing a lot of vocabulary;
  - b. Attending various seminars;
  - c. Participating in student clubs;
  - d. Learning and thinking in English.

Some of the top participants including the highest scorer did not get this item correct. The top scorer could not find a good answer based on the passage. However, the other students found this item easy. We are not sure whether participants got these two items correct by understanding the passage or by looking at the answer choices and guessing. According to Alderson (2000), the serious limitation in multiple-choice questions is that the tester does not know why the test takers answered the way they did. He mentions that "it is possible to get an item correct for the wrong reason or to get an item wrong for the right reason" (p. 212). Therefore, we should be cautious in making inferences or decisions about language ability through a multiple-choice test. It is also important to note that in order to decrease the measurement error, the number of items

in the Sample Test should be lengthened to increase test reliability. The measurement error can be reduced as test length increases (Wells & Wallack, 2003). For example, low scorers are less likely to answer many questions correctly, but they can answer one or two items correctly by guessing.

If it is necessary to use multiple-choice items, it is crucial to construct plausible but incorrect answer choices, or distracters that discriminate across candidates' performance levels. Language testers might agree on how hard it is to write good distracters which attract the less proficient learners but not the more proficient learners. Taking a look at the Distracter Analysis in Table 7, answer options in item 15 do not serve the function of distracters at all while distracters in some items function well. Therefore, when developing a test, test developers should pilot the test and analyze the items for difficulty and discrimination so they can modify and remove the items that do not function well.

Table 8. *Distractor Analysis*

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Answer key</i> | <i>A</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>D</i> | <i>No answer</i> |
|-------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|
| 1           | C                 | 1        | 2        | 14       | 2        |                  |
| 2           | D                 | 0        | 9        | 1        | 8        |                  |
| 3           | B                 | 1        | 9        | 6        | 3        |                  |
| 4           | B                 | 2        | 9        | 7        | 1        |                  |
| 5           | C                 | 1        | 2        | 15       | 1        |                  |
| 6           | A                 | 12       | 2        | 3        | 2        |                  |
| 7           | B                 | 9        | 7        | 1        | 2        |                  |
| 8           | A                 | 16       | 2        | 1        | 0        |                  |
| 9           | C                 | 1        | 13       | 4        | 1        |                  |
| 10          | C                 | 2        | 9        | 4        | 4        |                  |
| 11          | B                 | 2        | 9        | 0        | 8        |                  |
| 12          | A                 | 8        | 1        | 9        | 1        |                  |
| 13          | C                 | 4        | 0        | 11       | 4        |                  |
| 14          | C                 | 2        | 1        | 15       | 1        |                  |
| 15          | A                 | 19       | 0        | 0        | 0        |                  |
| 16          | D                 | 0        | 1        | 4        | 13       | 1                |

According to the College Board, the SAT Korean is intended to evaluate ability to communicate the Korean language in a culturally appropriate manner and measures the ability to comprehend both written and spoken Korean. However, the SAT Korean test has some limitations as an evaluative tool of Korean language ability. Since the test measures examinees' performance only by indirect tests, listening and reading, it can pose a huge concern for construct validity (K. Bailey, personal communication, February 2006). Including speaking and writing tests in the SAT Korean should be considered to make it a more valid test of Korean language proficiency.

In addition, the construct of "a culturally appropriate manner" needs to be defined. According to Bachman (1990), the discussion of construct validity is well represented

by the following statement of Messick: “A measure estimates how much of something an individual displays or possesses. The basic question of construct validation is: what is the nature of that something?” (1975, p. 957).

In this regard, it is necessary to identify and define the constructs of “something” that are intended to be measured in a test. With no specifications of the abstract entities, it is impossible to develop a valid test. In order for test scores to become valid indicators of language ability, the relationship between test scores and ability should be annotated through the specification of the constructs which the test is designed to measure (Bachman, 1990).

Test validity is dependent on test reliability, which means the test cannot be valid unless it is reliable. ETS has reliability data for all foreign languages on one page: “Test Characteristics of the SAT Subject Tests.” Based on data from the five most recent Korean tests, reliability for the entire test is decent at 0.89-93. Reliability for each section is reading 0.81-0.91, listening 0.63-0.73, and usage 0.74-0.85. According to 2005 SAT Program Handbook published by the College Board, the Subject Tests are said to be “highly reliable” because “students who take a test more than once tend to earn similar scores each time they test.”

The reliability of the listening section is the lowest of all the sections. According to the College Board, the average percent correct in each section, which represents the test difficulty, is reported as Reading 78-83%, Listening 86-90%, and Usage 79-82%. Compared to other sections, the listening portion is too easy, and thus 86-90% test-takers answer listening questions correctly. If a test is too easy, the scores didn’t show real differences among test-takers. The level of difficulty shows that listening items are relatively easy, which lower reliability.

Or low reliability in listening section may be attributed to the fact that listening test would be sensitive to external factors such as noise, fatigue, CD player problems, etc. Considering the fact that test takers should bring their own battery-operated CD players to the test center and test-takers control the playing of the CD players, listening scores might be affected by students’ external conditions other than language ability. We can infer this fact from the College Board’s explanation that the volume on a CD player or malfunctioning of a CD player can disturb other test-takers. Therefore, much attention should be given to identify and reduce the external conditions in the test room in order to improve reliability on the listening section (Bachman, 1990).

It is interesting to note that the impact of years of study on performance is surprisingly unimportant as shown in Table 9. The Mean difference between people who studied Korean for 3 years in high school and 4 years is only 7 points on an 800-point scale.

Table 9. *SAT Korean: Performance by Years of Study*

| <i>Years of Study</i>       | <i>Number</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| 2 years                     | 51            | 701         | 84        |
| 3 years                     | 37            | 712         | 79        |
| 4 years                     | 30            | 719         | 85        |
| Native Speaker <sup>4</sup> | 2,294         | 749         | 71        |

(Data are based on scores from the past six administrations from 1998 to 2003)

What does this imply? Does this mean that learning does not occur in a Korean class over a period of one year, or that the tests are increasingly difficult every year? It is impossible to make any sound interpretations. However, as shown in Table 10, this irregularity is not unique in Korean when compared with other foreign languages.

Table 10. *Other SAT Foreign Languages with Listening: Performance by Years of Study*

| Years of Study | Spanish w/<br>Listening |      | Chinese w/<br>Listening |      | Japanese w/<br>Listening |      |
|----------------|-------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|
|                | Number                  | Mean | Number                  | Mean | Number                   | Mean |
| 2 years        | 77                      | 545  | 33                      | 666  | 73                       | 545  |
| 3 years        | 362                     | 534  | 60                      | 616  | 168                      | 543  |
| 4 years        | 806                     | 540  | 31                      | 668  | 123                      | 585  |
| Native Speaker | 1,763                   | 715  | 3,946                   | 761  | 525                      | 761  |

(Data are based on scores from the Nov. 2004 administration)

As Table 9 indicates, other languages also have the same problem. For instance, the students who studied two years of Spanish outscored those who studied three and four years of Spanish, respectively. Those who had two years of Chinese or Japanese performed better than those with three years of study in the respective language. This table contradicts the College Board's thesis that the more years of study the student has, the better his or her language test score is likely to be (The SAT Program Handbook).

### Conclusion

The SAT Korean is the only Korean test recognized across major colleges and universities in the U.S. At least 400 students take the test every year for college admission or placement purposes. As one of the nine SAT foreign languages, the SAT Korean upgraded the recognition of Korea within American society and undoubtedly boosted the national pride and self-esteem of many people of Korean origin. Developed by ETS, the major strength of the SAT Korean as a test is its face validity. To the general public or students in the U.S., ETS is the undisputed heavy weight in standardized tests. Regardless of constant criticism of ETS-generated tests, the name ETS offers validity in the eyes of lay people.

The SAT Korean is unique in many respects. It is a product of collective efforts of the Korean American community that did not wait for outside funding or assistance from the College Board. The Korean American community gathered its own forces and resources and dramatically spearheaded the development of this test. The score distributions are highly negatively skewed, meaning that a high proportion of the examinees earned maximum or near-maximum scores on the test. The comparison of percentile ranks across the SAT foreign languages shows, in listening for instance, in German 750 is the 97<sup>th</sup> percentile, in Japanese the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile, but only the 55<sup>th</sup>

percentile in Korean. Considering that the SAT Korean is a norm-referenced test based on its scoring scale, we wonder if the test has norm groups whose scores are normally distributed (J. Turner, personal communication, August 2005). If it is the case, this flaw is a serious threat to validity and a grave design error.

This study shows that the Sample test contains passages that favor the Korean heritage group. The test content includes familiar scenarios and routines which Korean heritage groups have acquired in the course of their life. We should keep in mind that the target audience for the SAT Korean test is not the Korean heritage students but those who are learning Korean in the academic setting. Therefore, the test content should not be biased over a particular group.

This study suggests that more research should be conducted so the SAT Korean can become a more reliable and valid tool for measuring Korean language ability. Based on our research findings, some points can be suggested for future test construction.

1. The test content should be reviewed to avoid bias for specific groups of test takers. In language tests, test performance could be affected by the characteristics of individual or specific groups such as cultural background, background knowledge, and cognitive characteristics other than the ability being tested (Bachman, 1990). Therefore, the test content should be chosen carefully in a way that it does not give an advantage or disadvantage to specific groups. If the College Board can claim that “the majority of test content is based on academic classroom language” (College Board Research Summary RS-07), then informal and colloquial expressions should be reduced.

2. More attention should be paid to examining the test validity of the SAT Korean. No information or research on the test’s validity can be found. In order for a test to be useful, appropriate, and meaningful for the intended purpose, several attempts should be made to measure the validity for its use and test interpretation (Bachman, 1990). The SAT Korean has revealed some limitations in terms of content, reliability and validity. Much effort should be made to reach its full potential as a test.

3. Given the fact that the SAT Korean is a multiple-choice test, plausible distracters are essential to test development. The answer choices should serve well enough to discriminate among the candidates’ levels. Moreover, it is hard to tell why the test takers choose the correct answer or wrong answer in multiple-choice questions. It is good to adopt some variation in multiple-choice questions such as asking examinees to give their reasons for making their choice (Alderson, 2000).

The study has limitations, and more research needs to be conducted to give comprehensive and precise explanations of the SAT Korean. First, considering the unique characteristics of DLI students, we should be cautious in drawing inferences from our research findings. Even though they have studied Korean at DLI more than six hours a day for a year or more, they do not yet represent the target audience for the test, and their Korean curriculum might be quite different from that of high schools. Second, because the Korean heritage group is drawn from too diverse a background, it is difficult to assess differences between non-heritage speakers and heritage speakers. Third, the 16-item sample test from the College Board is too short to adequately represent the full version of the SAT Korean (e.g., listening accounts for 35 percent on the actual test but only 19 percent on the sample test).

For future research, more Korean heritage participants should be sought, because then it will be possible to seek differences between groups. In addition, it would be helpful if one could compute correlation between the score of the full form of SAT Korean, not just the sample test, and that of the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) to see if the SAT Korean has concurrent or predictive validity. Even though there are some limitations on our data, we think that this study provides some useful suggestions for future test development.

In sum, despite its short history of administration, the SAT Korean has played a pivotal role in publicizing the Korean language in the United States and in preserving the Korean language for Korean heritage students. Just a year after the Korean language was accepted for the SAT II, Korean language classes were created in several high schools in the U.S. We hope the SAT Korean can be used to enhance Korean learning for non-heritage speakers as well as Korean heritage students. Only then will the Korean language be more likely to be accepted, like French or Spanish, as standard high school curriculum. The SAT Korean will also be useful for students to check their progress and to measure their comprehension ability while they are learning the Korean language.

## **Appendices**

### *Appendix A*

#### SAT Korean Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time and effort to take the SAT Korean sample test. We are interested in knowing about your opinion about this test. We would appreciate it if you could complete the following questionnaire. This will be completely confidential and your demographic information will only be used for research purposes. Thank you for your help.

#### Demographic information

1. Age
2. Grade
3. Gender
4. Occupation
5. Ethnicity
6. Your first language
7. Language spoken at home?  
If more than one, percentage of each:  
\_\_\_\_\_ (        %) \_\_\_\_\_ (        %)
8. The length of studying Korean at school
9. Additional exposure to Korean (Home, Friend, or Korean language school)

#### Question on the SAT Korean Sample test

1. Have you heard about the SAT Korean test before?  
Yes (then, the source: \_\_\_\_\_ )        No

2. Do you have a plan to take a SAT Korean test in the near future?

If the answer is yes,

- a. When are you going to take the test? (                      )
- b. For what purpose are you taking the test? (                      )

3. How was the sample test? Please rate the degree of difficulty on a scale of 1-5.

- 1 – very difficult
- 2 – modestly difficult
- 3 – neither difficult nor easy
- 4 – modestly easy
- 5 – very easy

Listening section

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Usage section

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Reading section

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

4. What is the hardest part in the test?

5. Do you think the test contents favor Korean Heritage students?

If yes, why do you think so?

6. Any suggestions or comments on the SAT Korean test

Thanks for your valuable comments!

## Appendix B

Item Difficulty of the Sample Test Taken by Korean Heritage Students

| Item       | 1         | 2   | 3   | 4     | 5 | 6   | 7   | 8 | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13      | 14  | 15 | 16  |    |
|------------|-----------|-----|-----|-------|---|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|----|-----|----|
| Skill      | Listening |     |     | Usage |   |     |     |   |     |     |     |     | Reading |     |    |     |    |
| key        | C         | D   | B   | B     | C | A   | B   | A | C   | C   | B   | A   | C       | C   | A  | D   | 16 |
| S1         | C         | D   | B   | B     | C | A   | B   | A | C   | C   | B   | A   | C       | C   | A  |     | 15 |
| S2         | C         |     | C   | B     | C | A   | B   | A | C   | A   | B   | A   | C       | C   | A  | B   | 12 |
| S3         | C         | B   | B   | B     | C | A   | D   | A | B   | C   | B   | C   | A       | C   | A  | D   | 11 |
| S4         | C         | B   | B   | B     | C | A   | B   | A | B   | B   | B   | C   | C       | C   | A  | C   | 11 |
| S5         | C         | D   | B   | B     | C | A   | B   | A | B   | A   | D   | D   | D       | C   | A  | D   | 11 |
| S9         | C         | B   | B   | A     | C | C   | D   | A | B   | C   | B   | A   | C       | A   | A  | D   | 10 |
| S15        | C         | B   | B   | A     | C | C   | D   | A | B   | C   | B   | A   | C       | B   | A  | D   | 10 |
| correct    | 7         | 2   | 6   | 5     | 7 | 5   | 4   | 7 | 2   | 4   | 6   | 4   | 5       | 5   | 7  | 4   |    |
| Item Diff. | 1         | .29 | .86 | .71   | 1 | .71 | .57 | 1 | .29 | .57 | .86 | .57 | .71     | .71 | 1  | .57 |    |

| Item Difficulty of the sample test taken by DLI students |           |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |         |      |      |      |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|------|------|------|-------|
| Item                                                     | 1         | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5     | 6    | 7    | 8    | 9    | 10   | 11   | 12   | 13      | 14   | 15   | 16   | total |
| Skill                                                    | Listening |      |      |      | Usage |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Reading |      |      |      |       |
| Key                                                      | C         | D    | B    | B    | C     | A    | B    | A    | C    | C    | B    | A    | C       | C    | A    | D    | 16    |
| S18                                                      | C         | B    | D    | B    | C     | D    | A    | A    | B    | D    | A    | A    | C       | C    | A    | D    | 9     |
| S19                                                      | C         | D    | A    | B    | A     | D    | A    | A    | B    | B    | B    | C    | C       | C    | A    | D    | 9     |
| S20                                                      | C         | D    | C    | D    | C     | A    | B    | A    | C    | D    | D    | C    | D       | C    | A    | C    | 9     |
| S21                                                      | D         | D    | B    | C    | C     | A    | A    | A    | B    | D    | B    | C    | D       | C    | A    | D    | 9     |
| S22                                                      | C         | D    | B    | B    | C     | C    | A    | B    | D    | B    | D    | A    | D       | D    | A    | D    | 8     |
| S23                                                      | C         | D    | B    | C    | C     | B    | A    | C    | B    | B    | D    | C    | C       | C    | A    | D    | 8     |
| S24                                                      | B         | B    | C    | C    | C     | A    | A    | A    | B    | D    | B    | C    | C       | C    | A    | D    | 8     |
| S25                                                      | B         | B    | B    | C    | C     | A    | B    | A    | B    | C    | D    | C    | A       | C    | A    | C    | 8     |
| S26                                                      | C         | B    | C    | C    | B     | A    | A    | A    | B    | B    | A    | A    | C       | C    | A    | C    | 7     |
| S27                                                      | C         | D    | C    | B    | D     | B    | A    | A    | B    | B    | D    | A    | A       | A    | A    | D    | 7     |
| S28                                                      | A         | C    | D    | C    | C     | A    | A    | A    | B    | B    | D    | B    | A       | C    | A    | D    | 6     |
| S29                                                      | D         | B    | C    | C    | B     | C    | C    | B    | A    | B    | D    | A    | C       | C    | A    | D    | 5     |
| correct                                                  | 7         | 6    | 4    | 4    | 8     | 6    | 2    | 9    | 1    | 1    | 3    | 5    | 6       | 10   | 12   | 9    |       |
| Item Diff.                                               | 0.58      | 0.50 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.67  | 0.50 | 0.17 | 0.75 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.25 | 0.42 | 0.50    | 0.83 | 1.00 | 0.75 |       |

## Appendix C

[illegible]

|               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |   |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|---|
| S24           | B   | B   | C   | C   | C   | A   | A   | A   | B   | D   | B   | C   | C   | C   | A    | D   | 8 |
| S25           | B   | B   | C   | C   | C   | A   | B   | A   | B   | C   | D   | C   | A   | C   | A    | C   | 8 |
| S26           | C   | B   | C   | C   | B   | A   | A   | A   | B   | B   | A   | A   | C   | C   | A    | C   | 7 |
| S27           | C   | D   | C   | B   | D   | B   | A   | A   | B   | B   | D   | A   | A   | A   | A    | D   | 7 |
| S28           | A   | C   | D   | C   | C   | A   | A   | A   | B   | B   | D   | B   | A   | C   | A    | D   | 6 |
| S29           | D   | B   | C   | C   | B   | C   | C   | B   | A   | B   | D   | A   | C   | C   | A    | D   | 5 |
| correct       | 14  | 8   | 9   | 9   | 15  | 12  | 7   | 16  | 4   | 4   | 9   | 8   | 11  | 15  | 19   | 13  |   |
| Item<br>Diff. | .74 | .42 | .47 | .47 | .79 | .63 | .37 | .84 | .21 | .21 | .47 | .42 | .58 | .79 | 1.00 | .68 |   |

\* = heritage participants

| Item Discrimination |           |     |   |   |       |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |         |    |    |     |    |  |       |  |
|---------------------|-----------|-----|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|---------|----|----|-----|----|--|-------|--|
| Item                | 1         | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5     | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13      | 14 | 15 | 16  |    |  | total |  |
| Skill               | Listening |     |   |   | Usage |   |   |   |   |    |    |    | Reading |    |    |     |    |  |       |  |
| Key                 | C         | D   | B | B | C     | A | B | A | C | C  | B  | A  | C       | C  | A  | D   | 16 |  |       |  |
| S1*                 | C         | D   | B | B | C     | A | B | A | C | C  | B  | A  | C       | C  | A  | N/A | 15 |  |       |  |
| S2*                 | C         | N/A | C | B | C     | A | B | A | C | A  | B  | A  | C       | C  | A  | B   | 12 |  |       |  |
| S3*                 | C         | B   | B | B | C     | A | D | A | B | C  | B  | C  | A       | C  | A  | D   | 11 |  |       |  |
| S4*                 | C         | B   | B | B | C     | A | B | A | B | B  | B  | C  | C       | C  | A  | C   | 11 |  |       |  |
| S5*                 | C         | D   | B | B | C     | A | B | A | B | A  | D  | D  | C       | C  | A  | D   | 11 |  |       |  |
| S9*                 | C         | B   | D | A | C     | A | B | A | C | B  | B  | C  | C       | A  | A  | D   | 10 |  |       |  |
|                     |           |     |   |   |       |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |         |    |    |     |    |  |       |  |
| P1                  | 6         | 2   | 4 | 5 | 6     | 6 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 2  | 5  | 2  | 4       | 5  | 6  | 3   |    |  |       |  |
|                     | 6         | 6   | 6 | 6 | 6     | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6       | 6  | 6  | 6   |    |  |       |  |
| S24                 | B         | B   | C | C | C     | A | A | A | B | D  | B  | C  | C       | C  | A  | D   | 8  |  |       |  |
| S25                 | B         | B   | B | C | C     | A | B | A | B | C  | D  | C  | A       | C  | A  | C   | 8  |  |       |  |
| S26                 | C         | B   | C | C | B     | A | A | A | B | B  | A  | A  | C       | C  | A  | C   | 7  |  |       |  |
| S27                 | C         | D   | C | B | D     | B | A | A | B | B  | D  | A  | A       | A  | A  | D   | 7  |  |       |  |
| S28                 | A         | C   | D | C | C     | A | A | A | B | B  | D  | B  | A       | C  | A  | D   | 6  |  |       |  |
| S29                 | D         | B   | C | C | B     | C | C | B | A | B  | D  | A  | C       | C  | A  | D   | 5  |  |       |  |
| P2                  | 2         | 1   | 1 | 1 | 3     | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 1  | 1  | 3  | 3       | 5  | 6  | 4   |    |  |       |  |

|               |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |     |   |   |   |   |  |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|---|---|---|---|--|
|               | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6   | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6   | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |  |
|               |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |     |   |   |   |   |  |
| P1-<br>P2     | 4  | 1  | 3  | 4  | 3  | 2  | 4  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 4  | -1  | 1  | 0  | 0  | -1  |   |   |   |   |  |
| Item<br>Disc. | .4 | .1 | .3 | .4 | .3 | .2 | .4 | .1 | .3 | .1 | .4 | -.1 | .1 | .0 | .0 | -.1 |   |   |   |   |  |

\* = heritage participants

Notes

<sup>1</sup>The present study does not include the test outcomes of ten additional DLI students in their 57<sup>th</sup> week of training because their listening section was not properly administered.

<sup>2</sup>According to South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as of 2003, there are over two million people of Korean origin in the U.S and China, respectively. There are also about 899,000 in Japan, 558,000 in CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) or the former Soviet Union, and 170,000 in Canada. Some 16 countries have at least 10,000 people of Korean origin. (Joongang Ilbo Feb 7, 2005 p. 4)

<sup>3</sup> The formula we used for calculating item discrimination is  $P(H)-P(L)$ , where  $P(H)$  is found by dividing the number of high third scorers answering a given item correctly by the number of high third scorers and  $P(L)$  is found by dividing the number of low third scorers answering the item correctly by the number of low third scorers (Turner, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> According to the College Board, "native speaker" is defined here as including all students with additional language exposure or experience outside the classroom" (College Entrance Examination Board, 2005).

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## **Becoming a Strategic Language Learner in CALL<sup>1</sup>**

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*This article outlines what it means to be a strategic language learner in the context of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). It looks at the possible roles for language learner strategies at their crucial intersection with language learning technology. We will first consider what language learner strategies have been represented in literature and also consider the kind of fine-tuning of them that is likely to be a priority for maximizing their benefits in learning more complex language functions. Then we will consider how strategies can best be applied to dealing with CALL – e.g., (1) strategies for selecting what to study, (2) strategies for how to study an L2 online, and (3) strategic material integrated into websites – where strategic options for performance of the content material are explicitly emphasized. A focus will be placed on the learning and performance of L2 pragmatics, since this is a high-stakes area of L2 learning.*

### **The Representation of Language Learner Strategies in the Literature**

Until the 1970's and the seminal work by Rubin (1975), the focus of language instruction was primarily on the teacher because it was assumed that if teachers did a competent job of teaching, learners would get what they needed. Rubin's work marked the advent of a strategic approach to language learning and language use. Although definitions of language learner strategies have varied over the years, there is some consensus among experts that language learner strategies are conscious or semi-conscious thoughts and behaviors employed by learners, often with the intention of enhancing their knowledge about and performance in a second language (L2) (Cohen, 1998, 2007).

Language learning strategies include cognitive strategies for identifying, distinguishing, grouping, practicing, and committing material to memory. So, for example, if ESL learners wanted to learn requesting behavior in English, they would need to identify those language structures that make requests more polite such as the use of modal auxiliaries (e.g., "Could you find the time...?") and the use of the past progressive (e.g., "I was wondering if..."). Likewise, language learning strategies include the metacognitive strategies for planning how to make a request, checking how it is going while in the midst of requesting, and then evaluating how it went afterwards. In addition to cognitive and metacognitive strategies, there are also affective strategies for regulating attitudes, motivation, and emotional reactions to the learning experience, in the case of making requests (such as through self-encouragement and reduction of anxiety), and the social strategies for enhancing learning, such as though cooperating with other learners and seeking opportunities to interact with native speakers in learning requesting behavior.

Advocates of strategy instruction for learners would posit that if learners have a well-functioning strategy repertoire, then this set of strategies will enhance the learning of an L2, whether in teacher-lead instructional settings or in one of the alternative options, such as through self-access, web-based instructional settings, and other forms of independent language learning.

In contrast to language learning strategies, language use strategies are seen to come into play once the language material is already accessible, even in some preliminary form. Whereas language learning strategies would be used with an explicit goal of improving learners' knowledge of a given language, language use strategies have their focus primarily on helping students utilize whatever amount of language they have already learned (see Cohen, 1998).

We note that there is inevitably a point of overlap between language learning and language use strategies. What starts as a language learning strategy at, say, the initial exposure to specific social functions in speaking, referred to as speech acts, such as requesting or apologizing, may quickly become a language use strategy since the initial learning phase may be brief. Furthermore, new learning is likely to take place as learners make use of what they have learned.

Research on L2 strategy use has demonstrated that learners differ in how they use strategies. A study by Vandergrift (2003), for example, reported on the strategies of two French L2 learners, Rose and Nina, when confronted with the task of listening to an announcement about how to win a ski weekend in a drawing. Although both listeners engaged in translation from their L1, Rose selected among her other strategies at least one ineffective strategy for the task, namely, the exclusive use of bottom-up processing. In contrast, Nina used a more effective strategy, which was to engage in top-down processing by using her world and text knowledge to interpret what she heard. One of her strategies was to develop a frame of reference from which she could interpret new input. Numerous other studies describe learners like Nina who most likely have the requisite ability to do better at L2 learning than their performance would suggest. It is studies like these that have prompted the learner strategy experts to devise inventions for enhancing strategy use by L2 learners. So, for example, there have been studies involving explicit strategy instruction for learners in listening (Rubin, 1990), speaking (Dörnyei, 1995; Cohen, Weaver, & Li, 1998; Nakatani, 2005), and the literacy skills of reading and writing (Macaro, 2001). These studies and others have demonstrated that learners who consciously make use of language strategies produce better results in their language performance than students who are less strategic.

### **Fine-Tuning of Language Learner Strategies**

If we take a closer look at the language tasks in learner strategy studies, we notice that they have tended to be relatively straightforward tasks, such as describing yourself to someone who needs to meet you somewhere (as in the Cohen, Weaver, and Li, 1998, study), rather than complex tasks such as making a delicate request of someone who may well refuse your request. A more complex task would most likely require that the speaker use an intricate set of strategies in order to obtain the desired outcome.

So, for example, whereas a daughter might use a relatively direct request to borrow a car from her parents over the weekend ("Hey, dad, can I take your old car this weekend?"), she would more likely chose some indirect request strategy ("Hey, dad,

How was your business trip to Chicago? I was wondering if you're going to be using your old car this weekend. Something important has come up and..."). Depending on the language and culture, it might be strategic for the daughter making the request to adjust the delivery of the speech act according to the age of the parent and their relative status in that speech community. The daughter would also need to know what it means to borrow a car in that particular context – that is, how big an imposition it is likely to be in that culture (e.g., whether a car is a daily necessity or a luxury) and in that specific context (e.g., borrowing a new and relatively valuable car vs. an older "spare" car). In some cases, it may be crucial to avoid suggesting the borrowing of the car altogether, but rather just to indicate the need for transportation and to leave it to the addressee to determine whether to offer a car or not. In the above example there is undoubtedly some family history involved, such as whether the father trusts his daughter to drive even this older car safely. Issues of family personalities and deep-seated relationships are also likely to play a part in the phrasing of the daughter's request and in the father's response to it. And it could take a number of attempts for this request to be resolved, whether the interaction ends amicably or in conflict.

Research has demonstrated that effective speech act performance entails at least two ingredients: (1) strategically selecting and making use of the language forms that are appropriate for the given task, such as in making a request ("Can I take...?" vs. "I was wondering if..."), and (2) performing the speech act (in this case, a request for a car) in the right place at the right time, given the sociocultural norms for that speech community and for that family unit in the given situation. So, whereas natives of English and in this case, a daughter, would most likely soften the request through syntactic mitigation (e.g., "I was wondering if..."), nonnatives may well have learned this syntactic structure but would not necessarily have sufficient control over its use in their requests to know whether or when to employ it (Bardovi-Harlig, 2003).<sup>2</sup> So, L2 learners may need to utilize a rather specialized set of strategies for learning and using complex language functions, such as speech acts, to really develop their performance of them.

A recent concern for greater rigor in defining and doing research on language learner strategies would suggest not viewing the strategies that learners use in performing L2 tasks as separate thoughts and behaviors, but rather as strategy chains or strategy clusters (Macaro, 2006; Cohen & Macaro, 2007). In the case of strategy chains, the learner is selecting and employing the strategies in sequence. Let us say that a male learner wishes to ask his female boss for a raise. A strategy chain would involve a series of social strategies in sequence. First, he might use two supportive moves, such as first trying to minimize the imposition (e.g., "Could I just have a minute of your time?") and then doing his best to ground the request by way of justification for making it ("You know, I've been working 12-hour days these last few weeks..."). Third in the sequence would be the head act in the form of a query serving as an indirect request ("Would it be possible to consider giving me a slight raise?").

In the case of strategy clusters, the learner employs the strategies simultaneously, in an overlapping manner. A strategy cluster for requesting a raise might include the following learner strategies: retrieving from the speaker's L2 knowledge base language structures deemed appropriate for making that request, choosing from that material forms that are at the level of politeness due to a boss, making sure that the request is sensitive to the norms for male-to-female talk in that speech community and situation, and using a monitoring strategy to see how well these two strategies are working.

From initial research exploring the strategies L2 learners use in performing speech acts, it would appear that learners make efforts to combine various strategies – perhaps some learners more than others (Robinson, 1992; Cohen & Olshtain, 1993; Widjaja, 1997; Cohen & Ishihara, 2005). However, given gaps in their knowledge about sociocultural and linguistic norms for the given speech community, speech act performance among L2 speakers is likely to reflect, at least in part, negative transfer from the norms that they use for speech act behavior in their local L1 or other language community. Again, given the limits of their interlanguage pragmatic knowledge, they may generalize L2 speech act patterns from a situation for which they are appropriate to a situation for which they are not, producing a deviant result which may lead to pragmatic failure (getting a result you do not want). And according to the research evidence, it can take many years for L2 speakers to have their performance reflect the norms of speech act behavior for a given speech community (see Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Barron, 2003). Hence, strategy instruction for enhancing the learning and use of speech acts may play a valuable role in improving L2 learning.

### **Strategies for Learning and Performing Pragmatically**

If learners are interested in improving their grasp of L2 pragmatics, it may be beneficial for them to employ strategies designed to assist them in dealing with the rather complex challenges awaiting them. It was with this purpose in mind that a preliminary taxonomy of strategies of a generic nature was designed. The taxonomy includes (1) strategies for the initial learning of speech acts in a given sociocultural context in a given speech community, (2) strategies for using the speech act material that has already been learned to some extent, and (3) strategies for monitoring the use of these strategies (i.e., metapragmatic considerations) (see Appendix 1 for examples from the taxonomy).

Sources for strategies in this taxonomy include the general learner strategy literature, the speech act literature, and insights from recent strategy research conducted to enhance college students' learning of Japanese L2 speech acts through a strategies-based online curriculum (Cohen & Ishihara, 2005) and from a language and culture study abroad project (Cohen, Paige, Shively, Emert, & Hoff, 2005). For the most part, the strategies listed in the taxonomy are in need of empirical validation as to their actual contribution to enhancing learners' speech act ability, so they could be viewed as a series of hypotheses.

It would seem that taxonomies such as this one would be beneficial for learners tackling numerous types of language material. It has become clear that the day when general strategies seemed to suffice are over, and that we are now focusing more on the strategies needed to accomplish given tasks (see, for example, Oxford, Cho, Leung, & Kim, 2004).

### **Strategic Learning and CALL**

We now come to the link to CALL. More and more we are seeing that the textbooks typically used for language learning are not inclusive enough, and that it is increasingly necessary to supplement them with other materials. And here is where CALL comes in. Technology brings with it the promise of exciting new venues for language learners. It has been pointed out that rapid evolution of communication technologies

has changed language pedagogy and language use, enabling new forms of discourse, new forms of authorship, and new ways to create and participate in communities (Kern, 2006).

Given that instruction on the learning and use of speech acts can help learners to improve their pragmatic performance and ability to communicate with native speakers (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Kasper & Rose, 2002), CALL technologies have the potential of being a valuable conduit for disseminating information about how to use the L2 language structures in a pragmatically appropriate way in the given sociocultural context. The limited CALL research available in this area has addressed the benefits of various technologies for pragmatic and cultural instruction – multimedia and authentic materials (Hoven, 1999; Kramsch & Andersen, 1999; LeLoup & Ponterio, 2001), telecollaboration (Furstenberg & Levet, 2001; Belz, 2002, 2003), and asynchronous and synchronous computer-mediated communication (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2005; Sykes, 2005). Yet, to date there are only a small number of learner self-access websites specifically dedicated to pragmatic development, such as the two sites dedicated to English (CLEAR, 2005; Levy, 1999), one for Russian (CLEAR, 2005), one for Japanese (Cohen & Ishihara, 2005), and one for Spanish (Cohen & Sykes, 2006).

Even where websites do exist, the challenge is to make the technology more than simply a vehicle for transmitting the content – in other words, seeing that it is accompanied by information about how to make use of the content strategically. The concern here is to avoid the situation where L2 learners are provided with language material, but do not really have strategies for successfully incorporating the material into their language performance. The question is really one of how strategies can best be applied to dealing with CALL. It actually involves three kinds of strategies: (1) strategies for selecting what to study, (2) strategies for how to study an L2 online, and (3) strategic material integrated into websites – where strategic options for performance of the content material are explicitly emphasized.

### *Selecting What to Study*

It is not easy for L2 learners to determine just what material would have the biggest pay off in learning a given language. This issue is often left to the textbook writer or teacher to determine. While the issue of how to make language learners more savvy consumers of language material is dealt with elsewhere (see Cohen & White, 2007), let us just say here in passing that language learners could benefit from enhanced strategies regarding the selection of what would be for them the most appropriate approaches to L2 learning. The best website for one learner may not be the best one for another, given their learning style preferences, language strategy repertoire, and motivational level. While online instruction may consist of traditional curriculum posted on the internet, it may also reflect more innovative approaches, where learners can pick and choose according to what will be most beneficial for them at their given level of language proficiency and the needs that they have for performing in that language. The reason pragmatics was singled out above is because language learners invariably are faced with having to use language appropriately in many different social situations, and sometimes pragmatic failure in those situations can produce undesired results.

*Strategies for How to Study an L2 Online*

It has been pointed out that internet environments are not necessarily friendly for learners because familiar social cues are missing (Thatcher, 2005). Some years ago experts working with the distance learning of language recognized that learners would have different experiences learning language with the assistance of technology depending on their facility with strategies. Metacognitive strategies (particularly self-management strategies) have been found to provide the impetus for more effective L2 distance learning experiences (White, 1999). A study of distance learning, however, found that “language learners at a distance need to be shown more clearly and with more concrete examples why and how developing strategies, in particular metacognitive ones, can help promote more effective learning and by doing so, be time-saving rather than time-consuming in the long run” (Hurd, 2000, p. 77). So the mandate exists to have strategy instruction accompany technologically enhanced instruction. In other words, at the website the learners receive not just the L2 materials themselves, but also suggested strategies for how to learn material that is relevant to them, and strategies for realizing the most appropriate ways to use the material effectively in communication.

*Websites Featuring the Strategic Use of L2 Pragmatics*

Beyond strategies for determining what to study and how to study it, there can be strategizing about finding strategic material integrated into websites – where strategic options for performance of the content material are explicitly emphasized. The following are two examples of websites for self-access study of L2 pragmatics, which include embedded information on how to use the material strategically in performance. The two projects were designed to determine the effects of providing L2 speakers of Japanese and Spanish strategies-based materials for learning and using speech acts more successfully while communicating in those two languages – the former a less-commonly-taught language (LCTL) for much of the U.S. and the latter a more-commonly-taught language (MCTL).<sup>3</sup> The precursor to this project was an earlier one to construct a website that would provide teachers, curriculum writers, and learners basic information and examples of numerous speech acts in a variety of languages<sup>4</sup>. These web-based materials were designed so as to make the information as clear and accessible as possible, not just for teachers but for learners who might wish to access the site on their own in order to improve their learning of these complex speech acts.

The first phase of the project, begun in the spring and summer of 2003, involved the development of self-access, web-based instructional units for five speech acts in Japanese as a foreign language: requests, refusals, compliments, thanks, and apologies. The curricular materials were designed by Noriko Ishihara<sup>5</sup>, the R.A. for the project, under the direction of the author<sup>6</sup>. The Japanese speech act material included in the units was based largely on empirical data from research reports so as to make sure the language material would be authentic, rather than using the more typical approach which is for the curriculum writer to draw largely on his/her intuitions. The materials were designed to be used on a stand-alone basis or as a supplement to an intermediate course in Japanese<sup>7</sup> (see Ishihara, 2007, for more details).

A series of strategies deemed supportive for the learning and performance of speech acts, as well as those considered especially relevant for the learning of speech acts

in Japanese, were identified and built into the curriculum. The aim was to ensure that learners would not simply learn the language material, but would also be learning how to be more strategic in the learning and performance of Japanese speech. Three sources were used for obtaining these speech act strategies: the empirical research literature, feedback from informants, and introspective and retrospective self-observation from the author and from Ishihara, to determine the strategies that they themselves used in producing both L1 and L2 speech acts.

Appendix 2 provides a sampling of some of the strategies which were included in the materials as being relevant to apologizing in Japanese, such as repeating the apology several times (something that would most likely be considered excessive in an American English situation), speaking hesitantly or leaving the utterance incomplete as a sign of humility, and using non-verbal signals such as bowing. Note that these strategies could apply to other speech acts in Japanese and to the performance of speech acts in other languages as well.

Once the Japanese speech act website was operative, a study was conducted to determine the effects of training intermediate learners of Japanese to learn and use pragmatic information more successfully<sup>8</sup>. As a result of their favorable reception by the Japanese teaching staff at a local university in Minneapolis, the web-based materials for learners were made a part of the regular third-year Japanese curriculum on a trial basis for the 2003-2004 academic year. It was determined that two modular units would be assigned to each student as homework in each of the intermediate Japanese classes<sup>9</sup>.

Twenty-seven students across the three third-year Japanese classes volunteered as subjects in this study to determine the impact of these self-access web-based materials on the learning of Japanese speech acts and on the refining of strategies for learning such speech acts<sup>10</sup>. All subjects completed a series of tasks before accessing their two assigned speech act units: (1) a student background survey (with demographic questions, questions about languages learned, formal study of Japanese, travel and living experiences abroad, and current use of Japanese), (2) a measure of their language strategy repertoire for performing speech acts, and (3) 10-11 speech act tasks in Japanese consisting of written multiple-rejoinder discourse completion.

Eighteen of the students in the sample agreed to provide e-mail answers to a series of specific questions describing their language learning and use of strategies, focusing on the strategies used to comprehend and produce the two speech acts that they were randomly assigned to study. This study found that a strategies-based approach to the learning of Japanese speech acts on the web had at least some impact, especially for those students who demonstrated more limited ability in speech act performance at the outset. It is also fair to say that the learners generally perceived the strategies-based approach to the learning of speech acts as being beneficial. Averaged pre- and posttest ratings of speech act performance tended to vary according to speech act, with the "request unit" appearing to be the most effective. The Reflective E-Journaling from learners produced positive feedback regarding the value of the curriculum and the value of the norm-based nature of the materials in particular. The content also helped to clear up misconceptions about language and culture (Cohen & Ishihara, 2005). In response to the question of how the focus on speech act strategies influenced the learning of the content, a student named Linda gave the following response:

I thought the strategies were very helpful. When I first began the compliments unit, I noticed that my answers were a little funny in comparison to how a native speaker would respond. For example, I was too blunt when complimenting a professor, and too modest when speaking to my friends. When I learned that it is best to compliment a *sensei* [‘teacher’] in an indirect way so that I am not asserting my ability to “judge” their performance, I did much better in the following exercises when formulating my responses.

The truth is that when we made the Japanese website, the taxonomy of strategies for learning and performing speech acts was not developed the way that it was by the time that the Spanish pragmatics website was developed. The Spanish website has a far more developed strategy overlay (available at: [http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/sp\\_pragmatics/home.html](http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/sp_pragmatics/home.html)). It also has more modules. Aside from an introductory unit, it has units for the following:

- Compliment Sequences
- Gratitude & Leave Taking
- Requests
- Apologies
- Invitation Sequences
- Service Encounters
- Advice, Suggestions, Disagreements, Complaints, and Reprimands
- Considerations for Pragmatic Performance

In addition, each module contains the following elements:

- Introduction
- Encountering the Speech Act
- Strategies for Pragmatic Performance: sociopragmatic and pragmatic strategies
- Important Sociocultural Factors
- Language Varieties
- Summary

Not only does the current website construction process include varieties of Peninsular and Latin American Spanish, but it also has numerous video clips to demonstrate conversational dynamics, directness/indirectness and relative politeness, and most importantly guidelines for enhancing strategies for learning and performing speech acts. Appendix 3 provides just the opening section of strategies for complimenting and for refusing the compliment. The website provides extended exercises for learners to work their way through these strategy sections. Results from a small-scale study of the website with students at different proficiency levels would suggest that it is being well received. (Sykes & Cohen, 2007) Experts have also been reviewing the website and providing timely feedback.

So instead of expecting student users of the Spanish pragmatics website to know how to be properly strategic about learning the material at the site, suggestions are provided

for ways to make use of the material in pragmatically appropriate ways. There are also suggestions to learners about how to complement the language material supplied with other relevant and timely material through using local speakers as resource people, since a website cannot begin to cover the full range of material to accommodate age, gender, status, and other distinctions in the given sociocultural context. Plans are underway to seek further federal funding to expand the Spanish website to include pragmatics materials specifically designed to meet the needs of nonnative Spanish-speaking educators, social workers, and medical personnel.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

This article has explored what it means to be a strategic language learner in the context of CALL. We have looked at language learner strategies and the kind of fine-tuning of them that is likely to be a priority for maximizing their benefits in learning more complex language functions, as in the pragmatics of speech acts. Then we turned to the application of language learner strategies to CALL, noting briefly the need for learner strategies in selecting the L2 course material most suited to them and for supplementing this material where necessary, as well as the need for strategies to maximize the benefits from doing language study online. In addition, it was suggested that online L2 language sites which provide a strategic overlay can be beneficial in that learners are not just getting language content, but also are provided with suggested options for when and how to use this content.

We then focused on examples of websites that provide learners information about L2 pragmatics that they are unlikely to find in their textbooks and to supply them with strategies for using this material effectively in L2 interactions. It was noted that the two examples of websites for learning L2 pragmatics, in Japanese and Spanish respectively, both emphasize strategic choices in performing speech acts. It was also noted that the Spanish site is more developed than the Japanese one since it benefits from a more complete taxonomy of strategies. While there is still much work to do in order to incorporate strategic approaches to language learning into the curriculum, CALL provides a clearly viable and attractive avenue for doing this.

## **Appendices**

### *Appendix 1*

#### *Sample Strategies from a Taxonomy of Speech Act Strategies*

#### **Speech Act Learning Strategies**

Taking practical steps to gain knowledge of how specific speech acts work, such as by identifying the L2 speech acts to focus on, using criteria such as:

1. their frequency of use in common situations encountered by the L2 speaker in the given speech community (e.g., “requesting,” “refusing,” and “thanking”),
2. their potentially high-stakes value in discourse (e.g., “apologizing” and “complaining”),

3. their special role in the given community of practice within the speech community the society, such as in creating solidarity (e.g., the use of expletives).

Asking natives (instructors and non-instructors) to model performance of the speech acts as they might be realized under differing conditions, possibly to answer questions about their performance as well. A key goal of the learner would be to see if there is variation in the realization of the speech act(s) according to:

1. the magnitude or seriousness of the issue prompting the speech act (e.g., apologizing for missing a meeting vs. spilling hot coffee on a friend),
2. the relative age of the speaker and the addressee (e.g., making a request to a senior professor vs. making a request to a young child),
3. the relative status of the speaker and the addressee (e.g., making a request to the senior vice president of a firm vs. one to a custodian),
4. the relative roles in the speaker and the addressee in the relationship (e.g., making a request to the chair of the board meeting vs. to a waiter in a restaurant),
5. the length of acquaintance of the interlocutors (e.g., making a request to a stranger about switching seats upon boarding an airplane as opposed to making an appeal for assistance to a longtime friend over morning tea).

### Speech Act Use Strategies

Practicing those aspects of speech act performance that have been learned:

1. Engaging in imaginary interactions, perhaps focusing on certain pragmalinguistic aspects of the speech act.
2. Engaging in speech act role play with fellow learners of the L2 or with native speakers playing the other role.
3. Engaging in “real play,” with native speakers in the speech community, where the native speakers perform their usual roles (e.g., lawyer, doctor, shop clerk, etc.) but with the added knowledge that the learners are simply practicing speech acts and may say things that are contrary to fact (e.g., apologizing for something that in reality they did not do).
4. Engaging in interactions with native speakers without them being aware that the learner’s purpose is actually to practice speech acts.

### Metapragmatic Considerations

With regard to metacognitive strategies, the learner needs to determine how much pre-planning of the speech act to do beforehand, as well as the nature of the monitoring that will go on during its delivery and the evaluation that will go on afterwards. In an effort to avoid pragmatic failure, the learner may monitor for:

1. the appropriateness of the chosen level of directness or indirectness in the delivery of the speech act (e.g., finding the right level of directness with an L2-speaking stranger on an airplane),
2. the appropriateness of the selected term of address (e.g., referring in the L2 to Dr. Stephen Blake as “Doc,” “Steve,” or “you”—either *tu* or *vous*),

3. the appropriateness of the timing for a speech act in the given situation (e.g., for example, whether to make an apology for a work-related incident to a colleague during a social event),
4. the acceptability of how the discourse is organized (e.g., conveying the bottom-line message right at the start of the communication, gradually building up to it, or saving it for the last possible moment),
5. the sociopragmatic appropriateness of the selected semantic formulas and the pragmalinguistic appropriateness of the linguistic material used to represent them (e.g., whether it is appropriate for a college student to give an outright refusal to the department chair's invitation to dinner and whether the refusal could include—even in jest—an informal phrase like “No way!”).

## *Appendix 2*

### *Samples of Strategies for Performing Japanese Apologies\**

Selecting the pragmalinguistic material that is appropriate for the given semantic formula:

*expression of apology* – making sure it is at the appropriate level of formality, given the severity of the infraction, the age, social status, and role in the relationship of the interlocutor for the given situation (e.g., *gomen [nasai]*, *sumimasen*, *moushiwake arimasen*).

*acknowledging responsibility* – use of *...te shimatte* to indicate lack of intention to commit the offense.

Repeating the apology several times in order to achieve the appropriate effect in Japanese speech act performance.

Speaking hesitantly or purposely leaving the utterance incomplete so as to appear humble when delivering the apology.

Using non-verbal signals (e.g., bowing) to help in the delivery of speech acts.

\*(Based on Cohen & Ishihara, 2005)

### Appendix 3

#### Compliment Strategies

1. Hearer-oriented strategies are more common than speaker-oriented strategies.

2. ¡Qué \_\_\_\_\_! is a commonly used structure.

3. Positive irony, or sarcasm, is another way of extending a compliment (in other words, by saying the opposite of what you mean).

#### Compliment Response Strategies

1. A request for clarification or repetition of the compliment.

2. Use of reciprocal action to maintain closeness in a relationship.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Presented at the Technology for Second Language Learning 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Iowa State University, Ames, IA, September 22, 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas (1995) has popularized a distinction between *socio-pragmatic norms* for when to use speech acts (i.e., the rules for when the speech act is likely to be used in the given social context) and *pragma-linguistic norms* which govern the appropriateness of given language forms for realizing the given speech act in that context.

<sup>3</sup>These efforts were funded partly by a grant from the Office of International Education to the National Language Resource Center at the University of Minnesota, partly through a University of Minnesota Grant-in-Aid, and partly through funding from the Digital Media Center at UMN.

<sup>4</sup>The website <http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/> is housed at the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA).

<sup>5</sup>Noriko Ishihara completed her doctoral studies in Second Languages and Cultures at the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota, and is currently at Meiji University, Tokyo.

<sup>6</sup>In addition, Elite Olshtain (School of Education, Hebrew University) provided invaluable assistance as curriculum advisor for the project, paying two timely and productive visits to Minnesota.

<sup>7</sup>The Japanese speech act materials are web-based and accessible both to teachers and to learners at <http://www.iles.umn.edu/IntroToSpeechActs/>.

<sup>8</sup>Gabriele Kasper (University of Hawaii) served as research advisor for this study.

<sup>9</sup>All students were also assigned an introductory awareness-raising unit with vignettes depicting a variety of speech act situations.

<sup>10</sup>All subjects were paid an honorarium for completing the speech act units and all before- and after-measures and those completing the e-journals received an additional stipend.

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## Process-Driven Culture Learning in American KFL Classroom Settings

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*Teaching second language (L2) culture can be either content- or process-driven. The content-driven approach refers to explicit instruction of L2 cultural information. On the other hand, the process-driven approach focuses on students' active participation in cultural learning processes. In this approach, teachers are not only information providers but also facilitators, whereas students are not passive information receivers but also active participants who construct their own learning. The benefits of the process-driven approach have been well researched by many existing L2 culture studies. However, most of these studies have dealt with European L2 cultures, while the number of studies that dealt with less commonly taught non-European languages like Korean is almost non-existent. To fill this void, this paper investigates a case of implementing and evaluating various process-driven culture learning activities in an American beginning Korean-as-a-foreign language (KFL) classroom. The paper reports that the activities helped KFL students realize the danger of stereotypes and the need to have open attitudes when learning new cultures. The activities raised students' metacognitive awareness, where the students became more actively interested in the process of learning itself. Although the case presented in this paper is about a first-year KFL course in an American college setting, it is hoped that its instructional model and pedagogical implications can be applied to other less-commonly taught L2 culture curricula.*

Teaching second language (L2) culture can be either content- or process-driven. The content-driven approach refers to explicit instruction of L2 cultural information. In this approach, the focus is on target cultural content rather than the process. Teachers are primary information givers of target cultural content to the class, whereas students are passive recipients of the information. The target information may include cultural products that are tangible (e.g., buildings, clothes, and foods) and intangible (e.g., dances and rituals) as well as cultural practices (e.g., traditional and contemporary value systems or thought patterns). On the other hand, the process-driven approach focuses on students' active participation in cultural learning processes. In this approach, teachers are not only information providers but also facilitators, whereas students are not passive information receivers but also active participants who construct their own learning. Instead of unilaterally receiving the target contents from teachers, students are encouraged to learn through critical thinking. The process-driven approach employs various

self-discovery learning tasks, such as individual or group cultural portfolio projects, interview assignments, and internet-mediated activities. In these activities, students come up with their ideas or opinions, receive relevant cultural information from the teachers, and finally personalize the learning content.

The benefits of the process-driven approach have been well researched by many existing L2 culture studies (e.g., Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1985; Galloway, 1992; Storme and Derakhshani, 2002). However, most of these studies have dealt with European L2 cultures, such as Spanish, French, and German, while the number of studies that dealt with low-density languages like Korean is almost non-existent. Furthermore, Korean-as-a-foreign-language (KFL) pedagogy has neglected the process-driven approach in that the majority of KFL culture studies have been content-driven. To fill this void, this paper investigates a case of implementing and evaluating various culture learning activities in an American beginning KFL classroom. The paper reports that by participating in various activities, students learn to appreciate not only target culture knowledge but also to better empathize with the target culture. The paper aims to raise KFL teachers' and researchers' awareness regarding the importance of process-driven culture teaching. Although the case presented in this paper is about a first-year KFL course in an American college setting, it is hoped that its instructional model and pedagogical implications can be applied to other low-density L2 culture curricula.

## Literature Review

### *The Process-driven Culture Teaching*

Learning L2 culture is more than simply memorizing target cultural information. It is a process whereby learners recognize that there are different cultural viewpoints, learn to accept the differences, and integrate the target cultural perspective positively into their own (Paige, 1993). It is a process where learners first become aware of their own native cultural perspectives and then learn to appreciate different cultural perspectives (Robinson-Stuart and Nocon, 1996).

However, L2 students often learn a new culture, presuming that they can understand it on the basis of their own culture (Omaggio, 1993). In addition, the students are not always aware of the role of their L1 cultural schema in learning a L2 culture, and this in turn hinders the students in constructing open attitudes about the L2 culture (Galloway, 1985).<sup>1</sup> For instance, Mantle-Bromely (1992) reports that her college Spanish students were unaware of how much native culture influences their ways of evaluating and comprehending the target culture. Bland, Noblitt, Armington and Gay (1990) comment that students tend to assume that there are corresponding words or expressions in their L1 for every new L2 word, which may cause them to run into the danger of reinforcing negative stereotypes about a target culture. Consequently, instruction that develops an ability to empathize with a target culture (e.g., having open and positive attitudes toward the target culture) should be a primary focus of culture curricula (Robinson, 1991).

Changing L2 students' attitudes toward target culture and language is a daunting task since several factors such as cognitive, affective, behavioral, and past experience are all associated with attitude formation process (Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991).<sup>2</sup> Consequently, learning just cultural information or facts will not always result in generating positive attitude changes. However, a number of L2 studies (e.g., Abrams, 2002; Allen, 2004;

Barro, Byram, Grimm, Morgan, and Roberts, 1993; Jogan, Herdia, and Augilera, 2001; Robinson-Stuart and Nocon, 1996; Wright, 2000) report that process-driven culture teaching is effective in fostering open and positive attitudes toward a target culture and enhancing cross-cultural awareness. These process-driven studies employ various culture learning tasks, such as interview assignments, long-term individual culture projects, and internet-mediated activities.

Byrnes (1991) suggests four steps involving texts that L2 teachers can use in helping students obtain better cross-cultural understanding:

1. Make students read about an aspect of their L1 culture in their L1 (e.g., reading in English about how to address each member of your American friend's family, when invited for dinner).
2. Students read about the L1 cultural aspect but in the L2 from the perspective of the L2 culture (e.g., reading in Korean about how to address each member of your American friend's family, when invited for dinner).
3. Students read about the same cultural topic of the L2 culture in their L1 (e.g., reading in English about how to address each member of your Korean friend's family, when invited for dinner).
4. Finally students read about the L2 culture in the L2 (e.g., reading in Korean about how to address each member of your Korean friend's family, when invited for dinner).

By making them read the same topic from different cultural perspectives, teachers can expect that students will begin to recognize how different perspectives and/or attitudes may offer different understandings of the target culture. Byrnes further asserts that the use of such a discovery process should be the core for any culture curriculum whose aim is to develop cross-cultural competence.

Barro et al. (1993) and Robinson-Stuart and Nocon (1996) report the positive effects of teaching L2 culture through assigning interview projects; students conduct a series of interviews with native speakers of the target language to enhance their L2 culture understanding.<sup>3</sup> Wright (2000) remarks that long-term culture projects facilitate L2 culture acquisition. In his semester-long project, elementary German language students pick personally relevant research topics. During the project, the students expand their knowledge of a particular aspect of German culture (e.g., their topics), as they connect their existing schema with the new cultural information gathered.

Jogan, Herdia, and Augilera (2001) implement a culture portfolio task in which Spanish language students learn Spanish culture by exchanging e-mails with Spanish speakers, who are learning English in Chile. Students' records of the e-mail exchanges and their reflections on what they learn through on-line communication become a part of their portfolio. Abrams (2002) reports a case of employing an internet-mediated culture teaching. Abrams discusses how the project helps her German L2 learners modify their stereotypical ideas about the German culture and raise their own awareness about within-culture variations. Through classroom discussions, Abrams guides her students in creating a list of stereotypes about German speaking nations. The students select one topic from the list, and use the internet to gather evidence to test the validity of their hypothesis. Abrams asserts that L2 students' prejudices are often distinct enough for them to develop cross-cultural awareness, even in the beginning-level L2 classroom. What these

studies all maintain is that the process-driven approach is effective in developing open attitudes toward the target culture, decreasing any stereotypes, and thereby increasing cross- and intercultural awareness.

Despite the increasing number of process-driven L2 studies, the majority of previous Korean-as-a-foreign-language (KFL) culture studies have been largely content-driven. For instance, after reviewing previous and current studies on teaching Korean culture, Cho, H. (2002) concludes that most KFL culture studies fall into one of the two groups. The first group of works are those that consolidate cultural contents with language instruction. For instance, when teaching sibling terms, teachers introduce the collective usage of kinship terms as used with older friends. Teachers help students acquire cultural knowledge when teaching them how to perform and understand various speech acts in Korean. The second group of works are those that concern explicit cultural knowledge instruction. Some of these studies discuss teaching cultural content using literature (e.g., Y. Cho, 2002; Kim, 1995; Jung, 2003; Yuen, 2003) and media materials such as TV commercials (e.g., Lee, 2002; Kim, 2002) and films (e.g., Choi, 2001). For example, teachers show pictures, TV commercials, film clips, and/or audio-visual materials that depict target cultural products or practices, such as Korean temples, *Taekwondo* (the traditional Korean martial art), and *Samulnori* (a traditional Korean folk music), to the students. Then, teachers explain the cultural significances and lead the students in a group discussion.

In summary, developing cross-cultural awareness and/or open attitudes has never been a key research concern among previous KFL studies. In addition, the number of empirical KFL studies that reports pedagogical implications of process-driven culture learning activities is scarce.

## Method

### *Participants*

Heritage and non-heritage student groups constitute the American KFL college student population. Sohn (1995) says that KFL heritage students (e.g., second-generation Korean-Americans) are those who have learned the Korean language and culture naturally from their family members as well as from the Korean community. As a result, in many cases, they are to some degree bicultural and bilingual (with individual variations) in English and Korean. However, they display underdeveloped literacy because of the lack of formal language instruction. In contrast, non-heritage students are so-called "true beginners" who have begun to study Korean language and culture through formal classroom instruction. KFL education in U.S. college settings has experienced enormous growth in the last three decades (Sohn, 1999). However, in spite of a recent substantial increase in the non-heritage student population, the primary student group in most KFL programs has been the heritage students (Byon, 2005; Lee, 2001). As the focus of this study is on discussing Korean culture education in genuine FL learners, including only non-heritage students as the participants of this study is essential.

The subjects were 18 beginning KFL non-heritage students of a large northeastern university, taking an elementary Korean class (EAK 101 hereafter).<sup>4</sup> EAK 101 is the first part of First Year Korean. The course provides students with basic conversational, grammatical, and cultural patterns, assuming that the students have little or no previous background knowledge of Korean. The objective of the course is to equip students with

basic cultural knowledge as well as communicative skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing at a basic level in Korean. The group contained eight male and ten female students (the average age is 22). These students neither had formal Korean language nor culture education prior to taking this course.

### *Procedure*

#### *Assessing Students' Attitudes*

Before implementing any teaching activities, assessing students' backgrounds, needs, and attitudes is essential. For instance, there is no point of designing an activity that the majority of the students already find familiar. A pre-term survey was designed (see Appendix A) to assess (i) their backgrounds and interests to identify their needs (e.g., items 1 through 3), (ii) students' awareness of the role of positive attitudes in L2 culture learning (e.g., item 4), (iii) the levels of awareness regarding their own cultural backgrounds (e.g., item 5), and (iv) their attitudes regarding Korean culture by eliciting any previous experiences and/or contact with Korean culture (e.g., item 6).

Most students answered that they do not have much previous experience of Korean language and culture. For item 3, students named the following cultural topics that they wished the instructor to cover: War in Korea; anti-Japanese sentiments; traditional Korean customs; courtesy; Korean history (particularly in regard to Japan); basic business etiquette; traditional values and thought patterns; heritage; North and South Korean issues; entertainment and pop culture. On the other hand, three students simply wrote *"anything about Korean culture"*; *"none"*; *"no idea. . . that is why I am taking the course,"* indicating a lack of previous exposure to Korean culture.

In response to item 4, "In your opinion, what are the three most important elements in learning culture?" students named the following as the most important elements in learning culture: History of the country; language; social issues; standard way of life; acceptable behaviors; tradition; readiness to learn; cuisine; philosophy; religion; literature; moral values; first-hand experience; interaction with people; living and being surrounded by that culture; immersing yourself into the culture. Just three students displayed the awareness of the role of positive affective stances in culture learning: *"an open-mind, and effort put into learning about culture."*

Students' images of American people and culture are diverse, reflecting individual differences. For instance, some of their examples include: *"Money, because that is what the American people's dreams"*; *"U.S. flags for it is something we all have in common"*; *"Baseball and apple pie. . . I think because of the saying about being as an American as baseball/apple pie"*; *"A melting pot of all different kinds of culture"*; *"When I hear 'American people' I think of obesity"*; *"fast food restaurant"*; *"White? More than half the country is populated with white people"*; *"hamburgers?"*; *"Diversity. Because American people are not made up of one race or background"*; *"American cultural expansion is always large, and people are generally loud and boisterous"*; *"TV. It influences on global culture"*; *"Caucasians. They are face of America (unfortunately)"*; *"Not land of 'opportunity.' People take what they can. When Americans find a loophole, they take full advantage"*; *"Changing is the first word that comes to mind because as a country America is still young and its culture is still growing."*

Some of their common perceptions of Korean culture and people include: *“Family because everything revolves around family”*; *“Korean people strive for the best for their family”*; *“Ancient and modern: A society that has very ancient roots, but is also at the forefront of modern civilization”*; *“Kimchi, that was my first experience with anything Korean”*; *“I see Korean people as uniform”*; *“Koreans are fiercely independent”*; *“Hyundai, Samsung, economic power”*; *“Looked down upon in Asia and worldwide, and Koreans are generally not respected”*; *“North Koreans. An axis of evil”*; *“Sadly video games and manga are the images that come to mind because they are the main things my friends and I have in common”*; *“Respectable and proud of their culture”*; *“I don’t know much. Maybe spicy food?”* As shown in these remarks, students’ first impressions about Korean people and culture are varied, indicating individual differences in the degree of knowledge.

### *Teaching Activities*

#### *Understanding the Role of L1 Perspectives in Learning L2 Culture*

Due to the vast cultural differences between the American and Korean cultures, which are reflected in both daily verbal and non-verbal communication, it is easy to develop stereotypes of Korean culture when students first encounter cross-cultural phenomena, unless they have open attitudes toward alien cultures. For instance, people from American culture, who value egalitarianism and individualism, may find the collectivistic and/or asymmetrical aspects, commonly found in both verbal and nonverbal Korean behaviors, resistant and negative. Galloway (1992) asserts that positive attitudes towards the target culture can be increased when learners better comprehend the relationship between culture and self-identity. The more the students are self-aware of the influence of their L1 cultural backgrounds (e.g., knowledge of the interpretation and intake of other cultural perspectives), the more positive and open attitudes they may develop in relation to the target cultures. The next three activities were designed to help the students become aware of the role of L1 culture in learning Korean culture.

#### *Pie Activity (Appendix B)*

In the third week, the entire class was divided into groups of three to four, and each group was asked to draw a pie chart that represents various aspects of American identities (Storme and Derakhshani, 2002). The most common themes that appeared included: a melting pot and an apple pie; Martin Luther King (e.g., everyone is equal); land of opportunity; Microsoft (e.g., advanced technology); turkey dinner (e.g., family value); Christianity and churches; White people; baseball; individualism; Statute of liberty (e.g., freedom); aircraft carriers (e.g., U.S. military super power); rap music; Hollywood; Obesity; U.S. soldiers fighting in Iraq (e.g., war against terror); materialism; convenience (e.g., fast foods); middle class people and taxes; family mini-vans (e.g., middle class family). Then, students compared each other's pie charts, discussing the role that culture plays in the formation of their identities.

### Self-Awareness Activity

In this activity, students gathered cultural materials that may contribute to development of stereotypes in their own cultures (Mantle-Bromley, 1992). In the fifth week, the students were asked to find advertisements, graphic images, magazine clippings, clip art, and other materials from web-sites that illustrate American culture. The next day, students used the assignment results to discuss the images Americans have of themselves and the images they wish to project to other cultures. Some of the images students discussed included: big sports stars and events; strong military power; Wall Street; nine to five working hours and annual vacations; patriotism (e.g., news on the U.S. soldiers abroad); materialism (e.g., reality TV shows); medical advancement (e.g., many pharmaceutical product TV commercials); freedom of speech and press; a melting pot (e.g., metropolitan cities like New York City); easy going and casual (e.g., TV commercials of tropical cruise lines and Disney World); convenience and efficiency (e.g., fast food restaurant advertisements). Students supplied their own national stereotypes and decided to what extent they agreed with them. The differences of views expressed by the students became a starting point for understanding the relationship between cultural products and their self-identities.

### Cultural Behavior Activity

In the seventh week, students were asked to consider typical cultural behaviors of both L1 and L2 cultures (Heusinkveld, 1985). As a starter, the students were provided with a list of some American cultural phenomena (adopted from Sohn, 1986) to come up with their own interpretations of underlying value orientations of American culture:

1. American adults commonly use nicknames like “Barb” and “Andy.”
2. American siblings are considered to be equals and address each other on a first-name basis.
3. Americans put the given name first and the family names second, and write a mailing address in the order of the personal name followed by an address.
4. An angry American may sarcastically formalize address terms, as from “Peter” to “Mr. Peter Johnson.”
5. Generally speaking, in American society, it is rare to ask personal questions about marital status, salary, and age.
6. Older Americans shrink from telling their age because they wish to leave the impression that they are still active and doing things energetically.
7. Unless invited out, Americans follow the custom of going Dutch in paying restaurant bills.
8. An American boss often comes to his subordinate’s office to discuss business, or he will sometimes offer the subordinate a cup of coffee before initiating a conversation.
9. The ability to articulate ideas and feelings is respected among Americans.
10. Americans are willing to introduce themselves to each other whenever they meet for the first time.
11. Americans frequently say “I disagree,” “I have a different view on that,” or “I cannot agree with you” in meetings.

12. In drinking, Americans fill their own glasses and do not pass an empty glass to others.
13. Americans are encouraged to be independent from childhood.
14. Americans smile and offer greetings to anybody who passes by, saying “hi” or “good morning.”

This activity was a discovery-oriented task, in which students themselves had to come up with their own interpretations, rather than being instructed by the teacher. After examining aspects of their own surface culture, students realized their own underlying cultural values. Some common cultural concepts students discussed included privacy, freedom, independence, personal preference, self-fulfillment, initiative, self-motivation, noninterference, and frankness. For instance, the students realized that the American custom of knocking before entering someone's room, even with family members, reflects the American values of privacy and individualism. Students were encouraged to apply the aforementioned culture-specific situations to Korean cultures. The students used a list of some Korean cultural phenomena to categorize the Korean culture. Then, students argued against American culture, and for the practices of Korean culture.<sup>5</sup> In this way, students became more aware of their L1 cultural framework and the origins as well as the danger of stereotypes.

#### *Decreasing Stereotypical Perceptions*

Omaggio (1993) notes that stereotypes are barriers in developing empathy in L2 learning. Reducing stereotypes is vital in helping students better empathize with a target culture and thereby fosters an open-mind set. The following three activities, adopted from Steele and Suozzo (1994), were designed to help students understand how people develop stereotypes and how to eliminate negative stereotypes.

#### Four-Adjectives Activity (Appendix C)

In this activity, students were asked to comment on what they know about Korean culture and to describe it. In the ninth week, students wrote down four things they knew about Korean culture and adjectives describing those things. On the next day, students shared each other's findings in class: “*Kimchi: spicy and smelly*”; “*Drama: sad, monotonous, far-fetched*”; “*Conflict with Japan: long and drawn out*”; “*Good food: spicy*”; “*Hanbok: traditional*”; “*Respect: bowing*”; “*Movement: hasty*”; “*Korean gowns: elegant*”; “*Respect: most valued*”; “*Family: many members, caring, elderly, very highly respected*”; “*Karaoke: constant, loud, festive*”; “*Culture: ancient*”; “*Environment: mountainous, coastal, developing*”; “*Korean alphabet: rationally constructed*”; “*Engineering: economically important*”; “*Filial piety: loyalty*”; “*Religions: Buddhist*”; “*Technologies: Samsung, Daewoo, Hyundai*”; “*Music: H.O.T, K-Pop*”; “*Education: stressed beyond*”; “*Very formal: see the way they take to elders*”; “*Divided: something happened between N & S. Korea*”; “*Arts: celadon pottery, modern movies, and music*”; “*Hard working: laziness is looked down upon*”; “*Collectivists: Korean think in terms of being in a group.*” Using these images, students argued for and against their own comments. The activity was useful in gauging students’ understanding of Korean culture,

eliciting any stereotypes the students had, and identifying the instructional needs of the students.

### Media-Comparison Activity (Appendix D)

In this activity, students compared American cultural images projected in Korean media with Korean cultural images projected in American media. In the eleventh week, the class was divided into several groups of three to four. Each group was given a week-long assignment to search for and gather American and Korean media material, such as advertisements on internet sites, newspapers, magazines, films, and TV commercials that project visual images of both cultures.<sup>6</sup> A week later, the students shared their findings in the class.

Some of the Korean themes reflected in American media included: strong family values, traditions, codes of respect, and hierarchy; hermit kingdom (e.g., land of morning calm); Cold War (e.g., divided Korea); student demonstrations; recent democratization; M\*A\*S\*H\*; forgotten war (e.g., Korean War); strong and independent. Some American images they commented on were: fast and instant; a radically changing culture; nine to five shifts; backyard BBQ; big sports events; a free nation with a diverse culture; busy and efficient; a materialistic society. Students evaluated how well or poorly the materials represented both cultures, verbalizing any differences or similarities that they observed in the materials. As a further assignment, each group was required to submit a written summary of their groups' findings.

### Counter-Stereotype Activity

In this activity, a teacher brings visual images that run counter to common stereotypes of Korean and American cultures. These types of visual images can be easily located in magazines, newspapers, internet sites, videos, and films. In the thirteenth week, students had already engaged in five types of activities. Two of the most debated and common stereotypes students had toward Korean people involved family-oriented values (e.g., collectivism) and limited roles and unequal status of women in Korea. As a material to dissolve such prejudiced views, two magazine advertisements were used. The first picture depicted a picture of an American family having Thanksgiving dinner as a way of diluting the stereotype of Americans as being individualistic. The second picture was from a cereal advertisement found in a Korean magazine that depicts a young Korean couple, in their business suits and sitting in their Western kitchen, enjoying cereal for breakfast. The picture conveyed an image that a Korean wife is no longer confined to doing house work, and Korean society is no longer male-dominated. Using these cultural materials, students shared their reactions or impressions about the visual images presented in the class. They discussed that cultural values such as individualism and collectivism may exist in all cultures to some degree.

## Discussions

### *Instructional Effectiveness*

In order to assess the instructional effectiveness and explore pedagogical implications of these activities, a feedback form was designed and implemented at the end

of the semester (see Appendix E). I distributed the form to the students with department evaluation forms, telling them that the feedback form would not be opened until the grade was given. The students were asked to freely express how they felt about the activities. Questions 1 through 6 asked the students to rate each activity, based on the Likert scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), with comments. Among the six activities, the activity that received the highest mean score was *Cultural Behavior Activity* (4.2), followed by *Pie Activity* (4.0), *Four-Adjective Activity* (3.8), *Counter-Stereotypes Activity* (3.1), *Self-Awareness Activity* (2.7), and *Media-Comparison Activity* (2.2). Not all students wrote comments for each activity. However, the comments of those who responded were analyzed further to reveal some possible explanations for the results.

The most frequently expressed comments for the first three popular activities include: (i) fun and self-discovery process, (ii) easy to participate, (iii) less homework assignment but rely on rather spontaneous and natural responses, and (iv) sharing each other's ideas. On the other hand, for *Counter-Stereotypes* and *Self-Awareness Activity*, which received relatively low mean scores, students noted that locating and collecting relevant materials (e.g., advertisement, magazine clippings, on-line materials) was harder and more time-consuming than they expected. The activity that received the lowest score was *Media-Comparison Activity*. Some of their comments indicated that the contents (e.g., Korean wife no longer confined to doing housework and family-oriented American Thanksgiving dinner) were unsurprising and boring: "*Boring, it's something we already learned*" (S: 5). A possible explanation for these negative comments can be attributed to the implementation timing of the activity. *Media-Comparison Activity* was the last among the six, and implemented near the end of term. By the time students participated in this activity, they had already undergone several culture learning activities, which in turn familiarized them with the target cultural contents.

Questions 7 through 9 are open-ended items that asked students to write their subjective reactions regarding whether the activities, in general, helped them develop positive attitudes toward the target culture, what they felt they learned through it, and what changes they would recommend if they did it again. The results of the feedback form show that activities certainly helped students better realize the role of their L1 cultural frameworks in L2 culture learning and the danger of having stereotypes. The activities thereby assisted them in developing open and positive attitudes toward Korean culture.

For instance, in response to question 7 (Appendix E): "Do you think that the above learning activities helped you have open and positive attitudes toward Korean culture and people? If yes, or no, please explain how much and why," 13 students responded positively, while five left the question unanswered. Among those 13, four students said that they learned how stereotypes originated and why it was difficult to dispel them: "*I used to think I knew a lot, but they were all stereotypes*" (S: 1); "*Getting rid of stereotypes was harder than I thought*" (S: 14). Three students responded that the activities were fun and beneficial in helping them to appreciate their own cultural values: "*They were fun to learn more about our culture too*" (S: 6); "*I learned to identify American cultures in different forms*" (S: 15). Two students remarked how difficult it is to formulate simple stereotypes about their own population but easy to create one for an unknown culture: "*It's easy to have a stereotype about a foreign culture, but hard for my own*" (S: 2). One student noted that she was able to assess her own level of understanding of both American and Korean culture: "*I learned how ignorant I was of Korean culture*" (S: 4). In response to question 8: "In your opinion, what are the three most important elements in learning

culture?" 14 students responded, while four students left the question blank. In general, most students remarked on the role of open attitudes in L2 culture learning:

*"Open heart! cause even we are all different. What I used to believe isn't true for every Korean"* (S: 7); *"We need to study them more thoroughly before making any judgments"* (S: 9).

The last question was: "Would you recommend the activities in learning Korean cultural skills? If yes, or no, please explain why and how much. And if you were to do them again, would you make any suggestions to improve the activities?" Twelve students responded to this question (eight positive and four lukewarm), while two just replied "none," and four left the question blank. Among those 12 who answered, two students simply expressed enthusiasm about the activities: *"They were fun ways to learn more about different cultures"* (S: 7). Others commented on the benefits of having multiple perspectives: *"I would recommend it because it showed me how someone can better appreciate other cultures"* (S: 2). Two students recognized an improvement in their affective stances since they could use their L1 as a source of learning: *"Knowing how my background affects learning about Korean culture was helpful"* (S:10). One student wrote about the use of internet information (e.g., during *Media-Comparison Activity*): *"I learned more than I expected . . . especially using online information"* (S: 9). Another student said that the approach made him feel challenged to use higher analytic skills: *"The activities made us think not just memorize stuff"* (S: 17).

However, the responses of four students were less enthusiastic, indicating room for further consideration. Two students thought that the activities seemed redundant and time-consuming: *"Some activities seem the same. Maybe next time, we can have less of them"* (S: 5). The first three activities and the latter three activities were designed and implemented to achieve the following two aims: enhancing students' understanding of the role of L1 perspectives, and the dangers of having stereotypes in learning Korean cultures. Consequently, it is understandable that the students thought some activities were repetitive. One pedagogical implication is that depending on students' instructional needs, teachers should vary the number and/or types of activities they choose or adopt. The other two students commented that the activities were not appropriate for a language course: *"They seem to be better for a culture course, not a language class"* (S: 3). These reactions indicate that some students still have not realized the importance of cultural understanding in foreign language learning. Teachers should provide students with a clear rationale for each activity, raising students' awareness that having open attitude is a vital part of any L2 culture learning.

### *Pedagogical Implications*

Language teachers may prefer the content-driven approach over the process-driven approach for several reasons, such as the overwhelming amounts of cultural information that must be covered within the curriculum, which in turn makes fostering cross-cultural awareness and positive affective stances secondary to the primary teaching of content. Before administering the process-driven learning activities, I anticipated that the major difficulty in implementing them would be a decrease in actual class instruction time. In fact, having students participate in these activities took classroom time away and caused interruption in classroom learning. However, such process-driven learning should

be an integral part of teaching and learning for any foreign language and culture class as open and positive affective stances toward a target culture stimulate students' curiosity and motivation in learning differences and similarities between their L1 and L2 cultures (Kramsch and Nelson, 1996).

Conducting the aforementioned process-driven cultural learning activities is one way of going beyond the normal duty of teaching, taking extra steps to strive to instruct more effectively. As seen in the students' responses, participating in the culture learning activities brought out changes in the students' affective stances. The students noted the increase in their cross-cultural awareness. They realized the danger of stereotypes and acknowledged the need to have open attitudes when learning new cultures. In addition, the activities raised students' metacognitive awareness, where the students became more actively interested in the process of learning itself. The content-only approach may not bring the similar outcomes. Simply emphasizing the importance of cross- and intercultural awareness and open attitudes to the students do not ascertain the change in their affective stances. Meanwhile, the activities did not benefit the students alone. From a teacher's standpoint, I found the activities helpful in being more conscious of the importance of having a positive affective stance in L2 culture teaching.

### **Conclusion**

This study addressed several issues of KFL culture teaching from process-driven perspectives. For instance, the paper reviewed what previous studies maintain regarding teaching cultural information and open attitudes, the role of L1 culture in L2 culture learning, and the importance of generating positive attitudes in KFL classrooms. In addition, it reported a case of implementing and evaluating six activities, designed to foster open and positive attitudes toward Korean culture. Consequently, this paper supports that the process-driven approach increases students' curiosity and capacity in the target language and culture learning (Kramsch and Nelson, 1996). The approach helps students learn the content materials effectively, since it leads them to personalize the learning contents rather than simply to memorize them.

These are subject to further studies. First, due to the qualitative nature of this investigation, it is impossible to draw quantitative conclusions about the significance of the findings. In addition, since the population of KFL students (particularly that of non-heritage students) in U.S. college settings is small, it was not possible to obtain a large sample size from which to generalize the findings. Studies that employ larger sample sizes should be conducted for more generalized pedagogical implications. Second, the studies that discuss how to integrate these activities into language education of varying proficiency levels are worth investigating. Although the discussions and procedures presented in this paper are aimed at an American college-level elementary KFL course, the findings can be applied to other KFL curricula of all levels. For instance, when executing the pie activities, a teacher can guide intermediate and/or advanced students to use Korean in order to complete the activity. Finally, the studies that investigate how students' backgrounds affect the process-driven cultural learning experiences are worth pursuing. Depending on students' backgrounds (e.g., the issues of heritage and non-heritage, instructional needs, motivations, and personal experiences) students' attitudes in relation to Korean

culture may be different at the time of the entrance to their first KFL class. Hence, teachers must take account of students' varying needs and backgrounds when designing and implementing the aforementioned learning tasks in their class.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Open and positive affective stances toward a target culture stimulate students' curiosity and motivation in learning differences and similarities between their L1 and L2 cultures (Kramsch and Nelson, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> According to Mantle-Bromley (1995), attitude has three elements: cognition, behavior, and affect, and disagreement among these three elements may result in the attitude change.

<sup>3</sup> Bateman (2002) asserts that ethnographic interview is an effective tool not only to collect relevant information from interviewees (e.g., native informants) but also to promote positive attitude in L2 culture learning. For instance, the interview assignment may increase rapport between interviewer and interviewee and move learners toward becoming attentive listeners as well as thoughtful questioners. Robert, Byram, Barro, Jordan, and Street (2001) comment that having interpersonal interactions through interview assignments can assist students in dissolving negative attitudes and wrong stereotypical images toward the L2 culture. For instance, the students may learn about interviewee's culture, themselves (e.g., their own personal interview skills), and their own cultural perspectives (e.g., how their own native perspectives may be viewed by others such as an interviewee). In this way, the ethnographic interview can promote cross-cultural awareness.

<sup>4</sup> EAK 101 is the first half of the first year Korean class offered at the University at Albany, State University of New York. Until Fall 2002, the majority of EAK101 students were heritage students. Their predominant presence, even in this beginning KFL class, in turn prevented true beginners from taking the class. Since Fall 2002, in an effort to increase the number of non-heritage students in EAK101, more strict screening processes, such as conducting individual interviews and implementing thorough placement tests, have been employed for those who intended to register for EAK101. Only those non-heritage students who underwent the strict screening process have been admitted to EAK101. Those elementary KFL learners with heritage backgrounds have been placed in EAK102 "Beginning Korean 2." Such effort has resulted in the drastic growth of non-heritage student enrollment of EAK101. For example, the number of non-heritage students in EAK101 was 16 in Fall 2002, 17 in Fall 2003, and 18 in Fall 2004.

<sup>5</sup> This comparative approach may facilitate learning about the students' own culture and Korean culture. However, the teacher must be cautious of students' forming stereotypes. One must be aware that using the contrastive method too early, prior to positive identification with Korean culture, carries the danger of creating an adversarial relationship between the student and the L2 culture.

<sup>6</sup> For instance, I recommend the following web-sites as useful in finding Korean commercials: (<http://www.adic.co.kr>), (<http://www.ngtv.net/>), and (<http://www.arts.monash.edu/au/korean/kor3310>).

## Appendices

### *Appendix A*

#### EAK101 Background Survey: The Korean Culture

##### 1 General Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Major/minor \_\_\_\_\_  
Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you have any previous knowledge of Korean Language and/or Culture?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Are there any cultural topics or issues that you want the instructor to cover in this course? Please explain in detail.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. In your opinion, what are the three most important elements in learning culture?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the first image or the word that comes to your mind when you hear “American culture” or “American people”? Why do you think so?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the first image or the word that comes to your mind when you hear “Korean culture” or “Korean people”? Why do you think so?

\_\_\_\_\_

### *Appendix B*

#### EAK101: Pie Activity

A. Draw a pie chart that represents various aspects of American identities (e.g., individualism or popular cultures)

B. Verbalize the differences and similarities that you observe between Korean and American cultural products.

### *Appendix C*

#### EAK101: Four-Adjectives Activity

A. Write four important things that you know about Korean culture and adjectives describing them:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

*Appendix D*

EAK101: Media-Comparison Activity

- A. Discuss how American culture is projected in the Korean media.
  - What kinds of American cultural values do you notice in these images?
  - How well or poorly do the materials represent the American cultures?
- B. Discuss how Korean culture is represented in the American media.
  - What kinds of Korean cultural values do you notice in these images?
  - How well or poorly do the materials represent the Korean cultures?
- C. Discuss the differences and similarities that you observe the materials.

*Appendix E*

EAK101: Survey: Korean Culture (End-of the Term Questionnaire)

1. Did you like **Pie Activity**? How would you rate this activity for increasing open attitudes toward Korean culture? Circle one number and give any comments if you have:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

2. Did you like **Self-Awareness Activity**? How would you rate this activity for increasing open attitudes toward Korean culture? Circle one number and give any comments if you have:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

3. Did you like **Typical Cultural Behavior Activity**? How would you rate this activity for increasing open attitudes toward Korean culture? Circle one number and give any comments if you have:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

4. Did you like **Four Adjective Activity**? How would you rate this activity for increasing open attitudes toward Korean culture? Circle one number and give any comments if you have:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

5. Did you like **Media Comparison Activity**? How would you rate this activity for increasing open attitudes toward Korean culture? Circle one number and give any comments if you have:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

6. Did you like *Counter Stereotypes Activity*? How would you rate this activity for increasing open attitudes toward Korean culture? Circle one number and give any comments if you have:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

7. Do you think that the above learning activities helped you develop open and positive attitudes toward Korean culture and people? If yes, or no, please explain how much and why.”

---

8. In your opinion, what are the three most important elements in learning culture?

---

9. Would you recommend the activities in learning Korean cultural skills? Would you make any suggestions to improve the activities if you were to do them again? If yes, or no, please explain how much and why.”

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***Structure du Français Moderne: Introduction à l'analyse linguistique***

**(troisième édition revue).** (2005). By Pierre Léon and Parth Bhatt. Toronto, Ontario: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc. ISBN 0921627327

Reviewed by JEREMY KELLEY  
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*Structure du Français Moderne: Introduction à l'analyse linguistique* by Pierre Léon and Parth Bhatt, offers a comprehensive look at the structural composition of the French language as it is used today. Geared toward second year students of French as a second or foreign language, this text provides a well-organized observation of elements ranging from the proper articulation of sounds all the way to the more collective study of semantics. Its primary objective is to serve as both a general linguistic analysis and a review guide for the structure of modern French.

From the very onset, Léon and Bhatt apply an approach that is logically constructed and well thought out, beginning with the basics in structural study, such as sound formation, and progressing onward toward the more difficult elements of the language, such as meaning. The book has been broken down into six main sections consisting of multiple chapters of similar importance and value, creating a pattern of growth in complexity that not only pushes the student into new, fresh topics in language analysis but also creates a focused goal of both familiarity of linguistic nuances and oral control in the target language's usage.

The first section of the text deals with explaining the essentials of linguistics and how they apply to the French language. Elements that are crucial to understanding the details of the language are discussed at length, such as the various registers applied in successful communication and the differences between the oral code and the written code. The second grouping's content, made up of parts two, three, four and five, introduces a coherently organized progression of the major subcategories associated with linguistic study: Phonetics / Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, and Semantics. This section of the text attempts to link various levels of linguistic data in a manner that is both logical and crucial. The result of such a grouping is a succinct flow of components that originates with those that take on the role of linguistic building blocks, and terminates with those that embody the role of the finished message. Understanding the relationship between these four main topics lays the foundation to comprehending the makeup of the language. By developing a systematic plan for conveying these various fields of data, Léon and Bhatt create an appealing tool for teaching the mechanics of the French language. The text concludes with the sixth and final section that provides an analytical perspective addressing the current sociolinguistic issues of the francophone world: idioms, dialects, and historical significance. The authors use this section to discuss not only the influences of other modern languages such as English on the French word stock but also the differences between European French and that of the francophone world, particularly the French of the Canadian province of Québec. They also present information on other social differences that contribute to variations in speech, such as age, gender, and class.

Aside from its organizational accessibility, the text also offers two additional features that make it an attractive tool for language learners. A glossary of linguistic terms located at the end of the text helps students to decipher the technical jargon used throughout the book, thus facilitating their comprehension and increasing their linguistic

repertoire. The authors have also added an answer key so that the students can check their answers to the questions posed at the conclusion of each chapter. This encourages students to do self-practice exercises, even if they have not been asked to do so. By having such a tool they can explore their own growth and development in the educational process of language acquisition.

Though the book is thick due to the extensive content, it is filled with additional information that adds interest to the subject matter at hand. Each chapter is laced with an intriguing cultural or literal detail that pertains to the particular information being discussed. There is everything from Compère Lapin (Briar Rabbit), in which students are presented with a sample that illustrates the vocalic differences between European French and that of Caribbean Creole French, to well known theatrical pieces such as those of the acclaimed 17<sup>th</sup> century French playwright Molière, in which vocalic sound formation is explored through an excerpt from one of his most cherished pieces *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. Léon and Bhatt add cultural familiarities in order to keep the learner's attention and to liven up what could essentially be considered very scientific material, thus presenting the information in a context that is both comprehensible and inviting. The book is also a very inexpensive bargain given the amount of information covered, making it an attractive educational tool for the thinly stretched pocketbooks of the average college student.

There are however, some drawbacks within the text that cannot be overlooked or understated. Physically, the exterior size of the book is a bit cumbersome. The pages could also benefit from a splash of color and a few more illustrations in order to keep the attention of visual students. Though some visual aids have been provided, they are few and far between with the exception of analytical charts that detail everything from intonation to biological structures of the mouth. Furthermore, although a glossary of technical terms has been included, the definitions found within are rather difficult to understand given that the information has been produced for a second year foreign language learner. This could pose a problem for students who have not had prior exposure to linguistic terminology, making the text better suited for people who have already taken, at a minimum, an introductory course in linguistic studies. There is also, as was previously mentioned, an answer key at the end of the book so that students can self-check in order to monitor their own progress. Though this is a useful tool in promoting self-learning among students, it is important to note that it contains several errors that could pose major problems and frustrations for students using this text. Additionally, the amount of information offered is a bit much for both a single semester and a single quarter of teaching. The text easily has enough material to be divided over a longer period of time, perhaps two classes instead of one, especially given the level of student for whom the material has been prepared.

All things considered, Léon and Bhatt have created a work that is an in-depth tool for review and reference in all aspects of both structure and linguistic characteristics of the French language. It should be recommended however, in the introduction, that students have at least some previous knowledge of linguistic terminology to be able to fully benefit from the content. Though the flaws are important, the sheer organization and numerous examples of the language in action prove to be a valuable source of information and support. *Structure du Français Moderne* is a top choice for serious students and classrooms that want an extensive knowledge of French compositional makeup and mechanics, as long as the appropriate linguistic foundation has previously been established.

## General Information

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### **News and Views**

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General Information

Calendar of Events\*

2007

**Modern Language Association (MLA)**, 27–30 December, Chicago, IL.  
Contact: MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789; (646) 576-5000, Fax (646) 458-0030, Web: [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)

2008 Events

**Linguistic Society of America (LSA)**, 3–6 January, Chicago, IL. Contact: LSA, 1325 18th St. NW, # 211, Washington, DC 20036-6501; (202) 835-1714, Fax (202) 835-1717, Web: [www.lsadc.org](http://www.lsadc.org)

**Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSCTFL)**, 6–8 March, Dearborn, MI. Contact: Patrick T. Raven, Executive Director, CSCTFL, PO Box 251, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0251; (414) 405-4645, Fax (414) 276-4650, Email: [CSCTFL@aol.com](mailto:CSCTFL@aol.com) Web: [www.csctfl.org](http://www.csctfl.org)

**Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO)**, 18–22 March, San Francisco, CA. Contact: CALICO, Southwest Texas State University, 214 Centennial Hall, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666; (512) 245-1417, Fax (512) 245-9089, Email: [info@calico.org](mailto:info@calico.org) Web: [www.calico.org](http://www.calico.org)

**American Educational Research Association (AERA)**, 24–28 March, New York, NY. Contact: AERA, 1230 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036-3078; (202) 223-9485, Fax (202) 775-1824, Web: [www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)

**Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL)**, 27–29 March, New York, NY. Contact: Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, PO Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; (717) 245-1977, Fax (717) 245-1976, Email: [nectfl@dickinson.edu](mailto:nectfl@dickinson.edu) Web: [www.nectfl.org](http://www.nectfl.org)

**American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)**, 29 March – 2 April, Washington, DC. Contact: AAAL, 3416 Primm Lane, Birmingham, AL 35216; (205) 824-7700, Fax (205) 823-2760; Email: [aaal@primemanagement.net](mailto:aaal@primemanagement.net) Web: [www.aaal.org](http://www.aaal.org)

**Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)**, 2–5 April, New York City, NY. Contact: TESOL, 700 S. Washington Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 836-0774, Fax (703) 836-7864, Email: [info@tesol.org](mailto:info@tesol.org) Web: [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)

**Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT)**, 3–5 April, Myrtle Beach, SC. Contact: Lynne McClendon, Executive Director, SCOLT, 165 Lazy Laurel Chase, Roswell, GA 30076; (770) 992-1256, Fax (770) 992-3464, Email: [lynnemcc@mindspring.com](mailto:lynnemcc@mindspring.com) Web: [scolt.net](http://scolt.net)

**Association for Asian Studies (AAS)**, 3–6 April, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Association for Asian Studies, Inc., 1021 East Huron Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 665-2490, Fax (734) 665-3801, Web: [www.aasianst.org](http://www.aasianst.org)

**National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL)**, 25–27 April, Madison, WI. Contact: NCOLCTL, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 4231 Humanities Building, 455 N. Park Street, Madison, WI 53706; (608) 265-7903, Fax (608) 265-7904; Email: [ncolctl@mailplus.wisc.edu](mailto:ncolctl@mailplus.wisc.edu) Web: [www.councilnet.org](http://www.councilnet.org)

\*Courtesy of *The Modern Language Journal* (University of Wisconsin)

- International Reading Association (IRA)**, 4–8 May, Atlanta, GA. Contact: International Reading Association, Headquarters Office, 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139; Email: [pubinfo@reading.org](mailto:pubinfo@reading.org) Web: [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)
- American Association of Teachers of French (AATF)**, 16–19 July, Liège, Belgium. Contact: Jayne Abrate, AATF, Mailcode 4510, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4510; (618) 453-5731, Fax (618) 453-5733, Email: [abrate@siu.edu](mailto:abrate@siu.edu) Web: [www.frenchteachers.org](http://www.frenchteachers.org)
- AILA 2008**, 24–29 August, Essen, Germany. Contact: AILA 2008 Conference Office, Julian Sudhoff, Universität Duisburg-Essen, Campus Essen, FB Geisteswissenschaften, Anglistik, Universitätsstraße 12, 45117 Essen, Germany; +49 201-183-2727, Email: [orga-aila-2008@uni-due.de](mailto:orga-aila-2008@uni-due.de) Web: [www.aila2008.org](http://www.aila2008.org)
- EUROCALL**, 3–6 September, Kodolányi University College, Székesfehérvár, Hungary. Contact: Zsuzsanna Angeli, Email: [angeli.zsuzsanna@chello.hu](mailto:angeli.zsuzsanna@chello.hu)
- British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL)**, 11–13 September, Swansea University, UK. Contact: Web: [www.baal.org.uk](http://www.baal.org.uk)
- American Translators Association (ATA)**, 5–8 November, Orlando, FL. Contact: ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 683-6100, Fax (703) 683-6122, Email: [conference@atanet.org](mailto:conference@atanet.org) Web: [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org)
- African Studies Association (ASA)**, 13–16 November, Chicago, IL. Contact: Kimme Carlos, Annual Meeting Coordinator, Rutgers University, Douglass Campus, 132 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1400; (732) 932-8173, Fax (732) 932-3394, Email: [asaamc@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:asaamc@rci.rutgers.edu) Web: [www.africanstudies.org](http://www.africanstudies.org)
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)**, 21–23 November, Orlando, FL. Contact: ACTFL, 700 S. Washington St., Suite 210, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 894-2900, Fax (703) 894-2905, Email: [headquarters@actfl.org](mailto:headquarters@actfl.org) Web: [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)
- American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)**, 21–23 November, Orlando, FL. Contact: AATG, 112 Haddontowne Court #104, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034; (856) 795-5553, Fax (856) 795-9398, Email: [headquarters@aatg.org](mailto:headquarters@aatg.org) Web: [www.aatg.org](http://www.aatg.org)
- American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI)**, 21–23 November, Orlando, FL. Contact: AATI, Edoardo Lebano, Department of French and Italian, Indiana University, Ballentine 642, Blomington, IN 47405; (812) 855-2508, Fax (812) 855-8877, Email: [elebano@hotmail.com](mailto:elebano@hotmail.com)
- Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA)**, 21–23 November, Orlando, FL. Contact: CLTA, Cynthia Ning, Executive Director, 417 Moore Hall, 1890 East-West Road, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI 96822; (808) 956-2692, Fax (808) 956-2682, Email: [cyndy@hawaii.edu](mailto:cyndy@hawaii.edu) Web: [clta.osu.edu](http://clta.osu.edu)
- National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)**, 21–23 November, Orlando, FL. Contact: Mary Lynn Redmond, NNELL, PO Box 7266, B 201 Tribble Hall, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC 27109; Email: [nnell@wfu.edu](mailto:nnell@wfu.edu) Web: [www.nnell.org](http://www.nnell.org)

## **2009 Events**

- International Reading Association (IRA)**, 21–25 February, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: International Reading Association, Headquarters Office, 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139; Email: [pubinfo@reading.org](mailto:pubinfo@reading.org) Web: [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)

- Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT)**, 5–7 March, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Lynne McClendon, Executive Director, SCOLT, 165 Lazy Laurel Chase, Roswell, GA 30076; (770) 992-1256, Fax (770) 992-3464, Email: [lynnemcc@mindspring.com](mailto:lynnemcc@mindspring.com) Web: [scolt.net](http://scolt.net)
- Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**, 19–21 March, Chicago, IL. Contact: Patrick T. Raven, Executive Director, CSCTFL, PO Box 251, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0251; (414) 405-4645, Fax (414) 276-4650, Email: [CSCTFL@aol.com](mailto:CSCTFL@aol.com) Web: [www.csctfl.org](http://www.csctfl.org)
- Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)**, 25–28 March, Denver, CO. Contact: TESOL, 700 S. Washington Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 836-0774, Fax (703) 836-7864, Email: [info@tesol.org](mailto:info@tesol.org) Web: [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)
- Association for Asian Studies (AAS)**, 26–29 March, Chicago, IL. Contact: Association for Asian Studies, Inc., 1021 East Huron Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 665-2490, Fax (734) 665-3801, Web: [www.aasianst.org](http://www.aasianst.org)
- American Educational Research Association (AERA)**, 13–17 April, San Diego, CA. Contact: AERA, 1230 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036-3078; (202) 223-9485, Fax (202) 775-1824, Web: [www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)
- International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)**, 12–17 July, Melbourne, Australia. Contact: Web: [ipra.ua.ac.be/](http://ipra.ua.ac.be/)
- American Translators Association (ATA)**, 28–31 October, New York, NY. Contact: ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 683-6100, Fax (703) 683-6122, Email: [conference@atanet.org](mailto:conference@atanet.org) Web: [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org)
- African Studies Association (ASA)**, 19–22 November, New Orleans, LA. Contact: Kimme Carlos, Annual Meeting Coordinator, Rutgers University, Douglass Campus, 132 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1400; (732) 932-8173, Fax (732) 932-3394, Email: [asaamc@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:asaamc@rci.rutgers.edu) Web: [www.africanstudies.org](http://www.africanstudies.org)
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)**, 20–22 November, San Diego, CA. Contact: ACTFL, 700 S. Washington St., Suite 210, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 894-2900, Fax (703) 894-2905, Email: [headquarters@actfl.org](mailto:headquarters@actfl.org) Web: [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)
- American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)**, 20–22 November, San Diego, CA. Contact: AATG, 112 Haddontowne Court #104, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034; (856) 795-5553, Fax (856) 795-9398, Email: [headquarters@aatg.org](mailto:headquarters@aatg.org) Web: [www.aatg.org](http://www.aatg.org)
- American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI)**, 20–22 November, San Diego, CA. Contact: AATI, Edoardo Lebano, Department of French and Italian, Indiana University, Ballentine 642, Bloomington, IN 47405; (812) 855-2508, Fax (812) 855-8877, Email: [elebano@hotmail.com](mailto:elebano@hotmail.com)
- Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA)**, 20–22 November, San Diego, CA. Contact: CLTA, Cynthia Ning, Executive Director, 417 Moore Hall, 1890 East-West Road, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI 96822; (808) 956-2692, Fax (808) 956-2682, Email: [cindy@hawaii.edu](mailto:cindy@hawaii.edu) Web: [clta.osu.edu](http://clta.osu.edu)
- National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)**, 20–22 November, San Diego, CA. Contact: Mary Lynn Redmond, NNELL, PO Box 7266, B 201 Tribble Hall, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC 27109; Email: [nnell@wfu.edu](mailto:nnell@wfu.edu) Web: [www.nnell.org](http://www.nnell.org)

## Information for Contributors

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of *Applied Language Learning (ALL)* is to increase and promote professional communication within the Defense Language Program and academic communities on adult language learning for functional purposes.

### Submission of Manuscripts

The Editor encourages the submission of research and review manuscripts from such disciplines as: (1) instructional methods and techniques; (2) curriculum and materials development; (3) testing and evaluation; (4) implications and applications of research from related fields such as linguistics, education, communication, psychology, and social sciences; (5) assessment of needs within the profession.

### Research Article

Divide your manuscript into the following sections:

- Abstract
  - Introduction
  - Method
  - Results
  - Discussion
  - Conclusion
    - Appendices
    - Notes
  - References
    - Acknowledgments
    - Author

### Abstract

Identify the purpose of the article, provide an overview of the content, and suggest findings in an abstract of not more than 200 words.

### Introduction

In a few paragraphs, state the purpose of the study and relate it to the hypothesis and the experimental design. Point out the theoretical implications of the study and relate them to previous work in the area.

Next, under the subsection *Literature Review*, discuss work that had a direct impact on your study. Cite only research pertinent to a specific issue and avoid references with only tangential or general significance. Emphasize pertinent findings and relevant methodological issues. Provide the logical continuity between previous and present work. Whenever appropriate, treat controversial issues fairly. You may state that certain studies support one conclusion and others challenge or contradict it.

## **Method**

Describe how you conducted the study. Give a brief synopsis of the method. Next develop the subsections pertaining to the *participants*, the *materials*, and the *procedure*.

*Participants.* Identify the number and type of participants. Specify how they were selected and how many participated in each experiment. Provide major demographic characteristics such as age, sex, geographic location, and institutional affiliation. Identify the number of experiment dropouts and the reasons they did not continue.

*Materials.* Describe briefly the materials used and their function in the experiment.

*Procedure.* Describe each step in the conduct of the research. Include the instructions to the participants, the formation of the groups, and the specific experimental manipulations.

## **Results**

First state the results. Next describe them in sufficient detail to justify the findings. Mention all relevant results, including those that run counter to the hypothesis.

*Tables and figures.* Prepare tables to present exact values. Use tables sparingly. Sometimes you can present data more efficiently in a few sentences than in a table. Avoid developing tables for information already presented in other places. Prepare figures to illustrate key interactions, major interdependencies, and general comparisons. Indicate to the reader what to look for in tables and figures.

## **Discussion**

Express your support or nonsupport for the original hypothesis. Next examine, interpret, and qualify the results and draw inferences from them. Do not repeat old statements: Create new statements that further contribute to your position and to readers understanding of it.

## **Conclusion**

Succinctly describe the contribution of the study to the field. State how it has helped to resolve the original problem. Identify conclusions and theoretical implications that can be drawn from your study.

## **Appendices**

Place detailed information (for example, a table, lists of words, or a sample of a questionnaire) that would be distracting to read in the main body of the article in the appendices.

## **Notes**

Use them for substantive information only, and number them serially throughout the manuscript. They all should be listed on a separate page entitled *Notes*.

## References

Submit on a separate page of the manuscript a list of references with the centered heading: *References*. Arrange the entries alphabetically by surname of authors. Review the format for bibliographic entries of references in the following sample:

- Dulay, H., & Burt, M. (1974). Errors and strategies in child second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16 (1), 93-95.  
Harris, D. P. (1969). *Testing English as a second language*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

List all works cited in the manuscripts in *References*, and conversely, cite all works included in *References* in the manuscript. Include in reference citations in the text of the manuscript the name of the author of the work cited, the date of the work, and when quoting, the page numbers on which the materials that you are quoting originally appeared, e.g., (Jones, 1982, pp. 235-238).

## Acknowledgments

Identify colleagues who contributed to the study and assisted you in the writing process.

## Author

Type the title of the article and the author's name on a separate page to ensure anonymity in the review process. Prepare an autobiographical note indicating: full name, position, department, institution, mailing address, and specialization(s). Example follows:

JANE C. DOE, Assistant Professor, Foreign Language Education, University of America, 226 N. Madison St., Madison, WI 55306. Specializations: foreign language acquisition, curriculum studies.

## Review Article

It should describe, discuss, and evaluate several publications that fall into a topical category in foreign language education. The relative significance of the publications in the context of teaching realms should be pointed out. A review article should be 15 to 20 double-spaced pages.

## Review

Submit reviews of textbooks, scholarly works on foreign language education, dictionaries, tests, computer software, video tapes, and other non-print materials. Point out both positive and negative aspects of the work(s) being considered. In the three to five double-spaced pages of the manuscript, give a clear but brief statement of the work's content and a critical assessment of its contribution to the profession. Keep quotations short. Do not send reviews that are merely descriptive.

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### **Specifications for Manuscripts**

All editorial correspondence, including manuscripts for publication should be sent to:

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Manuscripts should be typed on one side only on 8-1/2 x 11 inch paper, double-spaced, with ample margins. Subheadings should be used at reasonable intervals. Typescripts should typically run from 10 to 30 pages.

All material submitted for publication should conform to the style of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th Ed., 1994) available from the American Psychological Association, P. O. Box 2710, Hyattsville, MD 20784.

### **Review Process**

Manuscripts will be acknowledged by the editor upon receipt and subsequently sent to at least two reviewers whose area of expertise includes the subject of the manuscript. *Applied Language Learning* uses the blind review system. The names of reviewers will be published in the journal annually.

### **Specifications E-mail**

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## *Notes*

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