Proceedings of the Fifth Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture

“New Techniques and Technologies for the International Classroom”

John Cabot University, Rome, Italy

1-2 December 2006

Director: Dr. Bruce C. Swaffield, School of Communication & the Arts
Regent University, Virginia Beach, USA
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The papers contained in the proceedings were selected in a juried review for special presentation at the Forum. The manuscripts included herein have not been modified or altered, other than to conform to certain formatting as required by the editorial committee. It is the expectation of the organization that each paper should reflect the language, tone, style and diction of the individual presenter.

For more detailed information on the journal or the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, please contact Bruce C. Swaffield, Founder and Director, at brucswa@regent.edu

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Scholars from more than 15 countries will participate in the Fifth Annual Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture in Rome, Italy, to discuss international and multicultural issues related to education. The theme of this year’s Forum is “New Techniques and Technologies for the International Classroom.” The program will include diverse sessions – both formal presentations and roundtable discussions – in order to stimulate discussion on critical topics. The primary focus of this unique congress is to allow teachers, researchers, scholars and business leaders a venue in which to discuss innovative and unique ways of advancing education, communication and culture among all nations. Some presentations may be given in different languages, but an English translation will be offered.

Creating new methodologies for interaction among counties is critical for individuals, communities and government organizations in this growing age of globalization and technology. Those attending the Forum will be encouraged to share their work, formal research and ideas with others who have a common concern for expanding educational and cultural opportunities for all people. Discussions and presentations will focus on the following areas:

- Training in foreign languages
- Multicultural approaches to education
- Understanding world religions
- Humanities in an age of technology
- Teacher training and certification
- Expanding the professions and sciences
- Communicating through new media
- Designing improved educational systems
- Teaching civic and community responsibility

A complete manuscript of all sessions – with papers written by those in attendance but not presenting – will be published online immediately following the Forum.

The cost of registration is $145 per person. Discounted lodging will be available at small hotels near John Cabot University in the Trastevere district of Rome. For more information or a registration form, please contact Conference Director Dr. Bruce C. Swaffield, of Regent University (Virginia Beach, VA), at: brucswa@regent.edu

Deadline for registration and payment of fees is September 1, 2006.
Friday 1 December 2006

9:00-9:45 Welcome and Opening Ceremonies

Dr. Franco Pavoncello, JCU President
Distinguished Delegate, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei
Mr. Gian Carlo D’Ascenzi, International Artist and Painter
Dr. Rose Lee Hayden, President, Worldviews Multimedia
Dr. Bruce C. Swaffield, Director, Worldwide Forum

10:00-11:00 “Experiential based spirituality?” Louis Silverstein, Chicago

“The role of music and folklore in the reconstruction of racial identity in the multicultural classroom,” Sally H. Michael, Egypt

“An ethnographic inquiry investigating the interaction of shyness within Chinese culture,” Michelle Zuckerman-Parker, Germany

11:10-12:15 “The latest technology, innovative methodology and plenty of warmth,” Carla Gómez Monroy, Mexico

“The dim and distant past teaches us about the present via the Internet,” Rocsana Radulescu, Romania

“Internet as an education medium of media literacy: Internet literacy in Turkey and the digital divide,” Pinar Seden Meral, Turkey

Lunch for participants at Miraggio Restaurant

2:15-3:15 “Leading beyond borders: preparing the next generation of higher education leaders,” Gwen Lee-Thomas, Virginia, and J. L. Kemp, Illinois

“Linking study tours of India and China to the primary classroom in multicultural Australia,” Penelope Rae Johnstone, Australia

“Language center networking in tertiary education in Europe,” Nora Liassis, Cyprus


“Expanding the profession – industry placement for teachers,” Annamarie Schuller and Roberto Bergami, Australia

“Culture in the foreign language business classroom,” Joan Manghisi and U. Theresa Zmurkewycz, Philadelphia

4:35-6:00 “A comparison of the adaptation of ideas and methods of working with young children from the Reggio Emilia, Italy approach to two programs in the United States,” Elizabeth Landerholm, Cynthia Gehrie and Carol Kennel Aymar, Chicago
“Quality of teacher training: motivation, commitment, performance – a case study in the TNRC,” Zuhal Cafoglu and Nuray Olukcu-Borovsky, **North Cyprus**

“Teacher training: pre-service teachers as reflective practitioners,” Danuta Gabryś-Barker, **Poland**

“How is communication education different from the others? An empirical research,” Asli Kotaman, **Turkey**

**Saturday 2 December 2006**

8:30-9:30 "The necessity of studying speech behaviour stereotypes which determine and influence communication," Maria Desyatova, **Russia**

“Service learning in the blogosphere: A Filipino/American experience,” Beth Jorgensen, **Iowa**

"Helping international students from outside the Arabic Gulf region adjust to living and studying in an Islamic and Arabic environment,” Dale Taylor, **United Arab Emirates**

9:40-10:40 “Child refugees in the 20th Century: Teaching civic and community responsibility in the 21st,” Iris Guske, **Germany**

“The influence of globalisation of higher education on the professional training of Rehabilitation Counsellors in Sydney,” Lynda R. Matthews, **Australia**

“Cyber writing: Biliteracy in the ‘zone of proximal development’,” Sandra Liliana Pucci and Zaida A. Cintrón, **Chicago**

10:50-11:50 “Globalization, technology, and the question of identity,” Maria Assif and Jocelyn Ladner-Mathis, **Chicago**

“When the media is the classroom, humanities are the media: Using the media and technology to support the argument in favor of (foreign) language teaching,” Annalisa Mosca, **Florida**

“Designing organizational culture courses: A framework,” M.C. Lewis McAnally Salas and Ma. Del Refugio Navarro Hernández, **Mexico**

12:00–12:30 “HIV/AIDS, writing and global empathy,” Audrey Elisa Kerr, **Connecticut**

Lunch for participants at Miraggio Restaurant

2:30-3:30 “Experienced and inexperienced English teachers’ perceptions on classroom management in Turkey,” Ebru Melek KOG, **Turkey**

“Defining a curriculum for LSP teaching: A syntax-orientated approach,” Carolin Patzelt, **Germany**

“Sine Qua Non to make ESP classroom adequate,” Kadisha T. Ospanova, **Kazakhstan**
3:30-4:00 Coffee break

4:00-5:30 “Race, ethnicity and the news: Sensitizing young journalists to representations of differences,” Frank Harris III, Connecticut

“Where can you study cinema? Academies, faculties or in the center of the industry?” Âlâ Sivas, Turkey

“Expanding the business studies curriculum through industry links,” Roberto Bergami, Australia

“Reconfiguring the humanities in an age of digital media at Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden,” Danuta Fjellestad and Maria Engberg, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden (Presentation will be delivered by Lissa Holloway-Attaway, Director of Literature Culture and Digital Media program, and Frederick Young)

“Re-exploring the idea of a university: What do we mean by ‘higher’ education?” Bruce C. Swaffield, Virginia

Manuscripts of presentations made at the Fifth Worldwide Forum begin on the next page.
Expanding the business studies curriculum through industry links

Roberto Bergami, Lecturer and Associate Researcher, School of Applied Economics, Institute for Community Engagement and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia

Abstract

Recent trends in business studies teaching have tended to incorporate some form of industry involvement and partnership into subject curricula, under the aegis of community engagement. The advantages of such engagement, managed from an educational perspective, rather than a commercial one, are many, including:

• the exposure of students to the organisational unit, about which little, if any, was previously known,
• the ability of students to learn the organisational unit’s “fit” into the business processes they have learned about through theoretical study,
• the practical impact of the organisation’s role on international business processes,
• the role model provided by the organisational unit in the discharge of its duties,
• the role model provided by the speaker to the students.

The paper focuses on the development of a collaborative partnership between an Australian government body and Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. The outcome of this collaboration was the successful participation of that body into the teaching program of an undergraduate business subject (Finance of International Trade - BEO3417), that concentrates on export and import business transactions. The specialist speaker was a qualified trainer from the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS). The external teaching contribution was followed up by an internal assessment, consisting of a multiple choice test, that was incorporated into the subject requirements. Successful completion of the test enabled students to receive a Quarantine Awareness Certificate.

The paper describes the importance of selecting a relevant external organisation and the benefits such an initiative can bring to enhance student learning.

Introduction

Our workplaces have changed dramatically over the past three decades, with a generalised global shift away from manufacturing based employment towards more service oriented job roles, that “can be classed as professional or highly skilled” (Field 2002, p. 71).

We live in an age of immediacy, with the expectation that things should happen now and not later. The business cycle is shortening, thanks to the automation of processes and the revolution in communication. The job role is changing with the emphasis on “greater individual responsibility and autonomy” (Field 2002, p. 69), not only in the services sector, but also in the manufacturing areas.
It is generally accepted that nowadays employees are expected to be more adaptable and flexible in their job roles and that the traditional “job for life” notion has instead been replaced by several career and employer changes during the normal course of contemporary working life. This situation has been aided by the irresistible forces of globalisation experienced through a web of international agreements that have led to the opening up of economies, the design and implementation of new government policies, and the reaction of the firm to the changing marketplace, all of which have led to a restructuring the workplace environment.

In the case of new workforce entrants, given that prior industrial experience is usually lacking, the requirement is for graduates to possess relevant and up-to-date skills that enable them to quickly become an economic asset to the organisation.

Against this backdrop, universities have been under pressure to shift their education focus and include more practical elements in their curriculum. As educational institutions form part of a hierarchical system that begins with the student and expands to the community (Biggs 1991), then external engagement would seem to be a desirable inclusion.

This paper describes a unique approach used to incorporate industry involvement in an undergraduate business subject: Finance of International Trade (BEO 3417) at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. The paper will outline the rationale, implementation process and benefits resulting from the decision to expand the curriculum through industry involvement and thereby developing community engagement.

The subject ‘fit and purpose’ in the undergraduate degree

The Bachelor of Business programs on offer at Victoria University currently comprise 24 subjects, typically studied full time in a three year cycle, as detailed below:
- eight compulsory core subjects,
- six compulsory specialisation and two compulsory support subjects, and
- eight elective subjects

BEO 3417 is a specialisation subject within the International Trade and Global Logistics & Transport study themes. Outside these study themes, the subject is available to students as part of their choice of electives. Enrolments in this subject have averaged approximately 100 students per semester over the past decade.

BEO 3417’s focus is on international trade practices, where the theories of trade studied in other subjects are supplemented with new material and the teaching and learning is conducted in an environment that mimics real-life situations and challenges through carefully developed assessment tools that focus on problem based learning. This subject aims to equip students with industry specific knowledge and skills that enable them to successfully conduct an international trade transaction from price quotation through to contract formation and execution; assembly and booking of cargo space for international carriage; export/import clearance; cargo insurance; banking matters including exchange rate exposure and management, and payment documentation.

Crucial to the student’s learning, for future employability prospects in the international trade and logistics fields, are the concepts and practices surrounding the complex web of border control activities for international trade movements, particularly in respect of
government agencies such as the Australian Customs Service (ACS) and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

Post the events of 9/11, the ACS entered a new phase, that placed cargo security and control on the main stage of international customs operations through a dogmatic approach to compliance, backed by punitive domestic legislation. The focus of AQIS is the protection of Australia’s ‘clean and green’ image through a number of internationally accepted measures designed to prevent the incursion of exotic pests and diseases that could have devastating effects on a predominantly primary producing country. Although the ACS and AQIS have an excellent and close working relationship, historically it has always been comparatively more difficult for AQIS to discharge its duties because of its legislative base, past ‘soft’ offender punishment regimes, a low community profile, and the breadth of potential pests and diseases that presents many more challenges than the interception of contraband. As “AQIS is Australia's first line of defence, protecting our unique environment against exotic pests and diseases” (Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service 2006), it has to be active at three distinct stages of the international trade cycle: pre-border, border and post-border, that make up the “continuum of quarantine” (Nairn et al. 1996, p. 6), and the difficulties AQIS faces are not to be understated.

The selection of external contributors

Educational policies may well be very public documents, but what goes on in the classroom is usually private. Therefore it is largely the decision of the content expert, the subject leader, as to how and which refinements are made to the micro content of any subject. Along with this level of autonomy there is also a commensurate responsibility to do ‘what is right’ for the students, and this is not to be taken lightly, because content can effectively foster learning.

The inclusion of external input therefore needed to be technically relevant to the subject, within a pedagogical context, and designed to increase student awareness and knowledge of particular areas of business practices. There was also a desire to make this learning engagement a catalyst for the development of longer term relationships that may lead to the development of a community of practice.

In using the term community, we do not imply some primordial culture-sharing entity. We assume that members have different interests, make diverse contributions to activity, and hold varied viewpoints. In our view, participation at multiple levels is entailed in membership in a community of practice. Nor does the term community imply necessarily co-presence, a well-defined, identifiable group, or socially visible boundaries. It does imply that participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and for their communities (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 98).

In considering the definition provided above, the community of practice appears to have the right characteristics. It would be comprised of three categories: the students, the university and the external party. Whilst the university and the external parties may be considered to be ‘permanent’ members, the student cohort will be in a state of continuous flux, as these members move through the subject and eventually leave the university. Yet, they do not
necessarily lose the influence of the community of practice – this would be particularly so if students embarked on international trade or logistics careers. It was largely because of the above considerations that AQIS was approached and asked to collaborate in this project. AQIS were chosen because “quarantine touches every member of the Australian community either directly or indirectly” (Nairn et al. 1996, p. 4), and consequently AQIS strongly regard quarantine as a shared responsibility between themselves and the wider community.

**Content development, assessment and delivery**

The approach taken to include AQIS into the curriculum is consistent with the notion of the situated learning framework that stresses the importance of collaborative learning experiences … The teacher is no longer the deliverer of the knowledge, but rather a contributor to the construction of knowledge (Schlager, Poirier & Means 1996, p. 247).

A series of meetings ensued, prior to any formal classroom contact, to develop and agree on the pedagogical content and the method of delivery. This was a crucial step because students needed to be exposed to the underpinning theories of the WTO agreements (in particular the SPS Agreement) and how these were operationalised by AQIS to ensure compliance. For the students, this represented an effective demonstration of ‘putting the theory into practice’. At the end of the process, relevant suitable material was developed by AQIS for the university’s specific purpose and AQIS also generously agreed to make one of their senior training officers available to deliver the material to the students on the university campus. There was a keen desire to have an AQIS officer involved because this was seen as a way of “more rapidly diffuse practices” (Allee 2000, p. 8). It is generally accepted that there is a time gap between current practices and the teaching of those practices in the classroom. This is just a function of knowledge-transfer time, from industry through the teacher, to the student. The provision of the AQIS officer shortens the information transfer cycle, but importantly it also additionally provides a first-hand expert reference source to students. No matter how good a full time teacher might be, they could never hope to be as up-to-date as the practitioner in a specialist field, unless they were concurrently practicing in it that field themselves.

Adjustments to the subject content and assessment were made to reflect the AQIS input. The assessment was reworked, to include a small (5%) multiple choice test, scheduled three weeks after the lecture, and specifically dealing with quarantine matters. The decision to make this change stemmed from the desire to give validity to this process and also to create a perception in students’ minds that this was an important topic.

The delivery of the material to students was completed in two stages. Firstly the AQIS training officer facilitated a two hour lecture on the topic. Although the student cohort’s direct exposure to the AQIS officer was limited, it is nevertheless “legitimate peripheral participation …the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice” (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 29).

Secondly, the lecture was supplemented with additional reading material, provided to the students on-line. The lecture and the additional on-line material became the core resources for
the test. Students who successfully completed the test were issued with a non-award “Quarantine Awareness Certificate”.

The benefits

Through the involvement of AQIS into the curriculum, a number of benefits were derived from this peripheral community based learning experience, including the following:

- Increased awareness of AQIS by a cohort of students that previously knew little, if anything, about the important role carried out by this government agency. Yet a thorough knowledge and understanding of AQIS and its functions are critical to any future employment prospect in the international trade and logistics industries. The increase in knowledge gained by the student cohort has a ‘domino’ effect on the wider community. Anecdotal evidence suggested that students were unconsciously ‘spreading the quarantine message’ outside the university. Comments like “I went home and started talking about this quarantine stuff to my parents”, were a testament to the impact resulting from this type of exposure to industry.
- The impact of AQIS on international trade transactions, as a result of the unique quarantine requirements in Australia. The explanations of the operational processes provide a direct link between the underpinning theories of international obligations that Australia has subscribed to, by virtue of the WTO membership, and their practical implementations and their subsequent effects on government policies.
- The role model provided by AQIS in the discharge of its duties. Each organisation has its own culture – “the way we do things around here” (Chorn 2004, p. 15). Students are able to observe first hand aspects of the AQIS culture in the discharge of their obligations, and these observations become participation as way of learning – of both absorbing and being absorbed in – “the culture of practice”. An extended period of legitimate peripherality provides learners with opportunities to make the culture of practice theirs (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 95).

Indeed one of the basic presumptions is that students will enter the workforce in roles that have an AQIS interface, and therefore the understanding of the culture of practice will be enhanced over time. Additionally AQIS is not just the regulator, but also a prospective employer, and this type of involvement may provide students with career considerations not previously contemplated.
- The role model provided by the AQIS officer. There is a breaking down of the perceived authoritarian barrier in the classroom. This is an important aspect of the student experience because this shows an expectation of the calibre of professionalism and competence expected by employees of AQIS. This is likely to influence some students in their career aspirations choice. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a number of students have in fact pursued opportunities with AQIS in their Graduate Program. They openly attest to the fact that they would have never contemplated such a move before their exposure at university.

There are two additional benefits to AQIS from this engagement with university students. The first is that this engagement provides AQIS with an opportunity to witness first hand the calibre of students that will be the next entrants to the workforce. The second is that AQIS is able to ‘induct’ students into a particular way of thinking about quarantine
problems, because these are largely ‘minds untainted by less than desirable business practices’. In other words, these are individuals without prior exposure and therefore no prior ‘bad habits’. The opportunity therefore exists to positively influence thinking to the benefit of AQIS, and ultimately the community at large.

**Conclusion**

You foster communities of practice; you don’t create them. Nurturing healthy communities is more like tending a garden than building an engine—they thrive on the personal energies and relationships of members (Wenger & Snyder 2004).

The idea to create links with AQIS was to provide a win-win situation for all parties involved in the formation of a community of practice centred on quarantine practices. Thus AQIS, the university, the students, and teaching staff all benefit from this association. The engagement may only be temporary for any one student cohort, whereas there is real potential for the development of longer term relationships between the organisations: AQIS and the university. These symbiotic relationships are the fruit of personal individual efforts by the respective educators, who, in sharing resources and engaging in a direct dialogue are able to better appreciate each other’s needs and challenges, and strive to find mutually beneficial solutions through the development of a community of practice.

**References**


Chorn, N 2004, *Strategic Alignment: how to manage business leadership, the commercial environment and organisational culture for strategic success* Richmond Ventures Pty Ltd., Sydney, NSW, Australia.


Expanding the profession – industry placement for teachers

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Abstract

Portable skills are in high demand in the modern day business environments and there is increasing pressure for new entrants to the workforce to possess a range of knowledge that enables individuals to be “work ready”.

The requirement to be work ready is particularly relevant to post secondary school leavers, who having undertaken a vocational course of study to further enhance their chances for employment, face challenges in entering the job market, as the employers’ expectation is for them to have current knowledge. The work ready skills inherently require students to be up-skilled with modern day practices and knowledge of contemporary issues.

The challenge for teachers is the ability to provide such timely knowledge by incorporating up-to-date practices into the study curriculum. Teachers can only successfully meet this challenge where they also have knowledge of contemporary market place practices. Such knowledge is rarely gained through the study of literature. It is commonly accepted that theory stems from practice and if teachers are meant to be skilling students with practical skills, then logically there will be a time lag between practice and the development of theories to support such practices.

Regular industry placements may be a means by which teachers can acquire knowledge of contemporary practices. Such placements allow teachers to bring back to the classroom valuable lessons for students and enable the imparting of knowledge on a more up-to-date basis.

Through a specifically developed model, this paper highlights the benefits of industry placements, concluding that this type of professional development benefits not only teachers, but students and employers alike.
Introduction

This paper considers the issues associated with industry placement for teachers and the associated challenges and benefits such experience can provide to the various stakeholders involved. A summary of the major educational reforms that have taken place in Australia over the past ten years is provided, together with an overview of the current framework of Australia’s vocational education and training (VET) system and the link/influence that industry currently enjoys in the creation of the curriculum.

The challenges and benefits of industry placement for teachers are discussed in the context of curriculum development and design. The notion of the development of long-term communities of practice is also explored in the same context. This paper provides a conceptual model that highlights the possible benefits that may be derived from teacher placement in industry and argues that these benefits far outweigh any costs and limitations.

The current structure of post secondary education in Australia

There are a number of educational choices in Australia that may be pursued beyond secondary education, as follows:

- **Vocational Education and Training**

  The VET sector is dominated by the publicly funded national Technical and Further Education institutes (TAFE), with “three out of every four students” enrolling in its courses (Keating 2006). The majority of its courses are industry competency based and are governed through a central ‘national training package’ framework that ensures their equivalence of content and delivery across Australia. Courses range from Certificate to Advanced Diploma level, are usually developed in response to a wide range of industrial needs, may be delivered in-house, and are capable of being articulated into the University - Higher Education (HE) sector.

- **Universities (Higher Education)**

  Australian universities are publicly funded (with the exception of two private organisations) and are self-accrediting insofar as educational programs are concerned. University courses typically provide a more liberal style of education at undergraduate and post graduate degree levels. These qualifications usually provide advanced entry into the professional occupations. There are a number of dual sector institutions that offer both TAFE and HE programs, although the two are separately administered and their funding and pedagogical content and approach are quite different.

- **Private Registered Training Organisations (RTO)**

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1 The most generally accepted definition for CBT is that put forward by the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee in 1992: “CBT is training geared to the attainment and demonstration of skills to meet industry-specified standards rather than to an individual’s achievement relative to that of others in a group” (National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd. 1999, p. 2)
These organisations may offer VET programs, but typically are more selective in their offering. RTO’s are a commercial entity driven by profit motives and typically provide classroom and in-house programs tailored to particular industry sectors and clients.

- **Industry**

Some of the larger industrial organisations are privately registered RTOs, offering in-house VET programs to staff. These programs are in response to the organisational requirements. Staff career development is encouraged through the completion of these courses. It is possible for these programs to articulate into the HE sector.

- **Not-for-profit organisations**

A number of not-for-profit organisations, mainly in the social services sector are also RTOs in their own right. They tend to concentrate on the provision of re-skilling programs for the disadvantaged/unemployed groups within the community. These organisations enjoy a degree of government funding. Their programs generally sit at the lower end of the national training qualifications structure and are therefore unlikely to be suitable for articulation into HE.

In order to contextualise the TAFE system, it is important to understand the historical background of VET.

**A brief history of Australia’s VET ‘reforms’**

VET was firstly conceived between the 1940’s and the 1970’s as “training in technique for the trades” and “embedded in the industrial relations landscape, not the education sector” (Schofield 2001, p. 21). In 1974, as a result of the Report of the Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education (commonly referred to as the Kangan Report, after its chairman, Mayer Kangan), the modern Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system was instituted. This system provided a “distinct education sector serving both individual and manpower needs (Anderson, Clemens, Farrell, , and Seddon 2001, p.27) enabling the VET system to be recognised as being “an integral part of tertiary education” (Schofield 2001, p. 21).

The beginning of the current VET reforms can probably be traced back to the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) policy initiatives of the 1980s. The NTRA sought to achieve a more equitable outcome for disadvantaged groups, and a desire to create a more inclusive VET system (Taylor et al. 1997). As Australia’s economic performance deteriorated, micro-economic reform was stimulated by industry and government alike. This resulted in a landmark report Australia Reconstructed (1987), that provided the impetus for further reforms to the VET sector over the next fifteen years, to address industry’s labour-market demands in an increasingly challenging and competitive marketplace.

In Australia, the competency based training (CBT) system has been much of the focus since the 1990’s. Several reports were instrumental in influencing the direction of vocational education.

The Finn Report (1991) emphasised the need for integration of both “general and vocational education and of work and training, underpinned by a number of ‘key competencies’
necessary” (Taylor et al. 1997, p. 107) for work, education and adult life and advocated articulation across all sectors.

In the Carmichael Report (1992), the Employment and Skills Formation Council noted that:

….CBT is a move away from a culture of failure, where some are stigmatised as failures, to a training culture in which each and every individual is challenged to meet or exceed specified standards of performance (Seddon 1992, p. 7).

The Mayer Report (1992) findings identified key generic and vocational competencies required by industry, ultimately resulting in the establishment of nationally recognised VET education standards under the auspices of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) (Taylor et al. 1997). The creation of ANTA “legitimised and facilitated industry leadership in the VET system by having industry organising and maintaining its involvement in all levels of decision-making” (Billet 2004, p. 17) using a highly centralised framework.

It is argued that the current national training agenda, with a pre-occupation for narrowly framed, competency based and industry specific skills “takes attention away from the ‘working knowledges that are necessary in every occupation and every community’” (Anderson 1999, p. 29). This is the result of the governments’ policies of ‘corporatising’ educational institutions - because ‘education is business’ - as well as through the ‘industrialisation’ of the curriculum. The increased influence gained by industry has, in some sense, hijacked the educational agenda in the VET sector, and it would appear that training rather than education is well suited to today’s immediate needs for job readiness (Billet 2004). The curriculum was developed with minimal, if any, collaboration with teachers, resulting in the provision of a CBT system that caters for today’s training and not tomorrow’s thinking. This issue has already been recognised by industry associations in Australia:

What may be relevant to an enterprise’s skill needs today may have no bearing on that same enterprises’ skill needs in five year’s time (Australian Industry Group and Engineering Employers Association of South Australia 2003, p. 19).

Given these concerns, teachers need to reassert themselves as influencers in curriculum design and content to ensure that education, not just training is offered to students, and that education must be for the long term. In the current political climate that largely favours industry and ignores teachers, one way to achieve influence may well be through industry placements for teachers.

A conceptual model describing the process of possible influencing factors derived from teacher industry placement is shown at Figure 1.
There are a number of factors that can influence curriculum content and development from the Schuller-Bergami Model (SBM).

1. **Teacher’s current industry knowledge**

   The teacher must possess technical knowledge and an ability to impart such knowledge to the students. Industry placement provides such opportunities. The length of industry placement is an important consideration because “true learning often proceeds slowly” (Gela 2004, p. 8) and it takes some time to fully understand and appreciate a particular industry’s ‘culture’. There are funding and workload considerations for the relevant stakeholders: teachers, educational organisations and industry, and for this concept to succeed these should be viewed in terms of an investment in the future rather than an expense of today.

   When the teacher is equipped with latest knowledge on industrial processes he is better placed to make sound educational judgements and suggestions about the inclusion or the exclusion of particular content in a program. The teacher could therefore exert his influence in shaping future curriculum content.

2. **Testing of existing theories against the industry placement experience**
A teacher brings prior knowledge to the placement. This may be a result of prior studies, or prior industrial experience, or both. It is unlikely that the teacher will have had the opportunity to keep up-to-date with the progress of industrial processes and, in this sense, the placement may be regarded as a professional ‘refresher’. However it is more than this, as the teacher will be able to observe and reflect on the industrial processes experienced during the placement, and evaluate these against his prior theoretical and practical knowledge. The purpose of this comparison should lead the teacher to reflect on the application of the theories and an identification of any gaps that might exist. This may also lead to the formation of new theories that should be capable of being incorporated in future curriculum development.

3. **Influence on classroom teaching**

The placement experience will provide the teacher with a greater repertoire of ideas and examples to illustrate the theories that underpin industrial processes. The teacher is able to provide real life examples to inform students of the latest practices, industry trends and industry specific employee skills requirements. Quite apart from the resources/benefits that industry and teachers may mutually experience, the

“knowledge of a company’s management techniques, of marketing, financial management, the chance to develop curriculum materials and laying the foundation for a link with a local firm are just a few positive spin-offs” (Meadon 1990, p. 28).

There is a call upon teachers to become ‘boundary riders’ (Wickert 2005, p. 13). These are the teachers who see the new opportunities and throw themselves into creating more collaborative initiatives with those who work at the policy level. Industry placement is then a strategy that may be used to influence curriculum development by including the teacher’s voice in the process.

4. **Development of communities of practice**

The teacher can be an agent of change and influence, and he can do so by being a catalyst for the development of communities of practice among the stakeholders. The stakeholders of the industry placement were identified earlier as being the teacher, the educational institution and industry. There is of course one very important stakeholder that needs to be added to this equation, that is, the student.

A community of practice has been defined basically as a group of individuals who share a common interest in their activities within a community (Lave & Wenger 1991). This definition of community of practice allows for participation at various levels. For this community to be successful though, its membership must have a degree of commitment and behave in a mutually respectful and trusting manner (Mittendorf et al. 2006, p. 300). Based on these notions, it is possible for the teacher to develop industry participation in the classroom. Invited speakers can be brought to the classroom to pedagogically engage with the students. This enables students to be directly exposed to the industrial environment they may face upon entering the workforce. It is acknowledged that such exposure is limited, but nevertheless this falls into the concept of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ through “increased access of learners to participating roles in expert
performances” (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 17). The invited speaker, the expert performer, provides a role-model to the students. The classroom interaction provides industry with an opportunity to scout for new talent. This symbiotic relationship creates a ‘win-win opportunity’.

In relation to curriculum development and participation, it is possible for the teacher to learn and observe first hand what the employee skill requirements are. These can be compared with the current curriculum to see where improvements may be desirable. A pedagogy that provides long-term core generic skills and knowledge, enabling students to effectively engage in the workplace, and solve problems beyond the immediate ‘train for today’ approach is needed. This requires a departure from the CBT approach, as industry has already indicated that

“the generic component of VET in schools [and implicitly TAFE] should provide underpinning skills and knowledge for life-learning in an ever changing work environment”. (Australian Industry Group and Engineering Employers Association of South Australia 2003, p. 29)

Government educational policy nowadays is mostly influenced by “dominant ideas of the day” (Gonczi 1998, p. 137), that is, the input from the larger organisations – the participants to this process. The voice of teachers and the community generally appears to be absent from discussions related to educational reform. This is a pity because it is the teacher who expands the student’s knowledge base through the classroom. The teacher is expected to work with material that has largely been imposed by ‘remote control’ administration, and often, this material has been found pedagogically wanting and unable to deliver on the required skills for future employment. If the teacher was able to influence industry’s agenda, then the curriculum should be capable of change for the benefit of students and the community at large.

Conclusion

Education, not just ‘training’, is as important as ever towards building a more knowledgeable society. The teacher, being at the core of the process, should be allowed to educationally transform future generations based on a ‘holistic’ and not a short-term narrowly-based CBT approach. It is curious to note that the current system places industry at the helm of educational imperatives, but industry itself is not an educator. The modern day teacher needs to embrace the changing world of education.

To ensure relevance of learning programs and generate understanding between industry and educators, strategic alliances will need to be strengthened and built. Educators need to understand how the workplace skill needs continually change, industry needs to understand the school environment and what can realistically be achieved in supporting the skills formation needs of the workplace (Australian Industry Group and Engineering Employers Association of South Australia 2003, p. 1).

The development of communities of practice through industry placement for teachers provide an opportunity for educators and industrialists to better understand each other’s needs and challenges, and ensure that educational content is both relevant and appropriate to equip students entering the workforce.
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Globalization, Technology and the Question of Identity

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“With adequate social opportunities, individuals can effectively shape their own destiny and help each other. They need not be seen primarily as passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programs. There is indeed a strong rationale for recognizing the positive role of free and sustainable agency-and even of constructive impatience.” Amartya Sen in Development as Freedom, 2000.

Introduction/Overview: Truman College (one of City Colleges of Chicago):

History

The origins of Harry S Truman College go back to 1956 when, in response to community interest in a public two-year college for the northeast section of the city, an evening college was opened at Amundsen High School. By 1961, this successful undertaking had moved to a former Chicago elementary school and was renamed Mayfair College, offering both day and evening classes to 4,000 students. Demand for large, more up-to-date quarters resulted in the construction of a new campus in the heart of Chicago's historic Uptown neighborhood, a location that serves the needs of a new population and is convenient to public transportation. The College was named after Harry S Truman, the nation's 33rd president, a lifelong advocate for public higher education.

When Truman College opened its doors in 1976, the residents of the community wanted to ensure their access to this new institution. The same week the college opened, members of the community completed a mural directly facing the campus which denoted that, "This College must be for everyone." The message of the mural has always been, and continues to be, the philosophy of Truman College.

In 1995, more than 4,500 students were enrolled in the college's credit program. Another 30,000 plus students were enrolled in Truman's Adult Education, Continuing Education, Truman Technical Center, Lakeview Learning Center, and Truman Middle College (alternative high school) programs combined.

Developmental Integrated Courses (Integrated Communications 99 and Integrated Communications 100) aka Basic Reading and Writing:
(a) Theoretical Background:
These two six-hour courses were developed in response to a two-fold need (both departmental and discipline-centered), and that is to provide a mode of instruction that fuses writing and reading for students who scored a 3 out 5 (for 99) and a 4 out of 5 (for 100) in the College placement test in addition to 50 points or higher in the Reading Exam. This mode of instruction is not new. It has been widely applied since the late seventies with the revolutionary book of Mina P. Shaughnessy, *Errors and Expectations*, the pilot program of Anthony Petrosky at the University of Pittsburgh, and the works of psycholinguists, such as Stotsky, Sternglass, and Petrosky. This significant body of research has one major common point: highlighting the connections between the two activities, treating reading and writing as similar composing processes for making meaning, and re-defining comprehension in terms of the processing of syntax, where general fluency and comprehension can be developed and are related to the writing process itself, both literally and figuratively.

(b) In the Context of Globalization
In this era of globalization, Chicago, Illinois, has become a global urban center of approximately 3.0 million people. Once described as a major industrial area, the rust belt, it now boasts the ownership of a knowledge-based society. However, this new economy has created a two-tier system in urban areas such as Chicago: highly paid professionals and lowly paid routine-service positions, which require little or no higher education. According to Robert Reich, in his article “Why the Rich are Getting Richer and the Poor Poorer,” only high paid educated professionals will rise to the top leaving routine production and personal services jobs to sink. In other words, there are those who will either swim or sink. Coupled with this economic divergence, urban youth are struggling to find a sense of identity in a society where the rate of students who drop out of high school is high; where teen pregnancy and the spread of STDs is still high, despite a national decrease; where minority males are incarcerated; and where they live in poverty-stricken areas, which translates to a low quality education. These urban youth have been identified as “at-risk” students in the classroom. The editors of *Educating At-Risk Students: the One hundred and first Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 2*, Sam Stringfield and Deborah Land, assert:

The disproportionate risk for educational failure threatens both the ideals and the economic base of our society. Less well-educated people are significantly less likely to become active and productive participants in our democratic institutions. They are less likely to vote, less likely to assume leadership in many of our cherished institutions, more likely to appear on welfare roles, and more likely to serve time in prison. Economically, the failure of many students to achieve academically is particularly vexing as we move into a global information economy that requires a more educated workforce. (vii)

These so-called “at-risk” students deserve a sense of agency, as Amartya Sen argues “... as someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives ...” (19). Hersh Waxman, et al in “Resiliency Among Students At Risk of Academic Failure,” conclude that “resilient children typically display at least four attributes or personal characteristics, including social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and a sense of purpose” (29). As educators, we must recognize the need for inclusion of this vigorous and resilient youth in this “new” world.
INTGCOMM 99 & 100: Escaping the Stigma/Embracing the Future:

“The first stage of Open Admissions involves openly admitting that education has failed for too many students.”


As educators of Basic Writing and Reading, we are daily confronted with existential questions about our student population, profession, and teaching circumstances:

How to develop a working situation in the classroom where students trust us (teachers)? How to help them feel a certain sense of belonging within the classroom (in relation to their classmates), the institution, and the extended community? How to help them believe in themselves and in the validity of what they read and write in relation to their own lives? How to explain the failure of a system up to that point, when they were described as “unskilled” to join their counterparts in English 101? How to protect ourselves from the draining energy of our students’ problems and our own? How to control our anger at the same students, whom we do care about, for their apparent resistance or their acceptance of mediocrity?

Ironically, what we are presenting at this conference is not, by any means, an exhaustive answer to the questions posited above. We are discussing successful instances for us, but they may be unsuitable for other teachers or other students. As simple as it may seem, it is TRUST that will help us, educators, along with our students, to prevail: trusting our teaching instincts, our creative, academic, and pedagogical abilities and, maybe more importantly, trusting our students and the power of Education.

Our purpose in this presentation is to discuss teaching practices for students who have been identified as so-called at-risk college students. Significantly, the retention rate for students who fall into this category is low in most United States’ colleges and universities. However, we accept Waxman and his colleagues’ argument of resiliency and propose specific teaching practices to harness their resiliency and apply to their other learning experiences.

Journal/Blog Writing (Professor Maria Assif):

(a) Journal:

Description: Every two weeks, the student is expected to produce three types of journals: one about the class readings, the second is about an open topic (he/she can talk about your plans for the weekend, about the news, his family, himself, etc), and the third one should be related to the final book report the student is responsible for along with two/three of his classmates (whether the oral or the written portion). Each entry should be dated, typed, introduced with an expressive title, and articulated in 80 words or more. Once the student gets the journals back (with the teacher’s comments), he needs to place them in order as part of the class portfolio.

The journal can be organized by date (week 1, week 2, etc) or by theme (open journal, class reading journal, and book report journal). At the end of the semester, the student should have 18 entries (6 entries per section) and should have produced around 1000 words at least.

The three journals should be handed to the instructor every other Monday; he/she will give them back to the student on Wednesday with general comments about the content and the development of ideas.
(b) Blog:

Description: In addition, every other week, the student is expected to write: (a) three new words he learned—as part of every week reading and discussion—and use them in meaningful sentences, (b) any spelling mistakes that he made in your written assignments plus the corrections), and (c) one grammatical pattern he learned to pinpoint in his/his classmates’ papers.

All blog entries should be written in one page, handed in to the teacher every other Monday as well, and included in the class portfolio, once the teacher’s comments are added.

Teaching Goals: This technique provides detailed feedback on:
(a) how students read, analyze, write and respond to assigned texts
(b) how they live outside the classroom and witness in their own communities and, therefore, help the teacher establish a “personal” and continuous dialogue with each student, mainly during individual conferences
(c) what is going well and what is not going well in learning groups, so that potentially destructive conflicts in groups can be discovered and defused, giving insight into the group process

Related Teaching Goals:
(d) Allow students who are not vocal in class but may prefer the written medium to express themselves and their opinions
(e) Help them to write more frequently
(f) Allow those who may be traumatized by the idea of “error” to see language outside that box and beyond the “stigma” associated with developmental writers and readers
(g) Assist students in their self-reflective writing and thinking process
(h) Help increase student retention
(i) Improve students’ typing pace.

Ideas for Adapting and Extending this model:
- Making the open journal more specific
- Adding another entry related to school activities/services
- Adding another entry about a service learning component
- Changing the frequency of the journal and the blog to once a week.
- Making the process electronic through different websites (I tried to use the electronic medium at the beginning, but it did not work. The students were more frustrated with technology and the lack of access to it).

Possible Cons and helpful tips:
- Students may try to “cheat” at the beginning of the process (not bring the journals/blogs on time, not reach 80 words per entry, not fulfill all the entries, not take the analytical part seriously, especially in relation to the reading)

---- The teacher needs to be quite strict about the procedure, especially at the beginning of the semester. He should count the words, give the students back their journals/blogs on the spot if anything is missing and let them know that they should bring the complete product the following session. It seems that after the first month, the question of discipline (bringing all the entries on time and taking time to do them) will not be a problem.
• The process is definitely time-consuming, especially when it comes to reading and commenting on each entry. The teacher needs to be ready for that commitment.

**Problem-Based Learning as a Teaching Practice**  
(Professor Jocelyn Ladner-Mathis):

Recently, while teaching an advanced writing course in the Truman College/DePaul University Bridge Program, which focuses on problem-based learning, Professor Ladner-Mathis observed how empowering this teaching method for writing and research was for the students who are adult learners, 25 years of age or older. This program is designed for Truman College students who plan to transfer to DePaul University. This teaching method requires students to identify and define a problem in their community and then create a solution, using a specific theory of change methodology, such as community asset mapping, which motivates students to use the resources or assets in their community without reaching outside their community for a solution. This course teaches interviewing skills, the use of ethnography, team participation, critical thinking skills and research skills. Once Prof. Ladner-Mathis noticed how involved the students were, she was convinced that this could apply to the developmental course she teaches, English 100, as described in the introduction of this paper. Delving further into problem solving as a method of teaching, her research led her to “Problem-Based Learning,” which began at the McMaster University Medical School over 25 years ago. “As defined by Dr. Howard Barrows and Ann Kelson of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, problem-based learning (PBL) is both a curriculum and a process. The curriculum consists of carefully selected and designed problems that demand from the learner acquisition of critical knowledge, problem solving proficiency, self-directed learning strategies, and team participation skills. The process replicates the commonly used systemic approach to resolving problems or meeting challenges that are encountered in life and career” (Problem-Based Learning Overview). Significantly, students take responsibility for their learning process in defining a problem and proposing a solution.

As described previously, English 100 is a 6 credit hour, intense writing and reading course, which meets twice a week for close to three hours each day. For the first eight to nine weeks of the course, students have to read from an extensive list of articles and essays from the McGraw-Hill Reader by Gilbert Muller, in which they develop their comprehension skills, and they are assigned 5 essays to be completed on various topics throughout the sixteen-week semester. During week eight, students begin reading There Are No Children Here, by Alex Kotlowitz, which is a moving and raw account of two African American brothers who live in the public housing projects in Chicago, Illinois, during the 1980s, the Henry Horner Homes. The two boys Pharoah and Lafeyette have to endure the violence caused by gang violence and the poverty their family experiences daily. Consequently, the children have no childhood; several of the children raised in this environment never reach their eighteenth birthday because of gang violence. Taking place in Chicago, the text instantly becomes one of high interest for the students in English 100. Some are familiar with the area, which is now going through gentrification; some of the older students even know some of the residents Kotlowitz mentions in the text.

Students make observations to determine if the same problems that existed in the 1980s in Chicago are still prevalent today: gang violence, drug addition, police corruption, police brutality, alcoholism, teen pregnancy, single parent homes, violence against women, welfare, lack education. Secondly, students choose a problem that they feel subsists in their community. After students have identified a “problem,” they divide into teams based on similar problems and begin to define the problem. To begin, they must answer the question, “What is the problem?” Once they have proven that this problem exists in a Chicago
neighborhood, they begin to construct a solution, using the steps outlined below from John Chaffee’s text *Thinking Critically*:

Step 1: What is the Problem?
- What do I know about the situation?
- What results am I aiming for in this situation?
- How Can I define the problem?

Step 2: What are the advantages?
- What are the boundaries of the problem situation?
- What alternatives are possible within these boundaries?

Step 3: What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of each alternative?
- What are the advantages of each alternative?
- What are the disadvantages of each alternative?
- What additional information do I need to evaluate each alternative?

Step 4: What is the solution?
- Which alternative(s) will I pursue?
- What steps can I take to act on the alternative(s) chosen?

Step 5: How well is the solution working?
- What is my evaluation?
- What adjustments are necessary?

After each team of students finished these steps, they present their findings to the class. The other class members evaluate each team discussing if the problem does exist and if can be solved using the solution the team has presented. Finally, each student must prepare a problem/solution essay using the information his/her group constructed, as well as the comments from the other class members.

At the end of this assignment, students were given opportunity to assess the entire experience, and most commented on the value of using the text *There Are No Children Here* as the context. They also mentioned how they enjoyed working in teams to share ideas for their presentation and for their essay. One student made the comment as to how it made him to think and to want to solve the problem of gang violence in his neighborhood. For teachers of composition and for those working with developmental writing students, this is an excellent teaching practice that builds confidence in their writing and speaking skills. Students feel empowered with these skills that will hopefully carry over to their lives inside and outside the classroom, where they can take control of their educational experiences.

In the publication *Education Pays 2004: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society*, the authors conclude that “First, education does pay. Both individuals who enroll and succeed in college and society as whole enjoy high rates of return to investments in quality higher education. Secondly, the magnitude of these benefits makes the continuing gaps in educational opportunity particularly costly.” At-risk students, who fall through the gaps, will cost our society detrimentally if we cannot provide them the educational resources, such as access to higher education, to compete in a knowledge-based economy.

Prologue:
In the practices we’ve described in this presentation, we invite students to render their experiences through a conventional form that in some ways exceeds academic norms because they depend upon knowledge and experience that writers already bring with them to the classroom. Our hope is that they can reflect upon, validate, or critique their private languages in broader, more historical or public contexts. In our view, to strive to make
such connections between private and public literacies, between specialized and general audience, is one of the most meaningful goals of a liberal arts education.

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The necessity of studying speech behavior stereotypes which influence communication

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We study languages to have possibilities to communicate with other peoples in order to understand each other and try to make the world better. A good knowledge of languages is desirable but not sufficient. Every people have their own peculiarities in speech behavior which can be defined as speech stereotypes. It’s very important to know and to follow them when communicating because these stereotypes reflect historic and cultural processes that have been taking place for ages and in fact present a lot of information about society. It’s a field of great interest and it can be researched by watching people communicate and by comparing native stereotypes with the others. In the age of globalization many people seek to keep their original ethnic identity and get abused if there is no respect to their national traditions: in this case any confrontation may occur. That’s why studying languages together with speech stereotypes is a matter of great importance and should become one of the main directions in high linguistic education.

An attempt to realize this direction has been made at the Saint Tikhon Orthodox University of Humanities.

This presentation is in fact a brief summary of a special course read for students of the romance philology department. As the main goal of studying languages is communication including the intercultural one, the course is to help a successful interethnic interaction. The concept of the course called “National and cultural peculiarities of speech behavior” is that studying languages we should learn not only their grammar structure or vocabulary but also ways of their usage. When studying one should try to know the social and cultural experience of the people-native speaker. During the course students are supposed to get a real impression of all possible peculiarities in the intercultural communication. To be a success in it they should master adequate skills of a proper speech behavior. The main tool for it is the knowledge of so called speech stereotypes typical for a certain linguistic surrounding. In this way a multicultural approach to education is applied and ethnic peculiarities are taken into
account. The course is based on linguistic, cultural, social, historic and psychological information.

If one examines speech behavior of other peoples it means one should also study carefully his/her own native stereotypes. Usually, in everyday life, nobody cares much about his/her own national peculiarities, never thinks about them. But actually first you should know and understand yourself before you are able to understand others.

The necessity of studying speech behavior is quite obvious but still a concrete routine, real life material hasn’t been enough analyzed and systemized. We don’t reflect much upon the influence of our national peculiarities on us in daily contacts and in the long run on the result of communication. The main problem here is to define the limits of the notion “speech stereotype”. What should we consider to be national in communication? What is typical and what is occasional? How do we know that we belong to a certain nation?

As a rule any of us realizes his/her ethnic identity. Any of us after a glance at another person can tell immediately without saying a single word, judging only upon appearance who it is: “alien” or “native”. Why? Actually we feel the difference which opposes “us” to “not us” and is conditioned by a certain set of features. These features are stipulated by geographic, climatic, historic, social, religious, economic and cultural factors. The central indication of an ethnic group is its own unique behavior stereotype formed under the influence of all above factors. This stereotype is changing with time, from generation to generation but its structure remains the same. It is a strictly defined standard of relationship inside a certain ethnic group.

One of the integral parts of ethnic behavior stereotype is that of speech behavior. The only available and reliable source of studying communicative behavior of an ethnic group is watching. Watching the others and watching yourself. Another step is comparison. Only by comparing various stereotypes one can identify typical features, that essential difference which makes national stereotypes. One should always remember about possible individual features conditioned by personal peculiarities of speakers and not generalize them for the whole ethnic group. Because in this way common and plain ideas of other nations are spread and they spoil communication like a presupposed negative (as a rule) background.

1) It is obvious that national character of communication agents has got a significantly influence on the character of intercultural communication. But it is very hard to define the national character. We know that it exists since one can feel it, but when we try to word it, it slips away. And instead of the essence – commonplaces or something which maybe typical for all nationalities. However, instead of such indistinctness, we shall be guided by a certain principle, if we undertake to study speech behavior – which is quite concrete phenomenon which may be observed. The opinion of the scholars, considering ethnic groups – as a fixation of typical features, which are available in different degree and different combinations with considerable quantity of individuals, seems fair.

The degree of expression, compatibility and specific way of the manifestation of these features, correlation to the general values system, depending on social economic and geographical conditions, lifestyle and religion of the people are important. Therefore, with respect to and for identification national specific things we shall base our opinion on the same principles: fixation of the mostly widely spread, typical for the majority and analysis of the cultural environment on which background communication takes place.

Thus a set of behavior models which are typical and standard for a certain ethno-cultural community in different communication situations may be considered as a stereotype. Speaking about national and cultural specific character of a speech behaviour, one may not ignore social factor, which influences communication not less, and may be even more than the national one.

No ethnical group may represent a socially homogeneous phenomena. In each ethnic group one may identify a certain amount of social groups, which may be characterized by a
number of peculiarities, including communication ones. Each social group: age, gender, economic, politic, professional etc. has its typical set of verbal and nonverbal tools for communication. Each society has a certain number of stereotypes depending on its structure and various social roles played by its members. As one and the same individual can at the same time belong to different social groups (age, professional, politic, family etc.) and have various social roles, he/she will reproduce various models of speech behavior depending on the communicative situation.

It’s important to point out that manifestation of national specific features directly depends on the social status of an individual, on his education level. The higher is the level, the less national features may be identified during the intercultural communication. Besides each social group may have its own system of values, guidelines and mentality. For example, in the Russian society the following types of mentality may be identified: Russian Orthodox, communist, capitalist, criminal and a strange conglomerate of fragments of all the above mentioned mentalities. As a result different stereotypes of speech behavior get formed in accordance to the mental targets.

Summing up the above said, we shall point out the following:

1. National and cultural peculiarities of speech behavior are stipulated by historical, geographic, economic, social, religious, and cultural factors.
2. In order to understand national communication peculiarity one should study cultural area and the cultural context of the society.
3. National and cultural peculiarities of speech behavior may be studied in two directions: either from communication to a cultural and historical situation or from a situation to a communication.
4. The unit, which conveys the peculiarity of a speech behavior, is a stereotype, i.e. a set of behavior models in different communicative situations, which are typical and common for a certain ethnic cultural group.
5. Diversity of national speech stereotype depends on the level of social differentiation of society.
6. Mastering “not native” speech stereotype shall be realized in the process of training foreign languages by means of simulation of relevant communicative situation.
7. In order to master speech stereotypes systematized approach shall be used for their description according to the proposed model:
   - In each speech stereotype one may point out two components: verbal and non-verbal.
   - The verbal component consists of two aspects: form and content.
   - The following shall be taken into account in the formal aspect: average speech rate (syllables per minute), the clearness of articulation, emotional level, the intonation of narrative, exclamatory, interrogative speech depending on situation, ways of filling pauses in a speech, frequency of deviation from a literary standard of pronunciation, possible territorial variations, selection and preferences of certain grammar forms and stylistic peculiarities.
   - The content aspect supposes an analysis of types of information, targets of communication, of choosing the strategy of behavior, evaluation of success of communication.
   - In the non-verbal component mimics and gesticulation as well as poses and their meanings should be taken into consideration.
THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN TEFL

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Abstract
This study is conducted to investigate the perceptions of teachers on particular aspects of classroom management. The data is gathered from 242 subjects who are grouped into four according to the amount of ‘teaching experience’ they have: 1) The Trainee 2) The Novice 3) The Experienced I and 4) The Experienced II groups. Observation, questionnaire and interviews are the data collection instruments which are used in the study. For the analysis of the data descriptive statistics, item analysis and correlation are used. According to the analysis all teacher groups seem to regard amount of teaching experience and planning as important factors in classroom management. However, the results indicate that teacher groups have different strategies when making a lesson plan; while inexperienced teachers prefer to make detailed written plans, the more experienced ones make plans mentally or in the format of an outline. In addition, the study reveals that the teachers who have less amount of teaching experience have more difficulty in motivating students and making them participate in the lessons actively. In addition, teacher groups have significantly different perceptions in terms of the strategies they use to persuade the students to participate in the lesson actively. It is an interesting finding that teachers in the experienced groups seem to use pair work and group work activities in the classroom more often. The results also reveal that teacher groups have different perceptions and strategies in terms of coping with the student misbehaviors especially when dealing with the students who are not interested in the lesson.

Introduction
Learning to teach ‘is a lifelong professional activity, not something that one completes in a teacher training programme’ (Tuie et al 2001). Following graduation, time is needed to gain the maturity and the experience to implement theory in practice. However, there are quite many studies to support the idea that teacher training programmes should be developed since they seem to be inadequate regarding some aspects such as combining practice and theory and classroom management. A survey in Colorado reveals that most of the teachers think teachers’ preparation for classroom management in teacher education programs is inadequate. Similarly, according to the research carried on different aspects of classroom management, Veenman (cited in Richardson and Fallona, 2001:705) points out that most of the novice teachers regard classroom discipline [management] as their most serious problem. In addition, Woolfolk (1998:p.8) states some of the concerns of beginning teachers as classroom discipline, motivating students, accommodating differences among students. Megay-Nespoli (2001) shows that although pre-service teachers are aware of student differences, they are not sure what to do about it due to their lack of instructional strategies. A general finding is that pre-service teachers find teaching difficult and time consuming than they imagined cited in Megay-Nespoli (2001). The results of Houston and William’s study (Silvestri, 2001) also support the claim above. They found out that teachers regard the inadequate preparation for coping with classroom management and misbehaviour as the basic weakness of pre-service programs. The teacher education system aims to train teachers who are qualified and who can achieve effective teaching. ‘Effective teaching’ and ‘classroom management’ are two strongly related issues. For effective teaching, good classroom
management is required. However, classroom management is the issue that teachers even the experienced teachers have difficulty (Sivestre, 2001; Woolfolk, 1998; Wragg, 1984).

Classroom management is a huge area to investigate. It has many dimensions such as the physical conditions of the classrooms, planning, timing, setting relations in the classroom, and misbehaviors (Başar, 1998). Each of these dimensions can be a topic to investigate. However; this study focuses generally on only some of the aspects of classroom management such as lesson planning, time management, beginning the lesson, motivating the students, making the students participate in the lesson actively and student misbehaviors.

These particular aspects which are investigated in the study are chosen after a general data collection on classroom management in terms of the trainee teachers perceptions on their ‘teaching training course’ which covers the observation of the trainee teacher during their ‘Teaching Practice Course’ and interviews made with them about classroom management.

Following this, this study is conducted to gain information about teachers’ perceptions on some of the aspects of classroom management such as timing the lesson, lesson planning, motivating the students and the student misbehaviors. Another aim of this study is to find out whether there are significant differences among teachers’ perceptions. The research questions under investigation are:

1) What are the perceptions of novice, trainee and experienced teachers on particular aspects of classroom management in TEFL?

2) Are there any differences between the perceptions of novice, trainee and experienced teachers on particular aspects of classroom management in TEFL? If there are what are they?

Methodology

In this study different data collection techniques such as observation, questionnaire and interview are used. The informants of the study are categorized in four groups. The first group of informants are the trainee teachers studying in the ELT Department in the Faculty of Education at Uludağ University in the second term of the 2000–2001 education year. The other 3 groups of English teachers work in variety of schools in Bursa. Their teaching experience ranges 1 to 31 years. They are categorized according to the amount of experience they have. The informants of the study ate totally 142 and categorized in four groups: Group 1 Trainee Teachers, Group 2 Novice teachers, Group 3 Experienced I Teachers and Group 4 Experienced II Teachers (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>Amount of Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group I Trainee Teachers</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group II Novice Teachers</td>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III Experienced Teachers I</td>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IV Experienced Teachers II</td>
<td>11-31 years</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Results**

*Classroom Management*

Most of the teachers from all groups – the trainees (80%), the Novice teachers (76%), the Experienced I group (62%) and the Experienced II group (78.9%) agree that the amount of teaching experience that teachers, have plays an important role in the success of classroom management. Also, in the interviews most teachers from the two experienced teacher groups indicate that ‘experience’ helps to a great deal to control the students and handle the problems which are likely to occur in the classroom. One of the teachers from the Experienced II group comments on the importance of experience as follows:

“...When I first began teaching, I used to have concerns about how to manage my class, how to keep them quiet. One has no idea about those when he/she has no experience. But now, I know. I have learned very well what to do when I face similar problems that I used to have. Experience works...”

However, in the interviews some of the novice teachers argued that ‘good subject knowledge’ and ‘being good at interpersonal relationships’ are important features for a teacher which enables him/her to achieve good classroom management.

The trainee teacher group (M= 3.87) seems to believe in the importance of experience in classroom management more strongly than the Novice teacher group (M= 3.31). This may be partly due to that as they have very little teaching experience; they believe more experienced teachers manage the class better. Nonetheless, none of the results yields statistically significant difference across groups.

*Lesson planning*

The three items of the section ‘lesson planning’ below investigate whether the four group of teachers establish a relation between lesson planning and classroom management and experience. The analysis of the results reveal that there is a significant difference amongst the four groups in terms of the degree of importance they give to lesson planning in managing the class (item 4). Although all the teacher groups with mean scores respectively 3.73, 4.17, 4 and 4.4 seem to regard a good lesson plan as an important factor for a good classroom management, the teacher groups seem to have different strategies in making lesson plans. Although the Experienced I (84.21%) and the Experienced II (85.72%) teacher groups think that novice teachers should make written lesson plans, these two experienced groups seem to often prefer mental planning, that is organising the activities in the mind, or taking short notes. One of the reasons indicated in the interviews by the experienced teachers is that since they have been teaching for years and have been very familiar with the curriculum, they do not feel it is necessary to write down what they are planning for the lesson.

The information that was elicited from the interviews and the questionnaire also appeared to support the idea that the Novice and the Trainee teachers tend to make elaborated plans (see also Richards, 1998); whereas the experienced teacher groups show a tendency in making plans in terms of taking short notes or making mental plans. Although the analysis does not indicate any statistically significant results regarding this question, the teacher groups agree that it is essential for the Novice teachers to make a lesson plan for every
lesson. This can be regarded as a striking point that the majority of the Experienced I (M=3.95) and the Experienced II (M=4.07) teacher group seem to more strongly agree with this than the two less experienced the Novice (M=3.50) and the Trainee (M=3.60) groups. One of the novice teachers says:

“...I have always come to the class well prepared. I plan every detail; right from the beginning of the lesson to the end is noted down which, of course, takes really a great amount time...”

Taking the literature and the interview results into consideration, it can be said that particularly the Novice and the Trainee teachers have some problems in lesson planning the lesson such as spending a considerable time on it and not having much idea about what the content should be beforehand. The interview results also report that the inexperienced teachers are not usually aware of the real function of the lesson plan and regard it as a piece of written paper prepared for formality.

**Time Management**

The results indicate that all the teacher groups seem to rarely have problems in managing the lesson time [The Trainees (M = 2.13), The Novice (M=1.59), the Experienced I (M=1.26) and the Experienced II (M= 1.38)]. However, the evidence from the observation showed that the teachers from the Trainee and the Novice groups tend to have some problems in time management.

The analysis show that teachers who usually experience such problems more often appear to be from the Trainee group (M=2.10 for item 9; M=2.35 for item 7). When referred to the ‘Trainee teachers’ perceptions for item 4 which is about planning the lesson, this finding is not surprising. Because the trainees has the least agreement score (M= 3.73) to believe that good management of the class depends on the teachers’ planning the lesson well. The analysis of the item 8 shows that there is a correlation between ‘the amount of teaching experience’ and having less difficulty in managing the lesson time. In other words, the more experienced teachers do not seem to have time management problems [(the Experienced I group (M=1.26), the Experienced II group (M=1.38)]. The statistical results also show that there is a significant difference amongst the teacher groups in terms of the frequency of not having enough lesson time to give homework (item 9). One reason for it may be that they reflected the problems and the solutions and gradually, they gain experience and the ability to put theory into practice. One of the teachers from the Experienced I group comments:

“...I used to take notes on my lesson plan. I noted the things which went wrong, the reasons of them and the possible solutions. At that time I used to teach the same lesson to more than one class. So, in the second class, taking into consideration the previous lesson plan and the notes on it, I did not experience the same problems. Such comparison works...”

However, the less experienced teachers who have a problem as such are not likely to use lesson plans for ‘reflection’ to manage the lesson time efficiently. In other words, they do not use lesson plans for their professional development.

**Teacher strategies to fill up the lesson when it is over before the bell rings**

According to the analysis of the results, there is not a significant difference amongst the four groups in terms of the frequencies of strategies the teachers in these groups use to fill up the lesson when it is over before the bell rings. All the four teacher groups indicated that
they often [Trainee (M=3.79), Novice (M=3.90), Exp I (M= 3.89), Exp II (M=3.98)] appear to prefer creating different classroom activities rather than letting the students free or allowing them to do their homework to fill up the lesson time. However, the trainee teachers (M=3.79) seem to have such a strategy less frequently. This can be explained by the fact that trainee teachers do not have confidence in themselves. If they have self-confidence, then they can be more likely to make such decisions. Another reason can be that they tend not to make effective lesson plans and fail to see that a good lesson plan also requires extra classroom activities or exercise when the possibility of finishing the lesson 5 or 10 minutes earlier before the bell rings.

**Beginning the Lesson**

The results indicate that the perceptions of the four teacher groups are similar in terms of the frequencies of the strategies they use to begin a lesson. The study identified that all the teacher groups wait till the class settles down. It can be regarded as a dilemma that the two teacher groups to use such a strategy most frequently is the Experienced II group (M=3.71) and the Trainee group (M=3.62). A dilemma appears for the teachers in the frequency of their preferences of warning the students to be quiet as a strategy (item 14). The questionnaire results of the analysis show that the trainee teachers is the group to use such a strategy most frequently (M= 3.04). However, during observations they did not show such attitudes. This may party due to the fact that before filling out the questionnaire, the trainee teachers have been told that if they have not experienced the situation in the items stated in the questionnaire, they should think what they would do if they found themselves in this situation. In the ‘training course’, the trainee teachers are aware that the students usually settle down quickly since the class teacher is present in the classroom. Consequently, the trainees do not need to show any effort to make them silent, but they only wait knowing they are going to settle.

**Motivating the Students**

The section ‘motivating the students’ is investigated under three subtitles. The items in the first section investigate whether teachers have difficulty in taking the attention of the students and the frequency of the particular strategies which teachers use to take their attention to the lesson. The item in the second section aims to find out whether teachers have difficulty in making the students participate in the lesson. And the items in the last section examine the frequency of the particular teacher strategies to make students participate the students in the lesson.

**Taking the attention of the students to the lesson**

Almost all groups report that they rarely have difficulty in taking the attention of the students to the lesson. However, the Novice group (M=2.10) tends to have such a problem more frequently than others do. According to the statistical findings, the four teacher groups show significant difference only in terms of the frequency of speaking Turkish to take the students’ attention to the lesson (item 18). The analysis shows that different strategies at different frequencies are used to increase student motivation. Teachers in the interview indicated that taking into consideration the age of the students, they use different strategies to take their attention to the lesson. For example, games work for primary school students in order to motivate and take their attention, but not an appropriate activity for teenage students. In the interviews, the experienced teachers point out the importance of selecting proper materials and activities to motive the learners since different age groups have different needs
and interests. One of the experienced teachers also comments on the importance of age as follows:

“...games do not work for high school students because they regard themselves as adults and find games childish...”

Mok (1994) also indicates that if not well chosen the [authentic] materials could be frustrating for the learners. The materials should be suitable for the student’s needs, interests and proficiency.

That a small amount of importance is given to English in the Turkish Education System and that the out of date textbooks cannot serve for the communicative teaching methods could be partly the reason why some students may not be motivated for learning English. Similarly, Williams and Burden (1997) strongly point out the importance of increasing intrinsic motivation. They advice teachers to help their students to become aware of the importance of doing the classroom activities for the students’ own sake. Although all the teacher groups have indicated that they use both the visual and audible materials, the Experienced II group prefers to use those more often (M= 3.69 for item 17; M=3.55 for item 16).

One important finding which appears to deserve further research is that some of the teachers do not know how to do an effective listening activity. The interview analysis indicates that the trainee teachers avoid listening activities in contrast to the questionnaire analysis findings. This can be explained by their lack of theoretical knowledge of ‘how to do a listening activity’, and also some technical problems related to low quality recordings on tapes and not being used to find a particular listening part on a tape. As a result, while the teacher is trying to find the particular listening part, the students are likely to loose their attention and begin to deal with something out of task or chat with each other. Another reason stated by the teachers in the interviews is the students’ low proficiency level. This result in developing a negative attitude towards ‘listening activities’ since they can not understand the recording. Liu and Littlewood (1997), too, in their study reported that one of the reasons why the students are reluctant to participate in the classroom activities is that they have limited experience of speaking in English. They may find audio recording hard to understand. Students’ lack of interest may lead teachers to skip listening activities.

Speaking in Turkish appears to be another strategy that teachers use to take the attention of the students. The Trainee teachers (M=2.00) speak in Turkish less frequently compared to the others [The Novice group (M=2.62), the Experienced I group (M=2.00), the Experienced II group (M=2.43)]. One of the reasons is likely to be the ‘lecturers and instructors’ in the ELT Department whom the trainees observe their teaching and take them as a model. The trainees are likely to absorb their beliefs, methods and strategies. As a result, they prefer speaking in English.

Participation of the students to the lesson

According to the results the teacher groups do not seem to have difficulty in making the students participate in the lesson. Results indicate that the informants in the trainee group are those to have difficulty more frequently (Item 19; M= 2.71) in making the students participate actively when compared with the others; however, there is not a significant difference amongst groups.
Teacher Strategies to make the students participate in the lesson

The analysis reveal that there is a significant correlation between the amount of teaching experience and performing pair work and group work activities to make the students participate in the lesson (item 20 and item 21). Teachers have some concerns that they will have some problems in controlling the students especially when performing group work activities in the classroom. (See also Daloğlu-Koç, 2001)

According to the analysis of the items 20, 21 and 22, the teachers in the Experienced II group more frequently perform activities such as games (M=3.52), pair work (M=3.74) and group work (M= 3.74) to make students participate in the lesson. The amount of experience appears to bring in the ability to co-ordinate students better for collaborative work. In this sense, it can be argued that teaching experience most probably helps teachers to use group work and pair works in an efficient way.

To perform such activities in the classroom requires planning the lesson well. The analysis of item 4 has showed that the two experienced group (the Experienced I teacher group with a percentage of 84.2, and the Experienced II teachers with a percentage of 95.2) agree more strongly that a good lesson plan is necessary for good classroom management when compared with other groups.

Student Misbehavior

The items in this section aim to find out whether the teachers have difficulty in controlling the student behaviors and the teachers’ general strategies to cope with those.

Difficulty in controlling the Student Misbehaviors

The analysis of item 24 indicates that teachers rarely have difficulty in controlling the misbehaviors (the mean scores are stated respectively: 2.23, 2, 1.68 and 1.71). One of the experienced teachers talks about the difficulty she had faced in controlling the classroom when she first started to teach as follows:

“...When I first started teaching, I could not keep the classroom in silent and achieve classroom management since I was inexperienced. The students were talking a lot and I had no idea about what kind of a punishment I should give to them. The only way that I could think of was to keep them standing. Now, of course, I do laugh at this idea...”

Based on the analysis, it can be hypothesized that there is not a strong correlation between the amount of teaching experience and having difficulty in controlling of the student misbehaviors though a correlation was expected between these. This may be partly due to the fact that the trainee teachers have rarely experienced student misbehaviors. As mentioned before, the class teacher’s presence in the classroom is an invisible force and this stops the students from misbehaving.

Teachers’ general attitudes to come over the students’ misbehaviors

The results of the analysis show that there is a correlation between the amount of teaching experience and the frequency of scolding the students who misbehave in the classroom (item 25). It appears that two different teacher groups the Novice group (M= 2.41) and the Experienced II group (M= 2.17) show a tendency to scold those students who misbehave. The trainee teachers almost never appear to use such a strategy. This could be partly because the class teacher also present in the classroom and has the authority. Another reason may be that, the Trainee teachers are unlikely to experience any student misbehavior in the class and consequently may have given a predictable answer.
Teachers’ Strategies to cope With Noise in the Classroom

The statistical analysis reveal that there is a significant difference amongst the four teacher groups in terms only using eye-contact and facial mimics when dealing with noise in the classroom (item 30). The study also has found that, the majority of teachers in all groups often ([the Trainee group (M= 3.96), the Novice group (M=3.55), the Experienced I group (M= 3.89) and the Experienced II group (M= 4.10)] prefer to use eye-contact and mimics as a strategy to warn the students when they make noise whereas they rarely prefer scolding them. This may, however, be due to the fact that the teachers do not want to disturb the flow of the lesson and spoil the concentration of other students by using the other strategies such as hitting on the desk and shouting them.

Teachers’ Strategies to cope with the students who are not interested in the Lesson

According to the analysis, the teacher groups seem to have significant differences for item 31, 32, 33, 34 and 35 in terms of the frequencies of strategies they use to cope with students who are interested in the lesson. A considerable majority of teachers in all groups [the Trainees (M= 1.6), the Novice teachers (M=1.72), the Experienced I group (M= 1.37) and the Experienced II group (M=1.21)] rarely ignore the students who are not interested in the lesson (item 33). The Novice (M=3.45) and the Experienced teacher groups [the Experienced I group (M=3.16), the Experienced II group (M=3.62) show a tendency to warn such students silently or to use non verbal warning. Shouting at those students, using a high voice to warn them or sending them out of the class may disturb the flow of the lesson. This could be partly the reason why the trainee and the novice teachers most frequently prefer to use non verbal warning to warn the ones who are not interested in the lesson.

For all the teacher groups sending the uninterested students out of the class is the least preferable strategy. In the interviews the experienced teachers explained that since the principle does not approve such a strategy they are not allowed to send a student out of the classroom during the class hour. The questionnaire results for item 36 show that the Trainee (M= 1.40) and the Novice teachers (M= 1.52) seem to more often use such a strategy more often when compared with the teachers in the Experienced I and II groups. This may be partly due to the fact that less experienced teachers do not know the effective strategies to deal with such misbehavior. The reason behind this may be that the inexperienced teachers need to learn that the school also has its own rules which they have to obey.

Teachers’ Strategies to Deal with latecomers

The analysis indicates that the four teacher groups do not show any significant differences in terms of the frequencies of strategies to deal with latecomers. According to the results of the analysis all groups [the Novice group (M=3.79), the Experienced I group (M=4.11) and the Experienced II group (M=4.07)], except for the trainees (M= 3.38), prefer warning the late comers not to come late again more frequently the trainees (M=3.5, for item 42) prefer ignoring them. Similarly, The Novice, the Experienced I and the Experienced II groups are least likely to prefer punishing the latecomers.

The results indicate that all groups show significant differences between the perceptions on situations related to the items 25,30,31,32 and 33. The Experienced II teachers prefer to use eye-contact and facial mimics (M=4.10) and warning the students silently (M=3.62) as a strategy when they misbehave more often than the other teacher groups. On the contrary, The Novice teachers prefer to warn the students with a high voice (M=2.59) more frequently when dealing with student misbehaviors.
In general, taking the questionnaire and interview results into consideration, it can be concluded that teachers have different perceptions particularly issues regarding motivating and increasing student participation. This may be due to the lack of theoretical background or not having an integrated approach for putting the theory into practice. In addition, it should not be ignored that the trainees may have not experienced some or any of the situations stated in the interviews as a result of which they may have given only predicted answers which may have affected the results.

**Conclusion**

The study showed that all the teachers regard ‘experience’ as a necessity for a good classroom management. This shows the importance of how to integrate theory with practice in teacher educational programmes. Russell *et al* (1998) point out the importance of experience and say that teachers’ theoretical knowledge is shaped by experience. To help the teachers to gain experience more opportunities should be given to trainee teachers to practice teaching. Gallego (2001) supports the idea and suggests that to prepare teachers better; they should be provided more ‘professional’ experience opportunities in the classroom setting. This study highlights the crucial need required in the development of teacher education programmes in terms of providing more experience and practice opportunities for the pre-service teachers.

The study is important in that the findings of it can serve as a good source for the development of both in-service and pre-service teacher programmes. The study has found out the types difficulties and problems teachers can have when managing a class. Being aware of such problems are crucial in that they serve as a guide in developing the pre-teacher education programmes in terms of content and organizing various ‘courses’ which focus on such problems. For example, the less experienced teachers (both the trainee and the novice teachers) seem to be not aware of the real function of lesson planning, but they regard lesson plan as ‘a written piece of paper’ which are made because it is ‘a must’. That is, taking into consideration this finding, the importance of ‘lesson planning’ and its importance in classroom management should be taught in detail in teacher education programmes.

Other problems teachers tend to face are student misbehaviors. Especially the less experienced teacher groups indicated that they have difficulty more often in controlling the student’s misbehaviors. Pre-service teacher education programmes should make students aware of such problems beforehand and teach possible strategies to come over those. As a result, when they experience a similar situation in a real classroom they will have an idea about what to do.

Another important finding of the study is that the trainee and the novice teachers do not seem to use group work activities as a strategy to make the students participate in the lesson. However, this may be partly due to their fear of being not able to control of the class, another reason may be due to the lack of theoretical knowledge. Teacher education programmes should point out the importance of group work activities, their role in motivating the students in the lesson.

**REFERENCES**


Appendix 1

Items of the Teacher Questionnaire

ITEM 1. Good management of the classroom depends on the teachers’ experience.
ITEM 2. Good management of the classroom depends equally on the teacher and the student.
ITEM 3. Good management of the class depends on the teacher, the student and also the physical conditions of the class.
ITEM 4. The management of the class depends on the teachers’ planning the lesson well.
ITEM 6. Experienced teachers do not need to give importance to lesson planning.
ITEM 7: I have difficulty in managing the lesson time and finish before the bell rings.
ITEM 8: I have difficulty in managing the lesson time in terms of that I do not have time to revise the lesson.
ITEM 9: I have difficulty in managing the lesson time in terms of that I do not have time to give homework.
ITEM 10: When the lesson is over before the bell rings, I set the students free till it rings.
ITEM 11: When the lesson is over before the bell rings, I create an activity to fill up the lesson time.
ITEM 12: When the lesson is over before the bell rings, I tell the students to start doing their homework.
ITEM 13: I wait for the class to settle down quietly before beginning the lesson.
ITEM 14: I have to warn the students to be quiet to begin the lesson.
ITEM 15: I have difficulty in taking the attention of the students to the lesson.
ITEM 16: I use audio aids such as songs, type-records, etc to take the attention of the students to the lesson.
ITEM 17: I use visual aids such as pictures, posters and real objects, etc to take the attention of the students to the lesson.
ITEM 18: I speak Turkish to take the attention of the students to the lesson.
ITEM 19: I have difficulty in making the students participate actively in the lesson.
ITEM 20: I perform pair-work activities in the classroom to increase the students’ participation in the classroom.
ITEM 21: I perform group work activities in the classroom to increase the students’ participation in the lesson.
ITEM 22: I perform game activities in the classroom to increase the students’ participation in the classroom.
ITEM 23: I praise the students to increase their participation in the lesson.
ITEM 24: I have difficulty in controlling the misbehaviors of the students.
ITEM 25: When misbehavior occurs, I scold the student in the classroom.
ITEM 26: When misbehavior occurs, I speak with the student about it after the lesson.
ITEM 27: When there is noise in the classroom, I warn the students by hitting the table or the board.
ITEM 28: When there is noise in the classroom, I wait for the students till they are silent.
ITEM 29: When there is noise in the classroom, I warn the students by means of speaking with a high voice.
ITEM 30: When there is noise in the classroom, I warn the students by means of eye-contact and facial mimics.
ITEM 31: I go to the student and warn him quietly if he is not interested in the lesson.
ITEM 32: I warn the student who is not interested in the lesson with a high voice.
ITEM 33: I ignore the students who are not interested in the lesson.
ITEM 34: I warn the students who are not interested in the lesson in a sarcastic way.
ITEM 35: I warn the students who are not interested in the lesson with my reprimanding looks.
ITEM 36: I want the student, who is not interested in the lesson, to leave the classroom.
ITEM 37: I ask a question to the student, who is not interested in the lesson, unexpectedly.
ITEM 38: I want the student, who is not interested in the lesson to stand up and repeat the last sentence I have just uttered.
ITEM 39: I scold the latecomers in a harsh way.
ITEM 40: I warn the latecomers not to come late it again.
ITEM 41: I punish the latecomers.
ITEM 42: I do not warn the latecomers, but speak by sign to sit down not to disturb the students in the classroom.
ITEM 43: I want the student to see the vice principal to get a tardy slip.

Teacher training: pre-service teachers as reflective practitioners

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Abstract
This paper aims to present and discuss a course in action research that can be implemented in a teacher training institution as a part of the programme of studies. It comments on the general and specific objectives of the course, presents its structure in terms of content, timing and forms of work. The major focus of this presentation is however the discussion of the opinions on the course of teacher trainees from one English teacher training college and university department, where the course was originally implemented as a part of diploma /B.A. degree requirements.

1. The concept of reflective teaching: action research
When discussing different spheres of our life, we take different stands, different opinions emerge but they always derive from the concepts which we consider to be fundamental in our understanding and in our belief systems. Also, when discussing educational issues and
educational models, different systems of belief concerning their aims will create different attitudes to and understandings of the concept of education. In my own understanding, the key concepts in respect of education were introduced by humanistic psychology, which emphasize the need to realize one’s full potential both verbal and affective (Maslow), be self-directed and autonomous (Rogers) and make teaching and learning meaningful (Bruner). However it is not easy to eradicate the old and well-established omnipotence of received knowledge and often imposed authority. It is both authority (the teacher) and the receiver (the learner) that need to oppose it. To become successful, to adopt a different view of educational endeavours, the awareness of those involved in educational issues has to be awakened, a facilitative climate has to be created but also ways of becoming this new educator have to be made manifest and their advantages experienced personally by each individual.

In a classroom context this means first of all the development of autonomous action through reflective teaching based on the constant need for improvement. One of its forms is realized as action research, understood as:

*Teacher-initiated classroom investigation which seeks to increase the teacher’s understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about change in classroom practices.* (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988)

Action research based on the teacher’s own context is applied directly to that context and so may be considered subjective; however, it validates itself as a tool for measuring one’s own teaching effectiveness. It allows one to go beyond routine and become more analytical and, above all, more creative and enthusiastic about one’s own teaching. As Underhill puts is:

> Underlying all valid subjective enquiry is the aim to become more aware of myself and of my manifestations as they affect others and those of others as they affect me, so that I am more able to respond creatively to situations out of choice, rather than react mechanically to situations out of habit. Awareness is the only instrument I have that can drive this enquiry” (Underhill 1993:197).

Other proponents add that “critical reflection can trigger a deeper understanding of teaching” (Richards and Lockhart 1994:3). Therefore, as I see it, the key concepts in education these days are: awareness of oneself, self-direction and autonomy and at the affective level, enthusiasm and creativity deriving from awareness.

The data presented in this article looks at the ways reflective teaching can be achieved, what the major problems are and above all, how those who are to become reflective teachers (the pre-service teachers) see this method of professional development. It seems important to introduce the concept of action research and carry it out at the stage when the teachers have not yet developed their routines and have not become “I know it all” and “I know how to teach it” types of language instructor.

2. Action research at the pre-service level

2.1. General objectives of the course

This study is partly a replication study of my previous research on similar group of subjects, i.e. pre-service teachers of EFL still in the process of obtaining their full teaching qualifications, who were exposed to action research for the first time when the course was piloted in their teacher training colleges (Gabryś 2000). The students were asked to comment on what they did in the course and how relevant they found it for their professional development. The questions were open-ended and descriptive. In this study the data obtained
is more structured not as a general evaluation but rather as evaluation of the different stages of research planning and execution. This allows me to pinpoint more precisely the areas of difficulty encountered by the students at different stages of the project preparation, its actual administration and the concluding stage.

The objectives of the two-semester course were formulated at the level of professional development and were to:

- make the student teachers aware of their classroom (and outside classroom) teaching problems and to enable them to specify the area of difficulty and pinpoint the variables involved;
- make the students look for available resources in terms of literature on the subject to give them firm theoretical background;
- make the students share problems in discussions and collaborate with their peers in finding solutions to be tried out in their own classrooms.

(Gabryš 2000:173)

Simultaneously, it was believed that the project would make a significant contribution to professional development of these pre-service teachers and that it would also affect the students on the affective level of their functioning as teachers and hence it would help:

- to develop student- teachers enthusiasm for teaching as a challenging experience to prevent routine;
- to create appropriate attitudes towards their role in a classroom (feelings of both responsibility and independence/autonomy);
- to create appropriate attitudes towards the roles of learners in a classroom and their autonomy;
- to open teachers to negotiation with their learners;
- to feel a bond with other novice teachers.
- to develop a special rapport with the learners

(Gabryš ibid: 173-174)

2.2. Stages of the action research project

The sessions were run in the form of a whole group meeting (“caring and sharing”) and also in individual tutorials. Following Nunan’s cycle of action research (Nunan 1992:19), the course consisted of seven stages from the preparation to the carrying out and dissemination of the projects:

1. initiation – introduction to the idea of action research as research done by teachers in their own classrooms, emphasizing the importance of it for the individual development of a teacher; it also comprised brief instruction in different research methods and data collection tools available;
2. preliminary investigation – a brainstorming session with the students to establish their individual areas of teaching difficulties; it also comprised study sessions to ground the project in theory;
3. hypothesis and research design – formulating research questions and hypotheses, also designing the projects (research tools)
4. intervention – the longest part of the project in which the students applied their projects in their classrooms
5. evaluation – individual tutorials with the supervisor focusing on discussion of progress and results
6. dissemination - several sessions devoted to the presentation of the results and findings ("caring and sharing") to peers
7. follow-up - the final evaluation of the project, suggestions for the way forward: feedback to the work done.
   (for a more detailed description of the course, see appendix 1)

What seemed to be essential in running an action research course both at the piloting stage (Gabryś 2000) and in this study was to get the students’ feedback. In this study it was obtained in the form of a survey questionnaire.

2.3. Pre-service teachers’ feedback to action research project (a survey questionnaire)

2.3.1. Level of difficulty (general and specific)
The questionnaire’s aim was to see in which areas of research and project preparation and writing the students encountered problems (for the survey questionnaire, see appendix 2)
The subjects asked to participate in the survey were the teacher training college students (group 1) and the university students of an English philology department (group 2). Both groups were studying to become qualified teachers of English as a foreign language. Their programme of studies included both theoretical modules on teaching methodology and some degree of practical experience of teaching (teaching practice training).

The average level of difficulty in doing individual action research projects as perceived by the students of both groups seems comparable (5.2 versus 5.3), however there are some significant differences in terms of the stage at which the major difficulties appeared. For the college students, chapter 1 - the literature overview - seemed to present enormous difficulty (7.4), which may be explained perhaps by the fact that their experience in reading academic texts in applied linguistics and also producing texts such as reviews was very limited. In contrast, the university students ranked the theoretical part of the project as much less challenging (5.5) due to their much more extensive exposure to and practice in this type of writing compared with the former group. At the same time this group of students found designing the project itself more problematic (6.7), perhaps due to the fact that their classroom practice exposure (contrary to group 1) is significantly inferior and consequently they lack a teaching perspective and haven’t developed teaching intuitions ("a feel for the classroom").

Only in one area of the work did both groups exhibit a comparable level of anxiety and insecurity, and that was when presenting and analyzing data collected in the course of the study. Table 1 illustrates the degree of difficulty at different stages of research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of difficulty</th>
<th>College students</th>
<th>University students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature overview</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project design</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data presentation and analysis</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and implications</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Evaluation of the project difficulty on the scale of 1-10 points (10- most difficult)
2.3.2. Qualitative comments (each stage)

*Chapter 1: Theoretical background (literature overview)*

Difficulties expressed by the subjects occurred both at the level of content and form and they related to:

1. the choice of materials to be overviewed: the ability to select the most relevant references
2. a coherent presentation of the studies related but with contradictory results
3. unintentional plagiarism
4. appropriate language register
5. use of quotations
6. the structure of the text

Qualitative comments from the subjects illustrate the above summary (table 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>Form:</th>
<th>Other:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little written about my topic</td>
<td>Division of the text</td>
<td>Beginning of the work (project): difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To find which information was</td>
<td>Formal register</td>
<td>Most interesting chapter to write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most important but also relevant</td>
<td>Most demanding in terms of vocabulary</td>
<td>A little bit boring, repeating somebody’s words,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources directly connected to my topic</td>
<td>Degree of formality of the text</td>
<td>I was really frightened and discouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in theory</td>
<td>Informality of the text, problem</td>
<td>Bad mark for the chapter was discouraging!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of sources- how to choose the most appropriate?</td>
<td>Fear of unintentional plagiarism, difficulty in avoiding plagiarism</td>
<td>I started to hate my topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to organize the whole material into sections</td>
<td>Choice of quotations which are relevant to the work, paraphrasing quotations, inserting quotations into the text</td>
<td>It was time-consuming as it was my first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to use internet</td>
<td>To put certain ideas together, coherence of the text</td>
<td>It was very enriching as I learn a lot of theoretical knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transfer from L1</td>
<td>Time consuming chapter (... ) not very difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The plan was very helpful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editing the text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem with quotations and references: reference to reference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To introduce the quotations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The correctness in terms of language and composition of the whole chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translating from Polish into English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translating Polish terms into English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization of the material gathered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To keep the limit of pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To from clear sentences (... ) to paraphrase from books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Theoretical background
**Chapter 2: Project design**

The choice of research area generally did not pose a major challenge for the students, however, both groups expressed their inability to get their project into focus and narrow it down to a precise research question. In most cases the projects were very broad and lacking in awareness of their feasibility (having the time and space to carry them out); they also revealed the subjects’ inability to define precisely what the core of the problem to be discussed was - if the problem was defined at all! On the level of organization, as in any research carried out, a challenge was presented by the fact that there was no motivation on the part of the schools or individual learners to participate in the students’ projects. So, additionally, the need for motivating and creating positive attitudes towards the projects posed a major challenge, as effort in this regard was to a great extent responsible for the success of the studies carried out (see table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty area</th>
<th>College students</th>
<th>University students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficult to create a good question</td>
<td>Choice of subjects to suit the project best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Too long questionnaire; difficulty with coping with the data</td>
<td>To divide research into stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posing the question that the project would answer</td>
<td>To name all the methods, to ask the research question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I changed the research question a few times</td>
<td>To provide enough information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulties in constructing the research hypothesis</td>
<td>What questions to include in the questionnaire, not enough open ones, I didn’t know the group well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What to investigate; the focus of the project</td>
<td>The design of the observation sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formulating appropriate questions for teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Defining the research question, preparation of the observation and evaluation forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Constructing the research question and narrowing its scope, constructing the questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form:</strong></td>
<td>Not to use “I” all the time!</td>
<td>Organization of the particular stages of the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choosing a relevant method, formulating the questions</td>
<td>Coherence of the presentation, choice of the proper methods, whether to include personal details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was difficult to decide about the relevant methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To put in words what I had in mind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating questions that would not be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ambiguous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoiding biased questions, grouping questions into categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Length of the questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How to describe the sessions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problems with expressing some ideas precisely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No problem of form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
<td>Writing a diary was much more difficult than I thought it would be!</td>
<td>It was quite easy to write chapter II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The easiest chapter to write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was easy to describe the subjects</td>
<td>Teachers unwilling to answer open questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was easy to describe it as I knew what I wanted</td>
<td>The headmasters were reluctant to let me access the results of the exams (last year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was difficult to write true feelings about the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Challenges of designing the projects
**Chapter 3: Data presentation and analysis**

The students’ perception of what the nature of research is, i.e. a deeply ingrained belief that its aim is to create theories and models that would apply universally to different contexts (as in academic research) makes the subjects feel very insecure about the reliability and objectivity of their own studies. This clearly derives from their unawareness of the nature of action research as a specific type of research done by the teacher in his/her own classroom and therefore very much contextualized and applicable to this single context.

This perception also leads to the difficulty the subjects exhibit and comment on in relation to the interpretation and application of theory to practice. In some cases these two do not come together, that is, what happens in the Fl classroom does not always reflect (general) theories of teaching and learning.

On the level of form, again the language register appropriate for the analysis and the form of analysis are signalled out as challenging. For example, non-verbal presentation of data in tables or figures - when and how to use them - are other instances of problems the students struggle with in presenting their findings (see Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>Selection of areas to analyze, which were essential for my work and which would give objective results</th>
<th>To present data in a logical order</th>
<th>Proper interpretation of data was difficult</th>
<th>Evaluation of the lessons observed</th>
<th>Analysis of the data from open ended questions</th>
<th>Establishing clear criteria- checklists for evaluation</th>
<th>Too long presentation –had to choose the most important data</th>
<th>To design different sections of the text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To prepare the outline</td>
<td>Lots of data, I got a little bit confused</td>
<td>Clear presentation of data, making</td>
<td>Comments on findings, connecting findings and theory</td>
<td>repetitiveness of tables and data, making conclusions</td>
<td>Problems with comments on tables and figures</td>
<td>Demanding in terms of comments, Combining data and theory</td>
<td>Interpretation of data (grouping)</td>
<td>Statistical difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extensiveness of the research area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form:</th>
<th>Presentation of data by means of figures and tables (coherence)</th>
<th>Insertion of the tables and figures into the text</th>
<th>Presentation of graphs and diagrams</th>
<th>To formulate captions for tables and figures</th>
<th>Using Microsoft Excel</th>
<th>Choosing an appropriate form of presentation (language)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate language for analysis</td>
<td>Organizing the data and commenting on it</td>
<td>Gathering data from the notes made during the treatment</td>
<td>Tables, figures, charts</td>
<td>Organizing tables and figures coherently</td>
<td>Constructing diagrams</td>
<td>Too much focus on content – bad grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant revision of the text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other:</th>
<th>The most important chapter of the research</th>
<th>Collecting questionnaires</th>
<th>Too much data – I always write too much!</th>
<th>The most difficult was the beginning; I didn’t know here to start</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I had to be very precise in my analyses</td>
<td>In general demanding, both in terms of content and form</td>
<td>very time consuming – a lot of data</td>
<td>Gathering the data was a nightmare!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Most time consuming and demanding, as it contained detailed descriptions of sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Most difficult to write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It was difficult – I did it for the first time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Presenting and analyzing data
Chapter 4: Conclusions and implications
The discussion of the findings and conclusions of the studies carried out once again raises students’ doubts concerning their validity and reliability. What can also often be observed – and what is openly expressed by the students - is great difficulty in formulating general versus specific conclusions and structuring them accordingly in their presentations.

But perhaps the most striking and most frequently commented on shortcoming was the inability to evaluate the project carried out. Although most of the students express their enthusiasm about their small-scale projects, they look at them very critically. Their critical evaluation however is not supported by sound analysis of the drawbacks of the projects but rather is very general and usually relates to the already-mentioned question of validity and reliability. Table 5 includes their comments and also additional reflections of the subjects on writing chapter 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty area</th>
<th>College students</th>
<th>University students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with planning the chapter</td>
<td>I don’t know whether my conclusions were not too general</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to choose implications that would be most important</td>
<td>Summing up the findings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had problems with evaluation of my own project</td>
<td>Evaluation of the project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding repetitions from the previous chapter</td>
<td>Difficulty to evaluate what I failed at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I was repeating the same things</td>
<td>It was difficult to turn findings into implications, also to evaluate the projects ourselves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy as I had many ideas in my head</td>
<td>How to evaluate your own project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding practical materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating the work (project)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To structure implications</td>
<td>Much too long sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulating implications on the basis of conclusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was easy to write my conclusions of my own work</td>
<td>Easy to write (implications and evaluation of the project)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most difficult in terms of content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have had enough knowledge to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write down the implications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most personal chapter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was easy as it was short and Consisted of my own opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was easy as it was based on my own Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Working on conclusions and evaluation

**Additional comments**

The additional comments made by the pre-service teachers – students taking part in action research work - express their opinions on the utility of the work and its organizational aspects.
a. College students:

My advice to those who do write up such a project is to make a good, precise, well-prepared plan – without it, it is really like mission impossible.

There should be more attention put to language (expressions) that we should use in the project

Sometimes I felt that I repeated the same thing many times

The project contributed to my personal development and as a teacher

It enabled me to learn about writing this type of work, about new ways of teaching and certainly contributed to my teaching methodology in a very positive way.

I admit that strict deadlines helped me organize the work.

b. University students:

This study really served something. Students of methodology should get more opportunities to use their knowledge in practice, as it may turn out that methodology and all the things connected with teaching are wonderful indeed.

Even though I am a bit anxious about this project, I liked the very process of writing it.

Systematicity was very helpful.

A very creative process of data collection from the teaching world (…) improves classroom practice.

Beneficial because it was based on my own teaching experience and interests and therefore practical and relevant. It was also down to earth because once you start teaching you look at the whole process from a different, more realistic perspective.

These comments demonstrate that, despite the apparent difficulties expressed earlier, it is worth continuing with this kind of training in reflective teaching in the case of pre-service teachers, to develop their curiosity and show that being reflective and creative not only improves the process of teaching in terms of its effectiveness, but also makes it more interesting and motivating both for the teachers and the learners themselves.

3. Final remarks

The survey study carried out aimed at diagnosing the problem areas the pre-service teachers have in carrying out their individual mini research in order to become more reflective and more autonomous in their classroom practices. This diagnosis highlights very precisely the areas in which teacher training could be improved. They specifically include:
1. better ways of developing understanding of AR as teacher research versus academic research
2. creating more opportunities for the trainees to experiment in their teaching contexts
3. exposing pre-service teachers to academic research in the chosen area to give them firm
theoretical knowledge, but also to show that research in education is complex and will always yield contradictory results.

4. development of English for Academic purposes courses, in other words, more focus on writing critical analytical texts and instruction in the mechanics of writing a research paper.

There is a lot that can be improved in the type of action research course described here, but it seems to have made a good start as the trainees demonstrate changed attitudes towards the teaching profession, they show more enthusiasm to do things differently and not just become passive consumers of what is offered in methodology and course-books. With time and practice at being reflective teachers, in carrying out such projects, it is hoped that they will become more confident in what they do and as a consequence better, more creative teachers.

References


Appendix 1: ACTION RESEARCH COURSE (B.A.)

General objectives:
“to develop reflective practices in teaching”
“ to be able to diagnose a classroom problem and analyze it”
“ to develop the need to experiment in the class”
“ to develop a process of negotiation with learners”
“to introduce needs analysis”
“ to update one’s theoretical knowledge in a specific area of interest”
“ to be able to write a report on a project”

Timing:
two-semester course in the third year (diploma seminar); **30hrs**
( an additional academic writing seminar of **15hrs** is recommended if not offered in the academic writing classes)

Outcomes:
a diploma paper (B.A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Forms of work</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I SEMESTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>initiation</td>
<td>* introduction to action research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and its objectives
lecture / discussion 1

* presentation of research methods
and data collection tools:
lecture / group activities

7(total)

observation schemes
questionnaires / interviews
diaries / journals
experiments
introspective methods
case studies

* research design
lecture / individual tutorial 1

preliminary
* problem areas (awareness)
( general and specific)
* grounding in theory

investigation

* formulation of the problem
research question / hypothesis
* designing a project
(subjects, tools)

lecture / group activities
(review of studies, studies samples) 1
reading week / individual tutorial / reviews of references 1

hypothesis
& research design

* formulation of the problem
research question / hypothesis
* designing a project
(subjects, tools)

report on progress

Total: 15 sessions

II SEMESTER

intervention
* application of the project
the classroom

dissemination
* presentation of the complete project

evaluation
* students’ perception
of the project / results /
action research

follow – up
* “to reflect and change”

Appendix 2: ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I (Overview) Content: Form:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II (Design) 1. Research question Content: Form:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research methods</td>
<td>Content:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Subjects descript.</td>
<td>Content:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III (Data)</td>
<td>Content:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV (Implications)</td>
<td>Content:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overall evaluation: 1-10 pts (10-most difficult): ............

**Chapter I**
(1-10pts): ............

**Chapter II**
(1-10pts): ............

**Chapter III**
(1-10 pts): ............

**Chapter IV**
(1-10 pts): ............

**Appendix**
(1-10 pts): ............

**Bibliography**
(1-10 pts): ............

**Other comments:**
Interactive Technologies,

Information Landscapes and Constructivist Learning Environments

Dr. Iris Guske

Kempten School of Translation and Interpreting Studies

Abstract

By looking at the various components of interactive multimedia products, i.e. their computer, video, and textual elements, and the internet, their potential to contextualise learning in authentic environments is evaluated against the background of the requirements of constructivist learning theories spanning the range from Piaget's individualised notion of cognitive to Vygotsky's social constructivism. If both, technology-mediated cognitive tools as well as instructional settings allow for interaction, accommodation and assimilation of knowledge will be fostered, not least when aided by the scaffolding skills of peer tutors in collaborative learning environments. Structuring these will be a teacher's essential task, who will go from "the sage on the stage to the guide on the side" in order assist students in the learning process and promote self-directed learning within the zone of proximal development of different learner types. If interactive material is to support the learning environments in which new technologies can unfold their potential best, their design has to follow the rules of cognitive bootstrapping by creating information landscapes providing the context and structures necessary to engage the students and rendering them capable of effectively processing the information put in their path. That way knowledge how to tap information may come to enrich traditional notions of knowledge, instead of invalidating them.
Keywords:
Interactive Technologies
Constructivist Learning Environments
Recontextualisation of Learning
Cognitive Apprenticeship Model
Cognitive Bootstrapping

1. Interdependence of Interactive Technologies and New Styles of Learning

Trying to deal with the question whether interactive technologies support new styles of learning and teaching resembles the task of deciding which was there first, the chicken or the hen, since in order to be able to foster new learning environments, the use of interactive technologies should occur in altered instructional settings in the first place, but in reality it has been largely due to the findings obtained when these technologies were actually put to use within the framework of traditional educational contexts that the necessity for changes in instructional design in general has made itself felt very strongly. So the topic should rather be approached by way of studying to what extent the use of interactive technologies and new styles of learning are interdependent and how they should mutually reinforce each other in order for effective learning to occur.

What is especially noticeable when evaluating educational settings is that while the day of a typical child has changed radically over the last fifty years, his or her s仇olday has arguably remained largely unchanged. And while it may well be questioned if the changes in a child's life have been for the better, the fact that they have occurred has to be acknowledged and accounted for by our schools if they don't want the rift between learning in formal settings
and non-school learning to become insurmountable. While pre-school children learn mostly by exploring the world on their own terms as regards the what and how of the exploration of their immediate environment (with more or less guidance by their parents), schoolchildren’s learning is largely determined by educators' ideas of what they should be taught and how they should be taught it, i.e. by being first and foremost enabled to read so that they can access the storehouse of mankind’s knowledge. Although this is meant to broaden their horizons since learning cannot be restricted to the exploration of one's immediate surroundings, this reading-based culture of conveying knowledge certainly lacks the element of active involvement on the part of the child. This is what erstwhile education revolutionary Ed Lyell laments when he claims that "children are born learning machines. They have a 'try' attitude: try until they do it. But if you had a school out there today to teach children to walk, one-third of the population would not be walking." (Guglielmo, p. 1)

And this is precisely where new technologies come into play, since they are capable of bridging the gap between pre-school learning and formal education, at the same time bringing the latter in line with the technology-rich environment surrounding the children in their free time. With the use of interactive technologies "reading the word" and "reading the world" (Papert, p. 10) are co-joined and children can thus combine experiential with script-based learning. This is all the more important since learning through direct experience, however worthy it may be deemed by detractors of the traditional education establishment, may not result in real knowledge structures to be built if learning theorists such as Vygotsky are allowed a voice. His idea of the zone of proximal development would involve interacting with the children by way of verbalising what has been experienced, as well as providing intellectual stimuli by putting new and challenging information in their path, thus cementing a
foundation of knowledge on which pillars of information are erected verbally so that new floors of knowledge can be constructed.

2. Instructional Interactive Multimedia Products

What then are the new interactive technologies that might help students construct knowledge of the world beyond their immediate surroundings, and the learning theories that would accommodate this? By interactive technologies are meant all communication systems which "extend the human senses", allowing "an individual to reach out in space and time, and thus obtain information that would not otherwise be available" (Rogers, p. 2). Furthermore they are capable of providing feedback to users, which renders them similar in kind to interaction at an interpersonal level. Since interaction is regarded as "one of the higher order levels of feedback" (Forsyth, p. 28), it will be educationally relevant regardless of the learning theories favoured.

When evaluating interactive multimedia products we have to focus on the benefits and/or disadvantages inherent in either or all of the three components any Interactive Multimedia package is made up of. And in order to link them to accommodating learning environments we have to view them against the background of criticism as expressed by educators, and judge their potential for incorporating respective postulates. Thus, for example, Papert claims that learning is most effective with the learner at the helm (p. 25), and that in order for an assignment to turn into a true learning experience, it has to become a "personally meaningful undertaking capable of mobilising intellectual energy" (p. 110). Furthermore he accuses school of forsaking major learning opportunities by neglecting enthusiastic students' potential for intellectual give and take (page 44), with peer encouragement figuring as an
important variable underlying students' motivation in Martins and Kellermanns (2004), too. These notions together with the way he approaches the idea of education, viz. by claiming that "the kind of knowledge children most need is the knowledge that will help them get more knowledge" (p. 139) will serve to structure this paper.

2.1 Computer Elements

In the first place we have the computer elements of any IMM package, which offer linear and non-linear access to various information forms such as databases, graphics, video and voice. The fact that learners can thus work in their own time and at their own pace "through tutorials/dialogues, drill and practice sequences, simulations/models and exploration/problem-solving" (Latchem, pp. 20/21) has been found to be of great importance to students who need more than one go at a problem, since they can have as many tries as they like with a computer system without anyone (i.e. their peers) noticing, or without anyone (i.e. their teachers) getting exasperated when being asked the same question several times. According to Lyell, "the computer, because it doesn't care, is in a sense the most caring learning environment" (in Gugliemo, p. 2). Hence, the use of relevant technologies might prove to be especially beneficial to "minority, disadvantaged and underperforming students" (Latchem, p. 32). Since they furthermore do not force one way of learning, i.e. school's way, on children faced with a learning task, their worry of being exposed to the intellectual scrutiny of others and being found wanting (Papert, p 91) can easily be overcome. Likewise, studies relating to computer-adaptive testing where students may choose their own task levels showed that students opting for the best-fit version in general produced better results. This testifies to the fact that allowing for individual ways of thinking, which are based on "different
knowledge sets", will reflect competency more accurately than standardised testing (Cooper and Halkitis, pp. 1 and 2, and Astleitner and Wiesner, 2004).

Moreover, the computer-based elements of IMM systems facilitate learning by "symbolic representations of non-concrete formal constructs and relationships" (Latchem, pp. 20/21), which is evidence of the fact that the new tools (technology) and signs (semiotic tools) (in Harper, p. 4) of learning can be incorporated in learning environments, and this will be of special value to learners whose information-processing capacities do not accommodate large chunks of text-based information readily. Additionally, feedback is provided in the form of monitoring the learner's progress. Thus, a system may be based on a Socratic dialogue model, in which students can try to find answers to their questions, but would also have to demonstrate their progress in coming to terms with the information presented, while then being put onto a path towards discovery of new sources of information (Latchem, p. 63). In this context it has been found that, contrary to most expectations, students usually do not choose the easy way out by randomly pressing any key in order to be "told" the correct answer to a question/problem by the computer without giving the matter any further thought, but instead often try out wrong answers after getting it right in the first place, just to have their way of reasoning confirmed by the computer explanation (Latchem, p. 178). What we have is, in fact, an environment facilitating "deep learning", characterised by a high degree of self-motivation and self-direction on the part of the students (in Latchem, p. 25, and Wagner et al., 2004)), who try to develop problem-solving skills in personally meaningful tasks by collecting, manipulating and analysing a variety of data.
2.2 Video Elements

The second component are the *video elements* of IMM systems which "present authentic, simulated or dramatised behaviour, processes, situations and events" (Latchem, p. 22). While the importance of visual material in education has been acknowledged, its potential is greatly underestimated if it is seen as a motivational factor only, even though it is more closely associated with entertainment than with learning. When asking the question why the possibility to provide students with multiple representations, such as graphs, maps, narrative sequences and the like, has come to be regarded as indispensable with, we will find that this goes hand in hand with the recent trend to acknowledge that visual thinking plays a more important part in the learning process than has previously been recognised, when greater emphasis was placed on the use of linguistic and other signifiers (McLoughlin, p. 1). This does not only bridge another gap between everyday life, where visualisation, i.e. forming and manipulating a mental image (in McLoughlin, p. 2), enables people to come to terms with theoretical and abstract concepts, and formal learning, but also facilitates "learner-controlled access, replay and freeze-framing to analyse information that would otherwise be transient" (Latchem, p. 22). Moreover, in this scenario of "mixed sensory mode instruction" visual experiences will promote higher order thinking by constituting a learning environment which calls for the integration of verbal and non-verbal representation (McLoughlin, p. 2).

With higher order cognition increasingly defined as including both "creative (intuitive) and logical reasoning components" (McLoughlin, p. 3), we can also turn to simulations as an important tool in learning, and especially in training. Students/and or trainees are thereby enabled to enjoy a hands-on learning experience they might and/or could not be allowed in
the "real" world, e.g. due to workplace pressures such as limited funds for travel or the fact that employees cannot be dispensed with for longer periods of time. Hence, even though the initial outlays may be high, decentralising training with the help of IMM systems is an important cost-cutting feature. Furthermore, companies also benefit from the fact that training, although geared to the individual worker's requirement, can be standardised by the use of IMM systems, thus increasing "the chances of performance being up to a particular standard, giving companies more control over training" (David Hawkridge in Heap et al., p. 185).

Additionally, the nature of the task on hand might preclude workers from simply getting down to it, as it may be inherently dangerous, such as trying to land a plane, working with hazardous substances or performing medical operations on human beings, for example. Since simulations require the application of theoretical knowledge acquired beforehand they will constitute the link between knowledge and skills required if employees are to perform well in their jobs (David Hawkridge in Heap et al., p. 184). In this context, simulations are all the more important as the operation of complex high-tech apparatuses not only requires a combination of the knowledge of the logic inherent in the systems and the skills needed to handle them, but at the same time the ability to subjectively evaluate the performance of the machine, by combining "mental processes with sensual perception to connect with the system" (Bauer et al., p. 2; my translation).

2.3 Textual Elements

Thirdly we will have to look at the textual elements of IMM packages, which "provide the user with the primary symbol system used in scholarship and learning" and which act as
signposts for students who are guided through the learning process with the help of contents tables, chapter headings, abstracts, etc. (Latchem, pp. 22/23). Whether for study or for reference purposes, students may access them in ways that best suit their individual styles of learning, since "the branching structure of hypertext" allows them to "determine their own paths through the medium" (Latchem, p. 137). Ideally, hypertext links reflect the relationship between the individual pieces of information presented so as to allow the learner to make associations, on the meaning of which their understanding will be based (in Wild, p. 2). However, if learners are faced with a system allowing them to choose randomly between options they will not really be in control of the learning process since the option to click various buttons just to be presented with another multimedia gimmick does not constitute interactivity. Therefore any effective interplay of the individual components of an IMM system would require integrating the "choice and its consequence" (Harper, p. 9) as components of genuine interactivity.

However, we might not only think about interactivity in terms of feedback generated by the computer, but also in terms of feedback obtained from co-learners. And here it has been found that while text, or rather, the verbalisation of thought, usually gets a conversation, i.e. an exchange of ideas off the ground, it is the multiple representations of these ideas that lead to a widening and deepening of information flows. For if we take a telematics classroom (verbal communication achieved via a two-way audio-link; data exchanged between computers via the telephone lines) where learners isolated by geography work together, visual tools are a means of sharing ideas with the intention of exposing them to "multiple interpretations" (McLoughlin, p. 6). These may be based on slightly different definitions of the problem, different analogies made on the basis of a different knowledge base, and they may result in a number of hypothetical solutions, which would have to be tested in their own
right and for potential implications. In the end, former knowledge would have to be reflected on or even reinterpreted in the light of the new findings produced through "social negotiation" (Harper, p. 4).

2.4 The Internet

Although the answers to the questions dealt with in this article are contained in the character of the individual components of IMM systems as outlined above, we shall, for completeness' sake, have a look at the Internet as an important interactive technology before summarising our findings. The Internet, although espoused as "humankind's best chance to respect and nurture the most obscure languages and cultures of the world" by ardent proponents on the one hand, is at the same time derided by detractors as a "chimera of unfulfilled promise, which actually works against literacy and creativity rather than promoting them." (both in McMahon, p. 1) But the danger of taking its potential for the real thing only to find that it has, in fact, been squandered, is actually no greater than in the case of a library, the existence of which is in itself no guarantor of actual learning to take place. Hence it is the Internet as a library access facility that most requires students to be acquainted with the necessary search skills, which will be invaluable in our information society. Moreover, since publishing electronic material is far less costly than printed matter and can easily be kept up-to-date, the requirements of distance learning and open learning modes for which there is increasing demand, are accommodated especially well by the Internet with such additional interactive features as e-mail and chat-rooms, where asynchronous as well as synchronous learning may occur.
3. Situated versus Decontextualised Learning

Since the potential of the Internet also includes virtual worlds as facilitators of simulation and modelling experiences, all in all, the new interactive technologies provide us with a scenario of situated learning as advanced by social constructivists who have lamented the decontextualisation of learning which precludes learners from applying their knowledge and skills in an authentic environment. Thus the notion of "cognitive apprenticeship" emphasising "active participation in a social context or in authentic practice" (McLoughlin, p. 4) came up as a model based on its namesake in the crafts. Since computers provide a perfect platform for negotiating one's way through a wide variety of "processes and experiential tasks envisaged by [this] model" (McLoughlin, p. 4), the learning theories best supported by interactive technologies are in fact those appearing on a cognitive continuum ranging from Piaget's highly individualised notion of cognitive constructivism through Vygotsky's social constructivism to the branching nature of Bruner's contextual learning. And this is the very interface between learning theories and the use of computers in the classroom which we set out to explore.

Underlying both, Piaget's and Vygotsky's, theories is the assumption that development is a construction process in which children build ever more complex cognitive structures through their reciprocal interaction with the environment (In Crain, p. 103). But while Piaget sees these activities as emanating from the child's natural curiosity, Vygotsky speaks of socially meaningful activities mediated by adults or more competent peers. With these resulting in the child's mastery of psychological tools, such as language and gestures, sign systems, visual representations, and the like (In NASP Communiqué, p. 3), we can easily
envision computer-mediated learning environments as supporting cognitive development. For if new technologies, which are capable of offering a variety of psychological tools, are used as "cognitive tools that enhance our cognitive powers" (Reeves, p. 1), and these are then applied in constructivist learning environments which allow for interaction to take place with the environment as well as with the system itself, they will stimulate the kind of learning needed to "generate the cognitive conflict that can promote the accommodation and assimilation of new knowledge" (Ring et al., p. 1), as postulated by Piaget and Vygotsky.

Moreover, it is such a system, in which "technology is part of a larger social context that shapes, constrains, and enhances how information is processed and used" (Hannafin, p. 6), that would accommodate Bruner's criticism that learning has been decontextualised by schools, regardless of the fact that the learning process as such is public, with the learning of meaning taking place within a well-defined cultural space and its meaning being shared in the process (in Forsyth, p. 17). Thus, using computers in the classroom may help to "recontextualise" learning while at the same time facilitating the sharing and negotiating of meaning in collaborative learning environments, which are ideally supported by computer-based learning systems. After all, it is in group learning situations that multiple interpretations are encouraged which can only be identified and then reconciled if learners are motivated through the relevance of the task and are actively involved and goal-directed in trying to develop problem-solving strategies through a "deliberate and structured collaborative process" (Kaye in Heap et al., p. 195, and Wilson).

A good example of this is the "Jigsaw Method" designed to integrate Piaget's and Vygotsky's ideas. Here, each child is assigned one part of a task that has been split into various sections, and s/he has to work independently on it before the results are then joined
together like the pieces in a jigsaw in a combined effort, with each child turning from an "expert" in one specialised field to a knowledgeable student in the overall structure (in Smith and Cowie, p. 364). In this context, the advantages of peer tutoring as stressed by Vygotsky appear to be especially beneficial, since this does not only foster the required problem-solving skills but has the additional benefit of being more individualised in that it is tailor-made to the needs of the less knowledgeable of two learners, for example. For the "expert" may not be that far ahead of the "novice" (Smith and Cowie, p. 362) and still remember well how s/he managed the task herself/himself and be more able to impart that knowledge than a teacher who seldom operates in such one-to-one learning situations and thus runs the risk of not assessing the student's zone of proximal development properly. This zone of proximal development has been defined as "the distance between the child's actual developmental level and his or her potential level of development under the guidance of more expert adults or in collaboration with more competent peers" (Smith and Cowie, p. 352). Working within the ZPD will enable less capable participants to perform in interactions that would be beyond their competence if they acted alone, which testifies to the fact that performance precedes competence in cognitive development, and this process of processing information or mastering skills is certainly supported in a computer-based learning environment where students often start working from hypotheses, the testing of which will then lead to new understanding. As Papert says, "the learner can begin by knowing something in a very fumbly sort of way before it becomes established" (p. 64).

Compared to the teacher in a typical classroom situation peer tutors, moreover, may have little difficulty in scaffolding effectively, i.e. they will enable the tutees to reach higher levels of understanding by constructing the scaffolding in such a way as to accommodate the individual learner's ability to progress to the next stage with the help provided. After all,
based on their own experiences, they may find it easier to appraise the tutee's existing knowledge and combine this with an assessment of the levels deemed attainable (in Smith and Cowie, p. 357). The notion of scaffolding and the role of structure in learning, on the other hand, can be seen as concepts mutually reinforcing each other, for knowledge structures are as important as representational modes. Since Bruner uses the term structure to denote the "concepts of a discipline - relative and related to the needs of the learner" (Smith and Cowie, page 356), this implies the introduction of authenticity into the learning environment, which will in turn engage the interest of learners in the form of personally meaningful tasks.

In this context, Papert derides efforts by teachers to make educational contents relevant by, for example, pretending to be shopping as a pretext for having pupils add numbers (p. 25). But if we look at the Global Lab programme, for example, a science network for American high school students, we will see what really constitutes relevance of a subject and/or task. In their studies of mostly environmental topics, classes participating in the project usually gather data which are then posted on the Global Lab network in order to be compared with the findings obtained and posted by other classes around the world. In that way students "perform genuine scientific tasks that are plainly relevant to their lives" (Leslie, p. 1).

In the same vein, when Papert describes examples of computer use in the classroom where students collaborate on programming projects, he establishes not only the advantages computer-based environments offer in the form of a multi-disciplinary approach through a combination of, for example, mathematical and artistic skills, which will lead to a combination of talents inherent in students who would otherwise not unfold their true potential, but more importantly, we are shown classrooms in which mathematics can be experienced like a foreign language abroad rather than being taught and acquired in a
traditional setting. The term "Mathland" which Papert coined for this environment allows the students to make their way through a new domain - which, like most academic and, in fact, real-life domains, is complex, i.e. multi-dimensional, in nature - by a kind of trial and error approach. This fits in naturally with his postulate that "logic is on tap, not on top" (p. 167), since he deems formal logical thinking as an artificial construct as opposed to intuitive thought.

And it is in this process that students will encounter a teaching paradigm not previously encountered, i.e. programming's inherent bias "toward evaluation not by 'is it right?' but by 'where can it go from here?'" (Papert, p. 173) And while constructivism as such does not deny the existence of an incontestable reality, our efforts at deciphering the truth 'out there' will at best result in approximation based on a best-fit model of what we perceive the world to be like and reality (in Gruba and Lynch, p. 2) in a closely-defined context. Moreover, while traditional educational efforts are aimed at arriving at precise results, "cybernetics creates an epistemology of 'managed vagueness'" (Papert, p. 185), where students will have to find ways of approximating a solution by continuously adapting to the exigencies of a world that can - in all its infinity - never be wholly predictable, and thus they will be faced with the task of putting limited knowledge to optimal use making (Papert, p. 185), much the same as they are forced to do in "real" life. This relativity of constructivism which is caused by its inherent subjectivity means that multiple and complex representations of knowledge - deriving from the fact that cognition is not only a variable of the individual, but also of the situated nature of learning (Jones in Heap et al., p. 257) - will be produced in such learning environments, and are then likely to converge through "social negotiations and reflection upon individual practices." (Gruba and Lynch, p. 2)
4. New Styles of Learning Warranting New Styles of Teaching

Although it may be stating the obvious to say that new styles of learning warrant new styles of teaching, the nature of these adaptations may not be quite as obvious. While we have stressed the advantages of hypermedia "in supporting students in determining their own learning routes and making their own discoveries" (Latchem, p. 140/141), we have not yet dealt with problems that might arise from this approach of student-centred learning. Students lacking the "motivation and metacognitive skills of a self-regulated learner" (Harper, p. 1) might easily be disoriented by the mass of unstructured material thrown their way, and get lost in the maze of information so that they would need someone, in this case a teacher, to put them on the right path again by mapping the territory for them, i.e. by structuring the learning environment as a whole and, more specifically, the material to be accessed, so that students can "organise [their] understanding of what is going on" (Latchem, p. 145). Thus, for example, where the Internet is used to convey multi-layered information, knowledge structures underlying individual chunks of information need to be made visible (in Wild, p. 2), for knowledge will only be constructed if the meaning of the association is understood. In short, teachers will have to perform "a shift from didactic approaches to a constructivist approach" (Harper, p. 2).

Thus, instead of "teaching by telling", teachers will have to guide their students through the learning process, not least by fostering and co-ordinating peer tutoring in group learning environments. Encouraging "productive learner dialogue, interchange of ideas and negotiation of solutions" (Oliver et al., p. 2) through the selection of appropriate learning experiences to be reflected on by students through interaction with their peers will exploit the potential of collaboration to the fullest. Hence, as Jason Ohler, director of the University of
Alaska's educational technology programme, put it: "The teacher goes from the 'sage on the stage' to the 'guide on the side'" (in Leslie, p. 3). In the wider context it is crucial to the success of new technologies in schooling that the changes mentioned above actually take place, if the gap between students living in a "multimediated literate culture" and teachers mired in a "book culture" (Russell, p. 2) is to be closed. The education establishment therefore has to acknowledge the necessity to do away with "cyberspace aliens" in their midst, even if this requires far more than turning them into "teachers tourists", i.e. those who are not capable of exploiting the full potential of the Internet, but instead use it only as an electronic library (Russell, pp. 1 and 4). In the same vein, Khoo and Lou (p. 1) warn of equating the provision of technology-rich learning with good teaching, as it takes "the creative balance and integration of technology coupled with proven educational theories" to turn a lesson into a stimulating learning experience.

And while it may be difficult for teachers to view learning as an active, creative, and socially interactive process (Harper, p. 1), the recognition that knowledge, instead of simply being transferred, is something to be constructed by the learners themselves may be even more difficult to arrive at and account for. Acknowledging that there are more ways of learning than just their own, teachers can no longer assess their students' performances in terms of the learning path followed; instead the possibility of non-linear navigation through the material leaves room only for one legitimate question to be asked in this context, viz. whether the goal pursued was actually reached. This may be even harder to accept since "it is possible to be eclectic and build schemata of knowledge that do not conform to an expert or teacher's view of the world" (Forsyth, p. 17), and the only test they will have to stand is whether the learner can actually apply them in the situation for which they have been constructed.
Thus, teachers, instead of concentrating on learning contents will have to concentrate on learning processes in order to help students acquire the information-handling skills needed to be able to succeed in resource-based learning environments (Guri-Rosenblit, pp. 16-19), i.e. those in which "open-access, self-directed learning from a large information source" takes place (Taylor and Laurillard in Heap et al., p. 237). For the danger inherent in such learning environment is that students will have no sense of direction, unless the task assigned to them is put in an appropriate context, unless concrete aims are spelt out, and unless they are steered towards these by being blocked off from information irrelevant to the task, without actually being limited in their freedom to find their own definitions of the problem, problem-solving strategies and hypothesising on solutions (in Taylor and Laurillard in Heap et al., pp 245/246). In short, "it is the job of the constructivist teacher or interactive technology to hold learners in their zone of proximal development, by providing just enough help and guidance but not too much" (Strudwick, p. 4 and Azevedo et al.). Teachers aware of this new role would also be the ones to serve their students as models as far as the paradigm of lifelong learning is concerned, for where - until the more recent past - they were often left to their own devices when employed in small, rural schools, for example, they can now profit from the new technologies not only by retrieving information from data banks and the like themselves, but, perhaps as importantly, by exchanging subject-related information with colleagues scattered all over the world and thus being part of specialist virtual communities managing an up-to-date body of knowledge (in Leslie, p. 5).

5. The Information Society – Issues of Equality and Fairness
Although it has just been shown that new technologies are capable of supporting new styles of learning and teaching, the fact that far-reaching societal changes, which are already under way, will be reinforced, should not be overlooked. After all, the transformation process toward an information society will thus start very early on, thus encompassing ever larger parts of society. And in this context it has to be asked whether some of the trends are really to be welcomed or should not rather be countered, if, and this is really a big "if", this is still an option for anyone of us to exercise and we are not already mere objects manipulated by technological developments on which we as members of the society to undergo radical change no longer have any grip at all.

Thus, for example, we should not neglect the danger that children might suffer an overkill of "virtual" information which in turn might stifle their curiosity with regard to the "real thing", since it is arguably more comfortable to watch farm animals, say, in the cosiness of one's room rather than in nature. However, this is where the educational system might step in by trying to prepare "people in the skills necessary to systematise the selection process (...) which might help students become more discriminating judges of 'literature' available on the system" (Baldwin et al., p. 385). This task may be all the more pressing not only in view of ensuring quality material to be extracted as opposed to junk, but rather in view of the fact that in order to avoid information overload we may have to limit our use of information tools by accessing pre-selected and customised information only, i.e. information that caters to our preferences and fits in with our world views. Thus, students who are envied by previous generations for being able to tap into the world's resources of wisdom at the push of a button, might, "in the midst of plenty, become more narrow than [they] are now" (Baldwin et al., p. 385).
By the same token, virtual communities might come to replace real interpersonal encounters, and while these may have their benefits as regards the effective exchange of information, their ability to foster social learning, which should not be overlooked as one important aspect of learning in general, might be questioned. For while research studies have shown that technology-mediated communication is often socio-emotionally laden (Rogers, p. 53), "socio-emotional messages" might rather serve to construct "a vehicle for the transmission of task-related content." (Rogers, p. 209) And it is not only through learning increasingly taking place outside the realm of personal encounters, but also due to the fact that "the civilizing role of the arts and humanistic approaches to learning [may be] overshadowed by the scientific, right-wrong, computational areas of thought" (Mason in Heap et al., p. 179) that problems of de-identification may arise with a concomitant renunciation personal accountability and societal norms (Webster, p. 99). After all, "in cyberspace, when speaking anonymously or misidentifying oneself, the usual ethical and moral values are not enforced." (Connell in Baldwin et al., p. 391) Thus, children's development might come to lack components essential to their physical and mental well-being and social functioning, unless we can ensure that the virtual communities thus established take over some of the functions of human contact as involving respect and empathy (Baldwin et al., p. 396)

And precisely this last point should also be borne in mind when discussing the educational implications of interactive technologies, for questions of access and equality certainly have to be addressed. In dealing with these, the picture painted of the future of our society is usually a dismal one, since it may come to be characterised by an enormous discrepancy between those having access to technology-mediated information and those who don't (Baldwin et al., p. 393), to be found in all age groups and all forms of education and training. Thus, while people might contend that schools provide equally for children of low-
income families, these will almost invariably fall behind those students who grow up in a
technology-rich environment (Baldwin et al., p. 393). Likewise, their parents will be outdone
in their jobs by colleagues who are able to meet the exigencies posed by the call to arms as
incorporated in the slogan "lifelong learning". What is even more disconcerting in this context
is the fact that "the gap between the best informed and the least informed" is bound to
increase very rapidly as those in possession of knowledge and with access to more
information will continuously avail themselves of these resources, a fact which is certainly
reinforced by the ever shorter half-life of information, and which will be responsible for the
creation of an "information underclass" (Baldwin et al., p. 392).

What should be equally worrying in this respect is that the same holds true for the
world-wide community. The fact that information is not distributed equally across the globe is
pointed out by Nordenstreng and Kleinwächter who say that although "the rights to
information and communication are fundamental human rights, more than 70% of the world's
population are not able to enjoy this human right" (in Asante and Guddykunst, p. 88), with the
language gap further disadvantaging them, since 80% of the world's information stored on
computers is in English.

6. From an Information-rich Environment to an Educated Citizenship

However, the sting of some of these charges may be alleviated somewhat by pointing
out potential benefits of tailor-made interactive technology applications for the disabled or for
people whose geographic location would have meant their being cut off from formal
education before the advent of new technologies. If we take vision-impaired people, for
example, we have to acknowledge the fact that their lives can certainly be greatly enriched by
the development of special applications. While access to printed text in the form of audiobooks and Braille versions has long been assured, albeit at a high cost and in limited quantities only, independent and speedy non-linear access for reference purposes and note-taking has only recently been introduced in the form of hyperbooks compatible with screen reading techniques and compact disc technology incorporating a speech interface. Vision-impaired students are thus enabled to reclaim control over the learning process by not having to rely on others for the selection of what these deem appropriate material. Since, moreover, only a few additional hard- and software items are needed for regular CD-ROM based encyclopaedias and newspapers to be converted into material accessible by vision-impaired people, equality of access to topical and affordable material can be achieved (in Vincent and Taylor in Heap et al., pp. 224-236).

In the same vein, the example of specially designed courseware for minority indigenes or developing nations shows that, if dimensions of cultural variability are taken into account, other cultures need not be swamped by Western-style instructional products in what might be seen as a new colonisation wave, but can instead be provided with culturally-sensitive and culturally appropriate learning material that will actually deliver what it promises. Thus, courseware has "to incorporate design features that provide students with the means to control the matching of their academic learning tasks with their cultural and individual ways of learning" (Latchem, p. 171). In the example given of a programme designed for paraprofessional teachers in the north of Queensland, Australia, "current-traditional informal learning patterns" were accommodated not only by the structure in which the content was presented, but also by a number of multi-sensory elements, such as "simplistic animations", "bright colours" as well as "culturally specific music, language and images" (Latchem, pp. 175 and 176).
These two examples will have shown the importance of the appropriate design of courseware in individual cases, but we also have to deal with overall design requirements to be met if interactive material is to support the new learning environments in which interactive technologies can unfold their potential best. One requirement to be met if a constructivist approach is pursued, is to enable students to "see complex interrelationships and dependencies, by crisscrossing the 'landscape of contents'" (Strudwick, p. 4). This, however, entails the sequencing of information which means establishing what learners need to know before fresh information can be assimilated (Forsyth, p. 53, and Shute and Towle), and the existing knowledge to which this new knowledge can be linked. This has been called "cognitive bootstrapping" (Latchem, p. 84), and would, in turn, mean providing learners with "a concept map of information" (Forsyth, page 54) so that they can remain focused on their original task without losing their orientation in the mass and maze of learning material available. In this context, the term "information landscape" was coined, "which provides context and supports structures" (Harper, p. 8), so that the potential disadvantages of pure constructivist environments for students, viz. the need for strong metacognitive skills, can be overcome by incorporating "cognitive support tools" (Harper, p. 5) to provide for a learning environment acknowledging the advantages of the cognitive apprenticeship model. Since this is based on situated learning we would be well advised to account for an emotional factor which plays an important part in learning, viz. motivation. Thus, IMM courseware should be designed to provide for maximum stimulus in the beginning to engage the students by conveying a sense of the relevance of the topics studied (Latchem, p. 68), for only then will the learners be capable of effectively processing the information put in their path. Motivation should then be upheld by allowing them to monitor their progress and finally by providing them with a sense of achievement.
In short, "instruction should provide contexts (...) that will help the learner make sense of the computer-generated environment as it is encountered" (Strudwick, p. 3, and Monahan). This can, for example, be achieved by deciding on narrative as a unifying factor providing direction and coherence through its scaffolding abilities, thus turning the learning process into a more holistic experience in which the various features incorporated in IMM systems are combined so that they can best unfold their potential (in Bearman, p. 1). However, since instruction provided with the help of interactive technologies frequently fails to incorporate the findings outlined above, we are often faced with a situation not unlike the advent of the Xerox machines which enabled students to photocopy library material, thus freeing them from the time-consuming task of taking notes. Although new information-processing tools facilitate access to potentially unlimited information in contrast to a traditional library, there seems little difference in photocopying or downloading material, the effect in both cases being that large chunks of information can be "taken home".

And it is precisely here that alarm bells should start ringing, since the mere possession of information-rich material does not constitute learning, although students often tend to cling to the illusion that it does, happily surrounding themselves with stacks of papers the information content of which, however, is not accessed and processed at all and will thus not be transformed into knowledge. Hence, what we often have, is a student body that is in fact unable to avail itself of the true learning opportunities provided by the new technologies. What must be seen in perspective with both, the photocopying machine and information-processing tools, is the fact that although both free time from tiresome tasks, such as note-taking or locating information sources, this time should then not be wasted on photocopying ever larger paragraphs out of books or on downloading ever more computer files as a way of
soothing one’s bad conscience, but should instead be used to actually "sit down and study", i.e. convert information into knowledge.

And this is what some postmodernists such as Roszak lament when criticising the information society for viewing information in qualitative terms only by not differentiating between "data, knowledge, experience and wisdom" (Webster, p. 25). When he furthermore "insists that the ‘master ideas’ which underpin our civilisation are not based on information at all" (Webster, p. 26), we should realise that when we assess "information in non-social terms" (Webster, p. 28) we might in fact be exposing our children to a mass of symbols that no longer signify. Thus, especially young people who undergo a process of establishing their identities, in which sets of culturally learned and culturally shared symbols play an important part, might be disoriented, since truth has been replaced with a "plurality of truths" (Webster, p. 185), while "performativity criteria" have invaded the educational sphere, favouring knowledge of how to tap information sources over classical views of knowledge (Webster, p. 186). Thus, educators would be well advised to acknowledge the importance of new technologies by using them as vehicles in pedagogically structured and content-rich learning environments, while seeing to it that the medium does not become the message.

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RACE, ETHNICITY & THE NEWS: Sensitizing Young Journalists to Representations of Differences

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Abstract:
When the primarily white staff members of a college newspaper faced accusations of racism for publishing the mug shots of three black male students on the front page, they said race was never considered. As journalists are taught to be fair and impartial, a "non-consideration," "colorblindness," or "neutrality" with regard to race would fall in line with the qualities one would expect of journalists when covering stories. However, this non-consideration of race is often cited only when the subjects in a story are minority group members. This inherently suggests race is not considered when the subjects in a story are white. Using as a case study the college newspaper's publication of the mug shots of the three black male students and the statement by its staff that race was never considered, this paper takes journalism educators' and practitioners' long-stated role of impartiality and examines it in the context of growing research that finds that people hold implicit or unconscious attitudes toward race that affects their decisions. This paper concludes that the role of race should be included in the education of young journalists', and provides guidelines for the implementation of a course on race and the news.

Introduction:
In America, as in many nations throughout the world, the local news media's coverage of minority groups influences the way the dominant group treats them, both in interpersonal relationships as well as in public policy. In America, there is a history of news coverage of people of color – primarily Native Americans, blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and most recently Middle-Easterners -- that has formed an image in the minds of the white majority. News media is recognized as playing a significant role in that image. This paper looks at how a course was developed to sensitize young journalists to the issues of race and ethnicity in covering groups by looking at some recent examples of racialized reporting. The roots of this came about years ago during a talk I gave at a conference in Hartford, Conn. During the discussion portion of the talk, one of the attendees, a white journalist for a small-town newspaper, mentioned how he felt uncomfortable and unprepared to cover racial minorities, in this case, blacks, because there were no blacks on his staff. From my own experience as a journalism student three decades ago, no one addressed the issue of race when covering stories, despite the fact that race often plays an unconscious if not conscious role within most aspects of society. A recent event at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven, Conn., where I chair the Journalism Department and advise the student newspaper, brought the issue to the forefront once again in indicating the need for sensitizing those who will shape public views through their stories -- a need not just from the classroom.
perspective, but from the practical experience of applying it as staff members of the campus newspaper.

**A Case Study:**

In the Southern News – the weekly campus newspaper of Southern Connecticut State University -- the police mug shots of three freshmen students appeared on the front page of the May 3, 2006 issue under the headline “Charges pending for suspended students.” The three were arrested and charged with entering students’ dorm rooms and stealing digital cameras, cell phones, laptops and wallets. It was the first time that anyone could remember the mug shots of any students appearing in the campus newspaper -- despite there previously having been a student arrested for rape, and another arrested for having guns in his campus housing facility. The difference: The latter were white; the former – the ones with their pictures in the newspaper – were black. Two days later, a university alumnus and Youth and College Advisor for the Connecticut State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People sent an e-mail to numerous members of the campus' black students and faculty. A week later, the e-mail appeared in a letter to the editor of the Southern News. In the letter, he wrote that while he did not condone the behavior of the three students, putting their police mug shots on the front page of the campus newspaper did a disservice to other blacks on campus, of which minorities comprised 20 percent. Said the letter writer:

The persons responsible for the media lynching of the three Black male suspects involved, failed to consider that their actions symbolize the attacks of the white media on Black America for over 400 years. From criminalization to dehumanization, it is possible these photos have solidified guilt in the minds of white middle class academicians on Southern's campus. Furthermore, holding these students up to mock and scorn before all the campus has only reinforced the negative stereotypes that society often associates with young Black males. The operative question in this matter would then be, would this have been done if these students were white? Joining the ranks of Americas' media time honored tradition of wrongful deaths of the Black male image, clearly outweighs whatever positives you have done through past issues of Southern News. Your motives and intent in this matter must be called into question.

The primarily white staff felt some anguish over it. In an editor's note in a subsequent issue, the paper acknowledged the controversy its decision to run the pictures had caused, but said when the decision was made, race was never considered. Rather, the pictures were published simply because the students were arrested.

Said the editor’s note:

We do acknowledge that to some, this is a sensitive issue. However, we cannot allow that fact to get in the way of doing our job properly. We felt it our duty to show the pictures. By seeing a face with the crime, maybe it could help some students recover their lost items. Our motives were not racially driven. We would have published the photos regardless of race.

As the chair of the journalism department and advisor for the campus newspaper, I knew all of the parties involved on the Southern News staff. I had taught many of them in my
classes. I did not believe their intent was to cause harm, nor did I believe their motive in running the mug shots was driven by race.

However, as a black man, I had my own discomfort about the photos. It was a discomfort felt by many. One black student, a journalism major, said the publication of the photos made him feel as if he were a suspect. One black administrator expressed dismay that this could happen. Additionally, I also was concerned about the statement that when the decision to run the photos came up, race was never considered. This leads to the central theme of this paper: To what degree should journalists be sensitive to considerations of race when covering a story? More broadly, the question can be asked of journalists in other countries as it extends to include ethnicity, religion, and other areas that designate a group as a minority or underrepresented group.

For the purpose of this paper, a minority is defined as a group within a nation or society that is one or more of the following:

- A numerical minority
- A group with a history of being separated from the mainstream – socially, politically, economically or legally.
- A group with a relative recent history of being social outcasts (such as immigrants whose presence was acceptable in small numbers, but unbearable in larger numbers).

Returning to the central theme concerning race in news coverage, it should be emphasized that journalists are taught to be fair and impartial when reporting the news. That includes the entire newsgathering process. As such, if journalists – be they students or professionals – say they do not consider race when working on a story, that is, that they are, in effect, colorblind, then it can be said they are striving to embody what is expected of journalists: to be fair and impartial in an effort to report without bias. The argument to the contrary, that race should be considered and weighed on an ad hoc basis might be construed by some to mean that journalism should be "racialized."

So there is the argument that a story should be considered on its own merits, with no consideration of race. This view holds that all stories should be treated the same. That if a story involves any group, it should ignore any differences in the people involved in the story and just present as it is. The idea, again, is to be fair and impartial. Thus, the view that the story should be "race neutral." Surely one cannot have one set a rules for publishing (or not publishing) a story for whites and another for blacks, another for Muslims, another for Hispanics. So the view that race was not considered would seem a valid one. Indeed, my own policy with regard to the school newspaper has been not to ask the race or other factors of the sources involved in a story unless the staffer brings it up. It should be noted that as advisor of the school newspaper, my role is to guide staff members and offer advice and feedback to questions they may have in all aspects of publishing the paper. They, however, make all the editorial decisions, which is a right they maintain under the First Amendment, which covers college newspapers at public institutions in the United States. The discussion about running the photos never led to a discussion of race. My recommendation was that the editor publishes the pictures as long as the pictures were accurate. Had I known the students were black, would my answer have been different? Yes, it would. That is not to say I would have recommended not to run the mug shots. I would, however, have posed some questions and issues for the editor to consider.

For one, has the newspaper ever run mug shots of students before? If not, then why now? Would the staff be aware of the implications of running mug shots of black students here, but not running mug shots of white students arrested for worse crimes? As such, the fact that no
whites' mug shots had been published in the Southern News suggests there should be a conscious consideration of race when looking at publishing the mug shots of blacks. It should be a conscious consideration of race with regards to these minority group members, just as it was presumably an unconscious consideration of race with regard to the majority group members – the former whose pictures were not included; the latter, whose pictures were not.

With regard to the question of race as an issue, the view often is that unless one consciously and overtly makes decisions based on race, that person is absolved of being identified as being a racist intent on harm. This overlooks the fact that decisions previously made that treat the majority group favorably or disparately in a positive way, are also decisions that are race-based. As such, there is no colorblindness here if clearly one group has better treatment than others. That has been the case indicated in Robert Entman and Andrew Rojecki's book, "The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America." They noted that black defendants were four times as likely as whites to be featured in a mug shot in a local TV news report. While this is TV, the same can be said to exist with newspapers. Race seems to be playing a role in unconscious decisions of support with regard to whites and blacks.

This idea of unconscious decisions about race is an important one to consider, particularly when journalists or anyone says that their decisions are devoid of race consideration. Unconscious decisions rooted in race are something researchers Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald uncovered in the 1990s through an Implicit Association Test they developed. In their research, "implicit" is synonymous with the words "unconscious" or "unaware attitudes and beliefs" that people hold. Because the attitudes and beliefs are implicit, people are unaware of some of the beliefs or preferences they hold.

In further research by Greenwald and Banaji -- "Implicit Social Cognition: Attitudes, Self-esteem and Stereotypes," which appeared in a 1995 Psychological Review -- they explained that "The signature of implicit cognition is that traces of past experience affect some performance, even though the influential earlier experience is not remembered in the usual sense – that is, it is unavailable to self-report or introspection."

Accordingly, the college newspaper staff's assertion that race was not considered can be said to be valid only in the sense that it was not overtly or consciously considered. That is, there was no one saying "Let's run this mug shot of these black students to make blacks look bad, and never run such mug shots about whites." However, the research on implicit association finds that unconscious decisions on race are made all the time by everyday people. This would inherently include journalists, the latter whose actions emanating from their decisions, bear powerful consequences as evident by other considerable research on the effect of news media on shaping people's impression of others.

In Robert Entman's study, "How the Media Affect What People Think: An Information Processing Approach," Robert M. Entman pointed out that a standard assertion has been that "media affect what people think about, not what they think." He noted that his findings

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2 There is an active website on Implicit Association testing in which the public in America and numerous other countries can take the test to learn implicit attitudes not only on race, but on ethnicity, religion, gender and other areas.


4 Entman cited the works of Klapper, 1960; cf. McGuire, 1985 that stressed that audience members tend to screen out information they don't like; Neuman, 1986; cf. MacKuen, 1984 that said audiences not only pay little attention to the news, but also understand so little that the news could not effectively influence them; Lau and Erber, 1985 p. 60; McCombs and Shaw, 1972; MacKuen, 1984 pp. 372, 386; Parenti, 1985, p. 23; MacKuen
suggested that "the media make a significant contribution to what people think – to their political preferences and evaluations – precisely by affecting what they think about.

While he was referring to the political messages that newspapers presented to their readers, it would not be a tremendous leap of faith to say that a newspaper's message with regards to the selection of stories and images pertaining to race, ethnicity and religion would have a similar effect. That is, in regards to concerns of shaping racial attitudes, simply reporting a story or, in this case, publishing the mug shots of three black suspects, the news media sets the agenda not only on thinking about the three people pictured in the news for a crime, but how they think about the people charged.

Said Entman:

If the media (or anyone) can affect what people think about – the information they process – the media can affect their attitudes. This perspective yields an assumption of interdependence: public opinion grows out of an interaction between media messages and what audiences make of them.

The consideration then in regard to the mugshots of the three blacks on the front page of the Southern News is whether what white public opinion thinks about the three as individuals gets projected to members of the racial group to which the three belong. This is the consideration of the letter writer, as well as the black student journalist and other blacks on Southern's campus.

Returning to the issue of being a minority and showing the race of the criminal suspects, there is a big difference in how suspects who are minority group members are regarded in comparison to majority group members. In the case presented here, blacks are often construed to represent not just themselves, but the entire race; whites who are pictured are representing themselves. They are individuals. Minority group members, whether in America or some other country, do not have that luxury. This fear of being seen negatively by the majority group has a historic basis. Consider the letter-writer's term, "media lynching" to chastise the Southern News for its use of the mug shots of three black males.

It is a word that gained prominence following similar words used by Clarence Thomas during his Supreme Court confirmation hearings in October 1991. A black conservative, Thomas, who was facing critical questioning pertaining to an alleged incident of sexual harassment, referred to the hearings as "a high-tech lynching for uppity blacks." Since then, the term has been used to describe the news media's harsh treatment of blacks. When considering the brutal horror of lynchings in America\(^5\) in which, according to statistics from the Tuskegee Institute Archives, 3,446 blacks were killed over an 86-year period from 1882-1968,\(^6\) the use of the term lynching to signify anything other than the physical torture that was committed against black human beings deems the full horror of the word lynching. On the other hand, the American news media has played a significant role in contributing to the brutal practice of publishing stories of an inflammatory nature that, if not initiating racial animosity that led to lynchings, then certainly spurred such instances on.

In Richard M. Perloff's "The Press and Lynchings of African Americans," he said there was little doubt that press coverage of lynchings had a number of effects upon its audience.

\(^{5}\) See website Without Sanctuary: Photographs and Postcards of Lynching in America (www.withoutsanctuary.org)
\(^{6}\) The total number of overall lynchings in America was 4,742. Thus blacks represented 73 percent of all lynching victims. It has been said that these numbers are low estimates.
Among them, he said press coverage may have sown the seeds of "distorted beliefs about the prevalence of black crime."

Such was also said in Franklin D. Gilliam Jr. and Shanto Iyengar's "Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public" when discussing the effect of local news coverage. They said the association of violent crime and racial imagery that normally appear in the local news does not go unnoticed by the public.

In their work "The Role of Social Groups in the Persistence of Learned Fear," Andreas Olsson, Jeffrey P. Ebert, Mahzarin R. Banaji, Elizabeth A. Phelps referred to the tendency of each group to be more fearful of those of other groups. They said race was not the inherent basis for fear of other groups, but "instead, it is likely that sociocultural learning about the identity and qualities of outgroups is what provides the basis for the greater persistence of fear conditioning involving members of another group. Most notably, individuals acquire negative beliefs about outgroups according to their local cultures, and few reach adulthood without considerable knowledge of these prejudices and stereotypes."

They further added: "It is plausible that repeated exposure to information about outgroups might prepare individuals to fear newly encountered outgroup members."

Whether the fear is rooted in race or a perceived neutral learned behavior of any group different than one's own, the concern by blacks that the publication of the mug shots of other blacks might foster negative association by whites toward all blacks has merit.

Still, there are students, such as one in a class discussion on this issue, who will insist that seeing these images will have no effect upon them. That is, seeing blacks as criminals in a mug shot will not make them fearful of all blacks, particularly in an environment where there are many blacks and where whites have friends and acquaintances who are black. So the argument would then be that the transference of fear applies only to those whites who have zero to minimal first-hand interactions with blacks. At Southern Connecticut State University, where 10 percent of the 12,100 students are black, one might argue that this theory might thus be nullified. However, if the implicit attitude toward race is something that everyone acquires, then the amount of contact with those of other races would have only an effect on the conscious level. That is people know and will express the "right" thing to do, say or conduct themselves. There will be little that can be done to address their unconscious biases.

In "Easier Done than Undone: Asymmetry in the Malleability of Implicit Preferences," A.P. Gregg, B. Seibt and Banaji indicate while implicit attitudes are easy to acquire, changing or eliminating implicit attitudes is not easily done. As such, if one has an implicit prejudice attitude toward another group early on, it is difficult to undo it.

Reinforcing their finding through anecdotal evidence is the outburst of former "Seinfeld" television star Michael Richards at a Los Angeles comedy club in November 2006. As widely reported in America, Richards responded to a heckler with this remark:

_Fifty years ago, we would have had you upside down with a fork in your ass._

He was referring to the practice of lynchings.

With that statement alone, his rage against an individual jumped to a rage against a whole race. He would later say, in effect, that he did not have a racist bone in his body and that he didn't know where the rage came from. It just shot out of him, he said.

Supposing what he said was true, then where did his "stuff" come from?

Andrew Scott Baron's and Mahzarin R. Banaji's, in measuring the racial attitudes of white American children and adults in their 2006 study "The Development of Implicit Attitudes:

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7 Perloff cited, among others, the work of Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli.
Evidence of Race Evaluations from Ages 6 and 10 and Adulthood," reported that "implicit pro-White/anti-Black bias was evident even in the youngest group." The difference, however, is that among the white 6-year-olds, they, according to Baron and Banaji, acknowledged or self-reported their bias. However, while the same intensity of implicit race bias was found in the white 10-year-olds and white adults (whose average age was 19), these latter two groups did not display the same honest self-appraisal as the 6-year-olds. In other words, as they get older, they learn the socially acceptable way – also known as the politically correct way – to respond to questions about race.

As to whether this preference for one's own race is universal for any group, Baron and Banaji found that black American adults on average "lack an implicit in-group preference, instead showing no bias in favor of one or the other racial group, even though they report strong in-group liking on self-report measures." With regard to black children, they referred to the 2004 study "Implicit Race Attitudes in African-American and Hispanic Children," which measured the race attitudes in "12- to 14-year-old Black Americans who lived and attended school in Bronx, New York. That study found that black children replicated the pattern found for Black adults. Said the study: "In other words, at least by age 13, young black Americans do not show the in-group preference that has come to be the hallmark of white Americans, close to 80 percent of whom show some degree of in-group preference on the Implicit Association Test."

Returning to Richards' outburst against blacks, somewhere he learned about lynching as a controlling instrument to be applied to blacks. He consciously or unconsciously absorbed the history of America's racial past pertaining to blacks from formal and informal ways.

But with regards to the students at the Southern News, does the publication of the mug shots mean the staff members were racists?

While there was a certain blindness to the sensitivity of race, there are some other factors to consider that occur particularly with a college student newspaper that affect the editorial content of the newspaper.

For one, there is the natural turnover of staff due to graduation. This serves to bring about a change in editorial judgment and direction in the newspaper. As such, the decision on what story or picture to run can center on the resourcefulness and tenacity of the editor. The editor at the time the mug shots were published was resourceful and tenacious in obtaining the police mug shots of the three black students. Previous editors had the same opportunity to obtain police mug shots of the white rape suspects and the white student with guns in his room, but did not pursue that course of action. Had the current editor been editor earlier, perhaps he would have pursued mug shots then.

Of course, the public is unaware of all this. The public sees what appears to be a racial double standard. The fact is, whether by intent or accident, it is a double standard by the newspapers that is race-based. How can young journalists be sensitized to consider race when covering a story?

**Recommendation**

1. **Establish a journalism course that addresses the role of race and ethnicity**
   Included in journalists' education should be training that recognizes the role race and ethnicity plays in society. At Southern Connecticut State University, there has been a course called Race & the News that is currently a journalism elective. While a journalism course on race is not automatically going to eliminate what some might call a racial faux pas or others

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8 Baron and Banaji cited the work of Nosek, Banaji and Greenwald, 2002
9 Baron, Shusterman, Bordeaux & Banaji, 2004
might call the inevitable consequence of covering diverse groups, it would at least provide some reference from which to work in the course of their daily work as journalists.

2. Create a classroom environment conducive to frank discussions on race and ethnicity.

Achieving this involves establishing ground rules for discussions on race in which everyone participates and hears each other out. There have been times when I have taught the course that there was great tension building between groups. Race is a tough thing for many to hear and deal with. But dealt with, it must. In a Poynter Institute for Media Studies conference on race that I attended back in St. Petersburg, Fla., in 1999, Keith Woods, the facilitator used the expression that everyone be committed to "stay in the room." That is, regardless of how tough and uncomfortable some of the discussion gets, that everyone in the session agrees not to leave the room, but stay in, stick it out, listen, speak and work things out. It is important to create a nonjudgmental atmosphere where everyone is comfortable in expressing their thoughts and feelings.

One of the challenges that often arises with regard to race, ethnicity and increasingly in America, religious issues, is getting people of the various groups to talk about sensitive issues of race, ethnicity and religion. Generally, it is the majority group members who have trouble expressing their thoughts and feelings out of fear that they will be viewed as racists. It usually is not difficult to get the minority group members to talk. With regard to blacks in America, many often will unwaveringly recount their experiences of racism perhaps because they see themselves as victims. Conversely, many whites often will only express their sentiments with great reluctance, usually because they fear being viewed as perpetrators of racism.

One way of fostering an environment conducive to open discussion is getting students to know each other by addressing their assumptions. Pair off students and have them write down their answers to a few basic questions about their partner. The questions can be quite simple, relating to: The type of music this person likes best. Whether this person is "conservative" or liberal" (using your own definition). Whether this person is from a city, small town or the suburbs, whether this person owns a pet (if so, what kind?). Or the questions can get to the point: Does the person have any close friends of another race? What is the partner's view on affirmative action/diversity? What is the partner's view about people of my race?

I have found that getting students to do writings on their first awareness of racial and other differences is an effective way to explore their thoughts, feelings and experiences. Questions to ask: Describe your first awareness of race? How do you define yourself? Why do you define yourself this way?

They can be assigned into groups of four from which they produce in-class and out-of-class journals on their thoughts and feelings about the class discussions, readings or videos, then work together within their groups to share their impressions.

There will be those who will share views that some may find shocking, but it is important that the class members, while free to disagree, do so within the framework of respecting the person's right to express one's opinion and views.

All students have a story about their first awareness of race. Sometimes these stories and other experience shape who they are. It also fosters a good discussion point for the courses. The fact is students bring their experiences and "baggage" with them and it’s important for them to open up and show from where they have traveled and what they have accumulated along the way before there can be frank and open discussions. Once students are comfortable discussing race or ethnicity on a personal basis, they can look at the roots of race in the coverage of news. Then, take a look at the role of race in the American news process.
3. Use as Teaching Moments the Experiences that arise from Students' work on the campus newspaper

   The fact is, a course titled Race and the News has been offered as part of a journalism elective course for several years at Southern. Some of the students on the staff had taken the course. Yet, there was still a blindness to the sensitivities of race. It will happen. Classroom experience works best when tied to actual experience in covering stories for the news media. It took the hot heat of public scrutiny from some of the campus' black students and faculty to bring the issue to light. In this case, one rule does not fit all. Whereas, I think in hindsight, the mug shots should not have been published in light of the absence of publishing the mug shots of whites for worse charges, the then-city editor of the local New Haven Register, who is black, said he would have run it. But as he pointed out, he had previously published the mug shots of whites too. In other words, he had established a record of consistency with majority group members. The essence is consistency and awareness. That can only be brought to the light of learning through course discussions and experience attained through the campus newspaper.

Final Note:

   In concluding, it should be noted that in the following school semester, the new incoming editor of the Southern News took a step toward fairness and consistency: The next time a white student was arrested for a serious charge, his mug shot ran in the front page of the Southern News.

REFERENCES


Linking study tours of India and China to the Italian Language classroom in multicultural Australia

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Abstract: The paper provides an insight into teacher education programs, such as the study tours of India and China, organised by the Asia Education Foundation in association with the Australian Government. The programs aim to provide educators with a deeper understanding of the countries which make up the Asia Pacific region and the social impacts arising from the significant economic growth experienced by China and India. They provide a professional learning strategy for Australian educators which offer teachers opportunities to experience the aspects of the cultural diversity and social, political and economic issues of the countries of Asia in order to enhance participants’ skills and discipline knowledge of Asian studies. The programs promote the development of quality learning and teaching materials which serve to encourage students to develop greater knowledge and deeper understanding of Asia, consistent with the National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools. It is essential for educators to possess background knowledge together with a deeper understanding of the learning needs of students they are teaching. The in-country experiences provide teachers with opportunities to develop a network of Asia-skilled leaders in Australia and across Asia. The participants are presented with authentic cultural experiences which promote innovative ideas and aid in the development of units of work for use within state/territory curriculum frameworks. The challenge for educators is to implement new strategies and utilise new technologies within the context of the international classroom by engaging students with learning experiences which promote multicultural perspectives.

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Key words: Professional learning programs, teaching, learning, multicultural perspectives, values
The purpose of this paper is to present the positive outcomes gained through participation in the India and China Study Tour Programs. The professional learning programs are organised through the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) in association with the Australian Government and aim to provide Australian educators with a deeper understanding of the countries which make up the Asia Pacific Region. The Asia Education Foundation is a joint venture between the Asialink Centre, the University of Melbourne and the Curriculum Corporation with core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. Established in 1992, the AEF promotes and supports the studies of Asia across the curriculum in Australian schools. It works in partnership with all State/Territory Departments of Education in association with Catholic and independent sectors (Asia Education Foundation, 2006).

Consideration is given to various ways in which such in-country experiences may be implemented within the classroom to engage students with Asian studies in accordance with the National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). The paper provides an insight into the relevance of such teacher education programs and outlines the benefits gained through participation in these types of study tour programs. The challenge is to explore historical and contemporaneous links with Italy in order to engage student learning about other cultures. In addition, the paper outlines dissemination activities which have been designed to promote the India and China study tours as beneficial professional learning programs. The objectives are met by enhancing teacher knowledge and understanding about Asian cultural studies while examining global issues in relation to the emergence of India and China as a significant catalyst for social and economic change in relation to the global landscape.

The utilisation of new techniques and technologies within the classroom context include PowerPoint Presentations on India and China together with a short DVD using footage obtained whilst in-country. These have been developed for the purpose of engaging student interest in Asia. The PowerPoint Presentations and video footage have been instrumental in providing stimuli for further exploration of links with Asia. The students were required to respond to questions about various cultural aspects relating to India and China whilst comparing and contrasting life in Italy and Australia. Students were required to discuss their understanding of identity through culture and in this way discovered connections with their own cultural identity. Students from Indian, Chinese and other ethnic backgrounds shared information about their perception of differences and similarities between cultures, such as language, traditions, customs and religion.

Student-centred teaching and learning activities have been designed in association with the Connected Outcome Groups Identity Unit (COGs - Strand B) (State of NSW, Dept of Education & Training, 2006). The Human Society in Its Environment (HSIE) component outlines the expected outcomes and states that students develop knowledge and understanding of different expressions of Australian Identities. The cultural influences are expressed through significant events and symbols of Australian culture.

Students are encouraged to use an enquiry approach to acquire knowledge and skills with opportunities for social and civic participation. The ways in which Australians and Italians live are explored and students gain an understanding of how cultural differences are integral in shaping values which affect personal identity. A Creative Arts focus has been central to this topic in the past and there are opportunities to expand on the possibilities in this regard, particularly in the area of fashion and the textile industry in general. There have been areas where Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been incorporated within the activities in a rudimentary way but the challenge is to extend its use in a meaningful and authentic manner. The students were required to come up with strategies where the ICT may be embedded within the unit.

The units of work were developed in association with the Quality Teaching Framework in New South Wales Public Schools: A Classroom Practice Guide (State Government of New South Wales, 2003). The curriculum developed focuses around the Quality Teaching Action Learning (QTAL)
Project for which Oatley Public School received a $20,000 Australian Government grant. The objective of the QTAL project is to work collaboratively towards the integration of ICT into the COGs unit as there are limited SciTech outcomes associated with some units. The challenge remains for educators whereby it is necessary to design, develop and implement activities which engage students with the unit content while promoting multicultural values and perspectives.

The utilisation of PowerPoint Presentations provided a visual story of the experiences whilst travelling from southern India to the cities of the north. This has developed into a learning tool which serves to provide a window into regional and cultural differences which influence ways of life. Images of the drama of the Katakali performance provided students with the opportunity to learn about some local cultural entertainment and served to deepen their understanding and appreciation of differences in cultural representation. Religion was a prominent feature throughout the study tours and images such as those sourced from St Francis’ Church, the one time resting place of one of the world’s most important European explorers, Vasco de Gama, enlightened participants with the history and cultural influence of Christianity in southern India. A Muslim presence was evident in Cochin existing alongside Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. Religions of different ethnic groups appeared to co-exist.

The Ganges provided a spiritually uplifting and peaceful environment which was representative of timeless customs. The subsequent workshop delivered by Professor Mishra, founder of the Sankat Mochan Foundation, provided participants with the unique opportunity to learn about the ‘clean up’ the Ganges program and thus experience a different perspective of India. This experience raised the participants’ awareness about the need to preserve the environment for future generations. This professional learning experience has been utilised as an authentic cultural experience within the classroom environment. The children are empowered by learning about contemporary issues which affect real people and the environment.

Visits to monuments such as the Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort inspired many creative ideas about integration of Asian studies into the curriculum by way of the Florentine influence in the techniques used for the in-lay work which adorns the Taj Mahal. This formed the basis of exploration of historical links with India and Italy within the Italian Language & Culture Program at Oatley Public School. The digital images and video gathered during these field trips were collated and adapted for the classroom. These experiences were fundamental in facilitating reflection of contrasts which make up the customs and culture of India and provoked thought about ways in which learning materials could be developed to engage Australian students with Asian studies while making links with Italy.

The home stay in New Delhi offered participants an experience which promoted a deeper understanding about customs and traditions which impact on women in Hindu society. Throughout the home stay and school visit, participants gained a more profound understanding and appreciation of customs and traditions which make up the culture of modern India. The opportunity to share the experiences with other members of the group promoted discussion about the various programs and culture of the schools visited and enabled students to reflect on similarities and differences.

Images gathered throughout the school visit to the Christian Brothers’ school revealed a quality teaching and learning environment which offered a representation of contemporary school life. Oatley Public School children discussed the classrooms and were able to compare school life in the suburbs of Australia to what school life appeared to be like at St. Colomba’s School. Uniforms were discussed in addition to sporting facilities. The digital images provided the students at Oatley Public School a perspective of St. Colomba’s School, its facilities and playgrounds. In this way students enhanced their understanding about education in India. Comparisons could then be made with uniforms and classroom layouts in China also in relation to their own learning context.

Units of work which investigate historical and cultural links between Australia, Asia and Europe, particularly Italy are being prepared for further exploration. For example, the noodle,
introduced to Italy from China, evolved into what is Italy’s most notable staple foods, pasta. The area of interest to be further explored includes manufacturing of goods in China while examining the social impacts resulting from the manufacturing of goods in Italy and Australia by Chinese low paid workers. The new wave of globalisation is producing a new set of challenges for countries such as Italy in relation to manufacturing. An article entitled “Made in Italy at Chinese Prices” (Ehlers, 2006) addresses these issues in detail and there is discussion about the prospect of cheap labourers from Chinese heritage infiltrating the Italian Fashion industry and the consequences to the social structure. This is a contemporary issue whereby parallels can be drawn in relation to many developed countries around the world and provides authentic learning opportunities which will be explored further within the context of global issues.

In conclusion, the study tours have highlighted the importance of integration of Asian studies into the curriculum at primary school level. The relationships formed through the contacts made with schools in India and China facilitate the exchange of information about teaching practices in the broader international community. These links play an important role in the development of understanding and awareness about the history and cultural diversity which make up the customs and traditions of modern India and China. The professional learning outcomes have been achieved through the abovementioned dissemination activities. Relevant teaching and learning materials gathered whilst in-country continue to assist in the promotion of Asian studies within the Italian Language and Culture Program at Oatley Public School. These study tours have provided incentive to explore contemporary links with Asia in the areas of trade, tourism and manufacturing of goods. The rapid economic growth achieved by India and China in the current socio-economic climate provide relevant opportunities to explore current issues affecting society and in particular, education in the global landscape.
Technology and Service Learning: Facilitating Ethical and Intellectual Development in First-year Composition through Inquiry-Based Pedagogy

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The first-year writing sequence at my small, Midwestern United States college is similar to those of colleges across the nation in that we envision ourselves facilitating development in both writing skills and critical thinking. Moreover, we do so in a historical context wherein liberal education is seen as carrying out a moral purpose in the service of democracy. In the words of Thomas Jefferson, “the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty” is to “educate and inform the whole mass of the people” (“Comments” 123), that they may be raised “to the high ground of moral respectability necessary to their own safety, and to orderly government” (“Aristocracy” 285).
As language arts bear a distinct association with moral education that dates to the rise of democracy in Greece, it is not surprising that contemporary scholars in Rhetoric and Composition have taken up this mantle. For example, John Trimbur identifies “a move to reconceive . . . First-year Composition as rhetorical education for citizenship” (248), while Lynn Bloom observes that a major role of writing instruction is to assimilate students into the “whys and hows of good citizenship in their college world” (“Middle-Class” 656). Sandra Stotsky similarly asserts that our task is to introduce students to “the academic principles that should guide thinking and learning about any topic . . . academic manners as well as academic mores” (795), correlating academic writing to “participation in a republican form of self-government” (798). To facilitate this task, it is important to understand the processes by which the individual develops an independent moral compass. In the following discussion, I will outline one scheme for explaining these processes, loosely apply this scheme to my classroom experience, and suggest implications for future research.

**William Perry: Ethical and Intellectual Development in the College Years**

The central question is how students move from a position of rote conformity with inherited values and beliefs to a position in which they take rational responsibility for unfolding and evolving ethical commitments. Among the most prominent researchers into this question is William Perry, former head of the Bureau of Study Council at Harvard University. Perry’s team of researchers set out to describe the manner in which college students develop the ethical/intellectual capacity to deliberate on the complexities of meaning and so draw their own *reasoned* judgments. Among Perry’s assumptions are that moral development is concomitant to intellectual development, that the process is generally progressive, and that education can facilitate this progress.

Based on Adorno, et. al.’s research into the authoritarian personality and G. G. Stern’s work in values and personality, Perry and his colleagues developed *A Checklist of Educational Views* (CLEV), which was given to a random sample of 313 entering freshman in 1954. From these, 31 students were selected for interview in late spring during each of their college years, yielding 98 interviews and 17 records which spanned all four years (8). A second sample, drawn from the classes of 1962 and 1963...
brought the total to 464 interviews and 84 complete four-year records (17). From analysis of these interviews, Perry developed the following scheme of ethical and intellectual development.

Perry’s Scheme
According to Perry, ethical thinking consists in “forms,” which “characterize the structures which [individuals] explicitly or implicitly impute to . . . the nature and origins of knowledge, of value, and of responsibility” (1). Individuals bring personal forms to bear on experience as “expectancies” which then interact with forms “humanly discernible as ‘inherent in the environment’ of the experience” (46). To create meaning, individuals must create order between their expectancies and those at variance with them. Doing so requires assimilating and accommodating emerging forms into their expectancies. Assimilation occurs “by means of selection, simplification, or distortion” of new forms in ways which maintain expectancies, while accommodation occurs “by means of recombinations and transformations which result in new forms of expectancies” (ibid.).

Forms adhere to “structures,” which “may be classified in accordance with their formal attributes, for example, ‘dualistic,’ ‘relativistic,’ and so forth” (47). Ethical development consists in progression through these structures, from dualism, which requires no moral commitment, as truth is absolute, to a mature commitment to action upon unfolding, evolving knowledge and values.

From the formal properties of structures, Perry identifies nine “positions” in the individual’s intellectual and moral development, grouped into three overlapping categories. “Position” is not tantamount to “stage,” as it 1) does not bear assumptions of stability (51) or duration (53), 2) represents “a central tendency or dominance among [a range of] structures” expressed by the individual and 3) correlates to “point of outlook” (54). As “position” is therefore less restrictive and evaluative than “stage,” an individual may be observed to shift between positions as new knowledge emerges and may be at different positions with regard to different bodies of knowledge.

Category One – The Modifying of Dualism or Dualism/Received Knowledge
The first of these categories, inclusive of Positions One through Three, Perry describes as the “Modifying of Dualism.” Position One is characterized by “Basic Duality,” an “epistemological
innocence” (67), in which the individual sees the world in black and white terms of good and evil, right and wrong, “us” versus “them.” Knowledge is complete and invariable, “a collection of information” (xxxi) to be passed on from teacher to student. What is required from this standpoint is conformity, adherence to authority, obedience.

Such certainty is swiftly disrupted by education. Upon discovering that some areas of study, such as the humanities, are subject to greater disagreement than others, such as math and science, the individual moves into Position Two, “Multiplicity Pre-legitimate.” which continues to be characterized by dualism. A “bifurcation” occurs at this point. In one manifestation, Multiplicity is acknowledged, but seen as “alien” (81). Students in this position may find comfort in areas of study which appear more certain, thus adhering to Position One beliefs about Authority. Or they may see Multiplicity as an imposition by “willful Authorities who are failing in their mediational role” (ibid.). Thus, when confronted with answers to questions in “fuzzier” disciplines or when confronted with uncertainty in areas perceived to be more certain, the student may at first be beset by confusion, later moving into opposition, even scorn, retreating into his former position and identifying the sources of Multiplicity as enemies.

In the contrasting manifestation, the student continues to assume that Authority “knows his business”; thus the student perceives complexities as an “obstacle course” designed to teach students how to independently seek the right answers (81). Pluralism is reduced to “procedural impediment,” thus Multiplicity is “temporary, good for the mind, resolvable, and . . . unreal” (87) rather than alien. Like his counterpart, this student adheres to Position One beliefs about Truth and Authority—the former yet unattainable, the latter knowing what is good for students. While this student may be initially inclined to see Authoritative sources of Multiplicity as benevolent, if the student perceives the instructor as simply making work, he, too, may take a stance of opposition, seeing interpretation as irrelevant to the course or fleeing to fields which seem more tangible and pragmatic than those in which he is persistently asked to interpret. Despite these difficulties, Position Two represents change in that students have begun to perceive a responsibility to think for themselves.
Ultimately, this newfound responsibility pushes the student toward Position Three, “Multiplicity Subordinate” or “Early Multiplicity,” in which the student comes to acknowledge Multiplicity and thus uncertainty, even in the so-called “hard” sciences, while still retaining his certainty that, as right answers to everything are “out there,” we do not know everything yet. As Authority is likewise uncertain, the student perceives that any answer should be as acceptable as another. Distrusting authority, he becomes preoccupied with the validity of evaluation, often judging the instructor as arbitrary or unfair. Given that answers cannot be right or wrong, the student perceives that the value of an answer lies in the quantity of work put into it. Indeed, quantifiable measures dominate this position: the length of a paper, the amount of reading required, the duration of an instructor’s exposition on a particular point, the degree of hard work put into an assignment. The student may also exhibit indifference to solutions, as no one can be said to have the right one.

Meanwhile, he interprets theory as guesswork, rather than as a systematic explanation of phenomena.

**Category Two – The Realizing of Relativism or Multiplicity/Subjective Knowledge**

In Perry’s second category, the Realizing of Relativism, the student comes to recognize the problematic Multiplicity of human knowledge, to acknowledge the salience of context, and to “foresee the necessity of personal Commitment in a relativistic world” (65). Position Four, “Late Multiplicity,” marks the student’s move into this category. Once again, a bifurcation takes place, such as that which characterized Position Two. Student A may move toward “Multiplicity Correlate, a position of Opposition, while Student B may move toward “Relativism Subordinate,” a position of Adherence. Although each of these terms represents a “distinct restructuring of the world” (ibid.), Perry’s research team came to see these restructurings as “developmentally equivalent in that each represented an ultimate extension or accommodation of the old fundamentally dualistic structure” (ibid.).

In Multiplicity Correlate, the oppositional position, the student perceives ambiguity as a “playground” (107) of opinions, the right to which is universal, the validity of which is indeterminable. As no one “knows” anything, one Authority is as good as another, and the student himself is free to hold whatever opinion he please. Here we have what Perry calls a “dual dualism” (109), one element of which is the “right-wrong world” (ibid.), the other element of which is
Multiplicity. With no measure for “better or worse,” supported or unsupported, the mildly oppositional student may respond to the necessity of evaluation by attempting to figure out what the teacher wants and giving it to her, while the more reactive student may see evaluation as the unjust imposition of the teacher’s biases and prejudices. This position, too, may thus be marked by distrust of authority and indifference to solutions.

By contrast, in “Relativism Subordinate,” the student does not pit Multiplicity against Authority, but sees Relativism in Multiplicity “in the context of the Authority’s world” (111). Emphasis shifts from what They want us to think to “the way They want us to think” (ibid.), reflecting a move into thinking about thought or “meta-thought” (112). As the student begins to recognize that problems require more than one approach, he begins to understand what it means to think independently. The paradox is that the student may emulate this process of reasoning as an effort to conform to what is expected of him. Thus, coherence and congruence may not represent genuinely independent thought but rather “independent-like” (113) thought. Nevertheless, a student marked by Relativism Subordinate has begun to recognize “[t]he distinction between an unconsidered belief and a considered judgment” (115), as well as the relevance of context to one’s answers, with the responsibility implied therein.

Students in Position Four thus face a choice, whether conscious or unconscious. They may detach into a world of “anything goes” (119), becoming rebellious or reactionary, or they may find comfort in the knowledge that “everyone is in the same boat” (120). Regardless of the direction they take, so long as they remain in Position Four, they must account for Multiplicity, which at this position they do by restructuring it into the dualism with which they began. Relativism remains subordinate, “a special case” (123). At this point, further growth requires a “revolution” in thinking, as their dualistic scaffolding fails to assimilate “the expanding generalization of Relativism” (122). This necessary revolution, Perry claims, occurs at Position Five, “Contextual Relativism,” which may manifest as Relativism Correlate, Competing, or Diffuse (ibid.).

Gradually, relativistic thought becomes “habitual” (124), freeing attention from “method” to “the matter at hand” (125), marking the transition to Position Five, in which the student recognizes
that Authority is not only asking him to think this way, Authority, too, must think this way. “[T]wo structurally different paths” (128) are represented here, Relativism Correlate and Relativism Competing. In the former, students divide the world into areas where they perceive answers to be authoritative, such as math and physics, and those in which relativism applies, such as English. In the latter, the student perceives Relativism as applicable to all areas of study, but alternates this view with previous dualistic views. Thus both positions are marked by vestiges of previous positions.

The revolution is complete when the student moves from one of the above positions to Relativism Diffuse. The student now sees Relativism as pervasive, though he is not yet aware of the implications this entails. New possibilities open up as the student measures study not by the quantity it entails, but by the quality of ideas. Thus, he takes on a new assumption that proposed solutions must be examined in context and with regard to the reasons given for them. He becomes aware that reasoning methods vary by discipline and begins to distinguish between “Connected Knowledge,” which has to do with empathy and deals with why one believes what one does and how the various arts speak to the individual; and “Separated Knowledge,” which is subject to “objective analysis.” As a result, his relationship with Authority is altered as he develops a sense of belonging to a community of scholars. The student gains the capacity for detachment and objectivity, though he may remain unaware of the need for Commitment or may perceive this need but be unaware of the path to Commitment.

The remaining position in this category, as well as the positions in Category Three, “Commitment in Relativism,” involve the path to Commitment. In brief, students in Position Six, “Commitment Foreseen,” have accepted Relativism “for all secular purposes” (overleaf) and have come to perceive that Commitment is “the resolution of the problems of Relativism” (153). However, this position does not entail Commitment.

Category Three – Commitment in Relativism
Eventually, the student must come to grips with the necessity for Commitment in a relativistic world.

In Position Seven, “Initial Commitment,” the student has decided of his own accord “who he is, or who he will be” (170) and is beginning to see the implications. Though he may experience some
“relief in settled purpose . . . he feels strongly defined by the external forms typifying the role he has chosen (for example, medical student, doctor)” (171). In Position Eight, Orientation in Implications of Commitment, external forms take a back seat to stylistic issues, that is, questions of how to carry out the Commitments formed in Position Seven. Finally, Position Nine, Developing Commitment(s), represents “a maturity” in which he self-identifies with his Commitments “both in their content and in his style of living them” (ibid.).

The above summary of Perry’s positions does not suggest that ethical and intellectual development is a linear process. Indeed, as this process calls for deep self-examination and disrupts one’s “safety zones,” it requires great courage. Thus, the process may be suspended, nullified, or even reversed (198) as students seek more comfortable alternatives to growth.

**Alternatives to Growth**

Perry identifies three alternatives to growth: Temporizing, Retreat, and Escape. Temporizing, as Perry defines it, is “a pause in growth over a full academic year” (199). Often a student is aware that he is waiting, even expressing, “I’m not ready yet” (ibid.). Or a student may experience what Perry calls “lateral growth—a spreading out and consolidation of a Position recently attained” (199). Individuals are subject to temporizing at any position on the scale and although it does not entail alienation, the potential for alienation exists.

Retreat occurs when a student falls back on a previously held position. While rare, it tends to be dramatic and marked by opposition. Retreat takes a variety of forms. The student may experience “Reaction,” becoming anxious, resentful, and irritable in the face of Multiplicity. The student may even become a “Dedicated Reactionary,” an adherent of Authority, certain of his own rightness, hateful of Otherness, and rejecting of complexity (205). Another student may suffer “Negativism,” displaying passive resistance [to] Authority.” Yet another may become a “Dogmatic Rebel,” standing in opposition to authority “without contingent judgment” (overleaf).

Escape, by contrast, may follow two paths, one “toward dissociation” (212), “as passive delegation of all responsibility to fate”; the other “toward encapsulation,” a sort of “gamesmanship” or “opportunism,” in which activity is encapsulated away from “the implications of deeper values” (213).
The dissociative student “dissolves” identity. On the one hand, the student may “wash out [the] self” in Multiplicity, rubbing out the intellectual process to the tune of “Anything Goes.” On the other hand, the student may experience “dissociation in Relativism,” erasing the self through intellectual gamesmanship and by avoiding Commitment (overleaf).

By contrast, the encapsulating student retains identity by encapsulating either Multiplicity or Relativism. The former student may display a forbearance of Multiplicity for Others so long as it serves Authority’s purpose and doesn’t upset [his] own Authority structures.” Such a student may display a “[l]oose cynicism,” by which she “uses Multiplicity to defeat all value statements (except affirmation of self as nihilist).” The latter student, by contrast, may “exploit” Relativism, “for Authority’s purposes while never turning it against an Authority structure. Here one may see a “Rationalistic cynicism,” in which the student overcomes all values statements by means of Relativism “(except affirmation of self as nihilist)” (overleaf).

The identity of the encapsulating escapist is marked by limitation. She may be “dependent,” completing tasks out of mere obedience. She may be “outer directed,” deriving satisfaction from tasks as a sort of performance for external authority or peers. Or she may be “inner directed,” locating “identity in [the] autocracy” of her moral rightness. This student, too, may derive satisfaction from “performance” (overleaf).

Yet Perry notes that “Alienation in Escape need not be permanent” and may, indeed, be temporarily necessary to an individual’s further growth (221). He, therefore, sets the teacher’s task as “recognition and confirmation” (223) of students experiences in whatever position we find them. Perry argues that this “enjoins upon educators . . . a visibility in their own thinking, groping, doubts, and styles of Commitment” as well as “the duty of confirming the student in his community with them” (239).

While Perry’s analysis remains relevant to student development, it is important to note that his study was conducted in a vastly different culture than the one in which we currently live. United States neighborhoods and schools, as well as the world of ideas, have become increasingly diverse. The fear brought on by the Cold War, once abated, has resurfaced in response to global terrorism. Rising healthcare costs, the instability of oil prices, and huge national debt leave United States citizens
feeling less economically secure as well. The result has been a marked shift in values trends over the last twelve years, which may make the task of moral and intellectual growth even more daunting.

**Values Trends in the United States**

Former pollster Ted Nordaus and public relations executive Michael Shellenberger set out to clarify “the measurable components of worldview” by examining one hundred seventeen “social values trends,” such as “‘time stress,’ ‘joy of consumption,’ and ‘acceptance of violence’.” From an analysis of corporate data assembled from 1992 to 2004, Nordaus and Shellenberger found an increase in authoritarianism coupled with increased feelings of isolation and nihilism, representing a populous that is “at once more libertine and puritanical” (Franke-Ruta 41), among whom solidarity and social equity is declining and violence becoming accepted as a “‘normal part of life’” (41-42). By grouping related survey questions, Nordaus and Shellenberger developed a set of “‘social values trends,’ such as ‘sexism,’ ‘patriotism,’ or ‘acceptance of flexible families’” (42), which they applied to a values matrix that opposes fulfillment against survival and authority against individualism.

According to their analysis, the last dozen years have shown a marked trend away from fulfillment, “home to such values as gender parity and personal expression,” toward survival, “home to such values as sexism, fatalism, and a focus on ‘every man for himself’,” as well a move away from authority, which emphasizes “responsibility, duty, and tradition” toward a “rage-filled” individualism “that values consumption, sexual permissiveness, and xenophobia” (43). What struck me, admittedly anecdotally, is the way these trends reflect values often displayed by our students. Three examples will suffice for my purposes:

**Raunch Culture**

“Raunch Culture,” a term coined by cultural critic Ariel Levy, describes a hyper-sexualized environment aptly represented by the “Girls Gone Wild” video series, which encourages shameless sexual exhibitionism among college aged females and voyeurism among their male counterparts (Franke-Ruta 42). While some question exists as to whether the women on video number among our college students, students at my college report acts of pseudo-lesbianism for the entertainment of male students and speak or write of sexually promiscuous behavior in reflective journals. In one instance, a
student produced a “memoir” for her senior project which proudly detailed her sexual escapades. Fortunately for the committee who was to evaluate her work, her mentor pushed her to excise graphic sexual scenes. Meanwhile, raunch culture is also reflected in the rise of more and more violent video games, which students defend as “all in fun.” Raunch culture may be easily seen as an avenue of Escape—as individuals “dissolve the self” in permissiveness. Individuals engaging in or defending raunch appear to be encapsulating relativism, exploiting it as a means of belonging. In this instance, Authority may be seen as a cultural landscape which students perceive as ubiquitous.

**Materialism**
That the United States is a consumer-oriented culture is not news. However, the extent of contemporary consumerism is worth noting. The upward trend in materialism is reflected in average home size, doubled since 1950, to an average 2,349 square feet (Adler), which has occurred even as average family size is shrinking. Meanwhile, personal bankruptcy in the U.S. has reached an all-time high, as consumer debt has risen in excess of disposable income at an annualized rate of 4.5 over the past half decade (Wasik). Consumerism, too, is reflected in student work, as in the following:

> I got a new car when I was sixteen. I’m sure everyone else did, too.

> My American Dream includes a $350,000 house.

While the former comment normalizes materialism, the latter suggests a concrete measure of material “success.” In addition, the former bears the assumption that everyone is like the speaker, suggesting a “we” that bespeaks dualism. Consumerism, too, is a form of escape, as identity dissolves into the clothing labels one wears or the car one drives. Here Authority may be derived from a conflation of capitalism with liberty and democracy. As one student remarked, “In America, everyone is free to buy whatever they want.”

**Xenophobia**
Meanwhile, many citizens of the United States feel threatened, leading to an increase in xenophobia. Here the problem is not so much concern over ineffective immigration laws, a topic for reasoned debate, but the racial attitudes citizens express toward non-citizens. As an example, states and cities
across the country have taken up “English Only” debates, perceiving immigrants as stubbornly refusing to conform and thus a threat to the stability of U.S. “culture.” Xenophobia is likewise expressed in student papers, as in the following comments:

Mexicans are taking our jobs.

Muslims hate us because of our freedoms.

When reminded by another student that they are in college because they don’t want the kinds of jobs “Mexicans” are taking, the former student simply remarked, “But they shouldn’t be able to come here if they can’t speak our language”—a remark which assimilates emerging multiplicity to dualistic notions of “us versus them.” Indeed, as these comments reflect, diverse Latin American and Islamic cultures are reduced to homogeneity under rubric umbrellas, which serve to make identification of “them” more simple.

The above examples are not to suggest that raunch culture, materialism, and xenophobia are pervasive. Indeed, observation of students in my first-year courses suggests that these values trends exist in a tug-of-war with more positive values. Indeed, it is critical that teachers remember that students are not unethical or amoral, but young.

The First-Year Writing Series
First-year Writing at my small Midwestern college is a two-semester sequence, the first of which focuses on basic composition skills, the second of which overtly emphasizes critical thinking skills as well. The catalog description of the first semester course, Composition, includes the following:

The emphasis is on developing an individual voice and on learning—through reading, discussion, and expository writing—to shape experience, discover ideas and communicate effectively in a variety of rhetorical situations.

While the title of the course suggests a focus on basic skills of grammar, usage, and composition, in terms of Perry’s scheme, the notions of “individual voice,” “learning to shape experience,” and “discover ideas” suggest that a major aim of the course is to facilitate students’ movement from dualism to nascent recognition of multiplicity. One assumption, then, is that students will be hovering
around Position Three or beyond, at least within particular contexts, as they enter the second semester course, Critical Thinking and Writing, the catalog description of which includes the following:

Continued practice in the writing process, with assignments that teach students to deliberate on issues and ideas they might encounter in the humanities, the arts, and the social and natural sciences, and to present carefully reasoned, well-supported, and—where appropriate—documented arguments in support of their opinions on these issues and ideas.

As the title and description make clear, the purpose of this course extends beyond compositional skills to that elusive concept called “critical thinking,” defined by Brazilian educator Paolo Freire as thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and the people and admits no dichotomy between them—thinking which perceives reality as a process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity—thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved. (73)

Critical thinking may be said to encompass what Perry calls “meta-thinking,” the ability to think about thought, specifically one’s own thought (Perry 37). The question for the educator, of course, is how best to facilitate critical thinking in students. Below I contrast a curricula and pedagogy based in Authority to an inquiry-based curriculum and pedagogy, in which students formulated research questions and sought out their own authorities with guidance from the instructor as to how Authority may be measured within a particular line of inquiry.

**Teaching Multiculturalism: Authoritative Approach**

A major challenge facing colleges across the U.S. is how to address the similarities and differences of the broadly diverse cultures which make up our nation, a task which has garnered much controversy in the public square.¹¹ This challenge is compounded at rural Midwestern colleges which have little diversity among the student population. Many majority students arrive for their first semester having

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had little to no contact with peers or authorities from minority cultures. Indeed, they often overtly choose this school for its small-town location and familiar, homogenous environment.

Before coming to this college, I had gained experience teaching multiculturalism at a large Midwestern university with a considerably more diverse, as well as more urban, student population. At the university, I taught in a computer lab and was known as an advocate for a somewhat controversial student-centered, inquiry-based pedagogy grounded in the philosophy of Freire. I used no textbook in Composition or Critical Thinking classes, preferring the more immediate experience of up-to-the-minute readings and multimedia inquiry. As I was now at a more traditional church-based school, I opted to return to a more authoritative pedagogy until I was better known by fellow faculty and administration. Understanding that I was now facing a more parochial student demographic as well, I chose to focus on the diversity of our home state as a means of easing them into issues of global diversity. Thus my search for a suitable textbook began.

**Textbooks**

An underlying assumption of textbook editors seems to be that the center of the nation is relatively homogenous, save for a handful of African-Americans and Native Americans. Thus readings tend to focus on urban life, life in the rural south, or native experiences in locales where indigenous peoples are populous and visible. Iowa provides a stark contrast to such regions. Thus I faced a challenge in locating a reader that addresses the diversity my students are most likely to encounter in their immediate futures.

For example, while coastal cities boast large populations of Japanese- and Chinese-Americans with a long history in the U.S., the Asian population of the rural Midwest is largely Southeast Asian—Vietnamese, Lao, and Hmong, with a recent history. In rural and suburban areas, the handful of Southeast Asian public school students are often assimilated by their peers (at least in their visible lives), their difference in appearance becoming an “exotic” marker rather than a real difference. The case is often very different in urban areas where Southeast Asian populations are considerably larger. Such populations are better able to sustain their cultures both at home and in public. As a result,
students often group by ethnicity and are susceptible to ethnic gangs in more troubled parts of the cities. Perception of Southeast Asian-Americans are likely to vary accordingly.

Meanwhile, eastern coastal cities boast large populations of Cuban-Americans and Puerto-Rican Americans while western coastal and southern border cities boast large populations of Chicano/as. By contrast, despite two mid twentieth-century waves of Mexican immigration into the southeast region of my state, mass Latino/a immigration into most of white rural Iowa is a phenomenon of the last decade. Thus my students are less likely to encounter Chicano/a-identified individuals that they are to encounter Latino/as who identify with their home cultures. Students often subsume these diverse newcomers under the rubric “Mexicans” and, being unaware of our state’s strong history of Mexican immigration, often view them with hostility, a problem exacerbated by often hostile statehouse rhetoric concerning “English-only” education and protection of our borders.

An additional challenge in adopting a textbook is that readings are often selected from African-American writers and/or historic documents from the Civil Rights Era. Unfortunately, for students unexposed to diversity in their daily lives, this limitation often encourages the view that discrimination is “over,” that blacks have achieved equality. The case is similar with regard to Japanese-Americans. These difficulties notwithstanding, I ultimately settled on a composition reader that, while still problematic, offered readings which addressed more recent Vietnamese and Latino/a immigration.

The Class
During my first fall semester, I taught one section of Composition in a traditional classroom, consisting of sixteen white Midwestern students, the majority of whom came from small towns or were raised on farms. A native of the state, I share their background, although I moved nearly thirty years ago to a city fifteen minutes from the small town which houses their campus. As these students thus perceived the group to be homogenous, I first assigned a short essay on their ethnic heritage, in an effort to demonstrate that diversity is not alien, that similarities are more common than differences, and that seemingly homogenous groups are diverse within themselves. Their response was, as we say in the Midwest, “like deer in headlights”—perplexed, frozen in their tracks—a reaction I expected.

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12 I modify the term with an “a” to indicate the feminine.
However, their paralysis was short-lived as they reached out to parents and grandparents, very often learning a family history they had never known, and began to see differences among themselves. Yet I found difficulty in following the assignment with meaningful readings, for as mentioned above, textbook focus tended to be urban. Still, the reader offered one reading about Scandinavian settlers in the Midwest—a common heritage among my students.

As we moved into study of Native, African, and Vietnamese Americans, a number of the anticipated concerns surfaced. For example, students were overwhelmingly sympathetic to the plight of Native Americans, but until I introduced them to the music of Keith Secola and His Wild Band of Indians, their views of native populations centered on unproblematicized historic and racist images of the “Noble Savage” or contemporary, despairing, equally racist and unproblematic visions of impoverished, uneducated reservation occupants. Thus they tended to perceive Secola as an exception to the rule, leaving their dualistic views comfortably intact. Here the cultural Multiplicity represented by Secola was seen as alien, a stance which denotes Position Two, Multiplicity Pre-legitimate.

Meanwhile, as our readings tended to focus on historic events, they struggled to perceive actual culture, accordingly conflating the diversities within ethnicities. With regard to African American cultures, in particular, they reduced contemporary black culture to popular music and film, media which frequently depict, even self-portray, blacks as violent and/or oversexed. Thus they asked, “Dr. J, aren’t you afraid to live in your [largely black and Latino/a] neighborhood?”—a question they defended as non-racist upon classist assumptions that my neighbors, being poor, are more likely to commit violent crime. Similarly, they dwelt on the crime of illegal immigration when discussing Latino/a cultures. In addition, they perceived violence within both groups as a physical threat to those outside the groups, namely whites. In short, Authoritative views of the Other continued to hold sway, again a sign of Position Two.

In the interest of space, I will not belabor my point. Despite the introduction of supplemental sources to offset limitations of the readings, students held to trite notions of multiculturalism. While they usually spoke as if open to diversity, they seemed more concerned with not appearing racist than

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13 A rock group which has achieved stardom among indigenous youth.
ferreting out pockets of racism within the greater society, themselves, or even their teacher. Moreover, as the Midwestern culture from which they stem highly encourages politeness, they simply displayed the attributes of “good boys and girls,” one of which is not to be racist, often very politely defending racist assumptions. For example, one student defended a hasty generalization about Asian Americans being smart by remarking, “I know I shouldn’t stereotype, but that’s just been my experience”—an experience based on media images as he had not known any Asian Americans before attending college. Meanwhile, the openness they displayed was often reduced to “happy family” or “melting pot” multiculturalism, which emphasized variety in food, clothing, and music rather than the complexities of assimilation, resistance, and identity. In short, Relativism was subordinated to surface features, a mark of Position Four. Additionally, they made clear that most of the readings didn’t seem relevant to contemporary life—at least the view of contemporary life they get from film and video. In the end, while students did, indeed, improve their composition skills and while class was pleasant enough, I felt disheartened that I saw little movement in their ethical development.

**Teaching the Political Conflicts: Authoritative Approach**

The following fall, I was assigned four sections of Critical Thinking and Writing, a course in which I have had significant success addressing political conflicts. Again I chose to use a textbook with authoritative readings, though my focus shifted from diversity issues to a variety of problems facing the U.S. at home and abroad.

As in the prior fall semester, students quickly disengaged from the readings. For example, in response to a series of readings concerning consumerism in the midst of poverty, students bore assumptions that poor people are lazy and unmotivated, i.e. “[a]nyone can get a job”; that teenage pregnancy is the primary cause of poverty, i.e. “if they’d wait to have kids”; and that sweatshop workers are immune to their suffering, i.e. “they’re used to it.” Nearly in unison, they responded to one author’s call for personal sacrifice with cries of “What am I supposed to do, give up my stuff?”—a clear example of indifference to solutions. One student went so far as to remark, “These writers are jealous; they don’t deserve to have jobs,” a comment which reflects Retreat into Dogmatic Rebellious, perhaps Dedicated Reactionarianism.
In students’ dualistic thinking, authors who challenged their views were dismissed on a variety of grounds:

Incompetence: “This isn’t a good source because it doesn’t tell me what to think.”
Envy: “The author just wishes he made as much money as Bill Gates.”
Untrustworthiness: “You can’t trust this author because he’s Muslim.”
Treason: “This author should be locked up for criticizing the President.”

To ameliorate their views on poverty, I introduced an inquiry-based exercise in which they were to investigate the cost-of-living for a single parent of two in the local area and to work out a budget based on wages from a job for which they currently qualified. Having steeled themselves against the views expressed in the readings, a number of them became “dogmatic rebels,” arguing that the exercise was a trick to force them to change beliefs to which they have a right. Seeing the restrictions of the assignment as arbitrary and unfair, many argued that by the time they had kids, they would have better skills, a point which assumed that any current sexual activity on their part will not have consequences in the meantime. Moreover, when confronted with studies on poverty that conflicted with their views, many mistook objective information for ideological interpretation when it conflicted with a view they held. This distrust of intellectual authority was well expressed by one student, who commented, “I don’t care what studies show; I won’t believe it.”

One consequence of their disengagement was that they assumed that I was trying to push them to agree with my unstated positions. For example, when studying logical fallacies, I gave two examples of *ad hominem* arguments in the last Presidential election: 1) arguments by Democrats that Bush was unsuitable because of his service record, 2) arguments by the Swift Boat Veterans that Kerry lied about the circumstances which led to his service medals. A number of students immediately saw me as anti-Bush, others saw me as anti-Kerry, when my effort was to provide balance in my example. As these student clearly saw me as pushing my viewpoint, we can perhaps place these students in Position Two, Multiplicity Pre-legitimate, in that they saw me as a “willful Authorit[y] . . . failing in [my] mediational role” (Perry 81). As a number of students thus became oppositional, I met
frequently with arguments that grading was arbitrary or unfair, in which students often focused on the amount of work they put in, a mark of Position Three.

Though the concerns exhibited above were common enough to alarm me, they were not pervasive throughout my classes. One section went swimmingly, while two others were divided, a frustration for students who had arrived at or were approaching Positions Five or Six and in some cases Seven. However, one section appeared particularly problematic. In addition to being dualistic, a number of students displayed cognitive development that was not sufficiently mature for the second-semester course. Among twelve students, four to five suffered from low reading comprehension, which led to misinterpretation of reading material. For example, they interpreted an article about racial tension in a rapidly growing community as being about the benefits of rapid economic growth in the U.S. Over half had great difficulty distinguishing abstract from concrete as well. Other colleagues expressed similar concerns and, upon further analysis, we determined to review placement policies.

Indeed, Perry argues that ethical positioning should be taken into account in administrative practice “in such areas as grouping, selection, and guidance” (235). However, tools employed to facilitate grouping are imperfect. For example, ethical development is difficult if not impossible to measure by means of ACT or SAT scores. Placement essays may not necessarily reflect ethical thinking and may be obtained by students through less than ethical means. Thus, differences in ethical and intellectual development may be markedly apparent in a given classroom. Therefore, the impetus remains upon the educator to prepare for classroom populations which bear diverse positions in their ethical development.

**Teaching Multiculturalism and Conflict: Inquiry-based Approach**
The experience of the prior semesters clearly demonstrated that I needed to more directly engage my students with diversity as well as political conflicts. I determined that I needed to put a face on multiculturalism, normalize and globalize the subject, and prompt my students to commitment. A rare opportunity emerged when my daughter, Eva, joined the Peace Corps in the Philippines. As she is an avid blogger, I decided to toss out the textbook in favor of her blog and an assortment of supplemental materials. I also moved the course into a multi-media lab to encourage hands-on investigation. In
addition, I added a service-learning component to encourage commitment. I taught two sections of Composition, one white, the other including two African American men, a Filipino man, and an African American woman.

My first piece of evidence that my approach was bearing fruit was reflected in student journals written in response to reading the Peace Corps handbook for volunteers in the Philippines. While students indeed commented on differences, they were much more enthusiastic about similarities. For example, one student wrote, “I would fit in because eighty percent of the people there are Roman Catholic and that is what I am.” In the process, a number of students can be seen accommodating prior forms into forms emerging from the experience:

“Being under the impression that the country was rather poor, I was absolutely amazed to hear that the Philippines has several phone companies and cell phones are very common.”

“I was really surprised to find out that their popular music is copied after ours.”

“I didn’t know they play basketball. Isn’t that kind of like the Jamaican bobsled team?”

Above all, students were struck by the contradictions of a culture which made use of middle-class trappings in the midst of widespread poverty.

Therefore, as their first formal assignment, I asked them to describe the American Dream. Nearly to a person, their first response was “The American Dream is different for everyone.” On the one hand, this comment may reflect dualism with regard to a vision of America in which everyone is free to do as they please in contrast to a vision of “the rest of the world,” in which everyone is less free. Evidence of this dualism was apparent in a number of student comments:

**Student One:** “America can provide you with all of the opportunities you need.”

**Student Two:** “The opportunities are endless.”

**Student Three:** “[I]f you work hard enough in high school you will have to pay little to no money for college . . . working hard as you can there and graduating will help you end up with a great job.”
On the other hand, the statement may indicate that a student is beginning to “realize” relativism, even foreseeing commitment. Evidence of this could also be seen in student papers:

**Student Four**: “I will discuss the pros and cons of the American Dream... accessibility, materialism, fair trade, our dependency on other countries, and what the American Dream is to me.”

**Student Five**: “If you look at surveys done in educational magazines, the minority groups are the most likely not to attend college.”

**Student Six**: “The American Dream is about doing whatever it takes in order to give yourself and your family the life you and they both deserve.”

Judging from the commonalities and subtle differences among student responses, I loosely determined that most students were hovering around Positions Three and Four.

I next introduced a documentary, “People Like Us: A Look at Social Class in America,” to encourage students to deconstruct their image of a huge, homogenous middle-class. The film is descriptive rather than evaluative and examines social class across racial lines as well as within the white population. For many students, the film was an eye-opener:

**Student One**: “I realized I was making unfair generalizations.”

**Student Two**: “It just made me think about what a jerk I was when I was making those assumptions.”

**Student Five**: “I found something in myself I wasn’t comfortable with. I know I would personally not be comfortable hanging around them in their homes, yet I feel strongly the pull in my heart to help them.”

Here again students can be seen accommodating new forms into previous forms. At least one student experienced a shattering of his assumptions:

**Student Six**: “It surprised me that someone with a work ethic that’s willing to walk 10 miles a day to work at Burger King is living such a hard life.”

Yet other students assimilated new forms into old forms, in the following example by means of selection:

**Student Three**: “The boy in the movie did things to his family because they were considered the bottom class... he needs to realize that he can change things by helping his brother dress, getting a job to make money, and to show his family love.”
From a story about a family in dire poverty, this student selected evidence that the boy is not trying hard enough while dismissing evidence of the boy’s hard work, such as achievement certificates and other academic rewards.

Among the most interesting events of the semester was our discussion of the war in Iraq. Prompted by a naïve comment I heard in passing, I became concerned that students may not have had knowledge of why the U.S. is in Iraq and, therefore, may not have been able to make reasoned judgments upon an issue most dire. Upon entering the classroom one morning, I simply posed the question. The response was stunned silence, as they had no answer. Rather than offer answers, I directed them to go on-line and search for reasons. While I am unable to document their responses from follow-up writing, the story is worthy of note as in previous semesters discussion of the war resulted in accusations that even to pursue such questions is unpatriotic.

First, they began calling out the stated reasons: the attack on the World Trade Center, weapons of mass destruction, a link between Saddam and Osama bin Laden.

“OK,” I said, “Let’s look for evidence.”

A few minutes passed. A voice called out.

“There were no weapons of mass destruction!”

“Who’s your source?” I responded.

Stunned silence again swept across the room, as the student exclaimed, “The president.”

By now the students were feverishly searching the web. Soon, a questioning voice emerged, “Did you know that the hijackers were from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan?”

And another voice, “Saddam Hussein hates bin Laden!”

“Who says so?” I asked.

“Saddam Hussein.”

Then another voice called out, “Look! Here’s a picture of Vice President Cheney shaking hands with Saddam. Is it real?” I seized the teaching moment to discuss how one determines authority in chaotic medium such as the internet and to examine the shifting nature of alliances.
Over the course of our investigation, one young woman found a website with a running tally of the costs of the war, nationally, as well as by state and city, which showed how this money would translate into scholarships, poverty relief, and other central issues facing the U.S. Students were fascinated by the tally, even though it is just the kind of item that, had I called their attention to it, would have created animosity under the assumption that I do not support the war.

As we placed our new knowledge into the context of U.S. involvement in the Philippines, students began to formulate their own thoughts on U.S. imperialism as inquirers rather than ideologues. They noted the similarities between the “White man’s burden” rhetoric used to sell our Philippine involvement to the people and arguments about bringing democracy to Iraq. They noted the use of “scorched earth” tactics during the Philippine-American War, a war of which they had never heard, and related these to “shock and awe.” They noted our removal of leaders in both wars, the labeling of Filipino and Iraqi resistance as “insurgency” and the United States military’s use of torture during both wars. Not once did animosity emerge in the classroom nor did it occur to them to ask about one another’s positions on the war. They simply inquired, frequently remarking, “Come here, Dr. J! You won’t believe what I found on this website!”, a clear sign that they were beginning to see themselves as members of a community of scholars. A new assumption was emerging: that proposed solutions must be examined in context and with regard to the reasons given for them. They began to see the task of scholarship as evaluation, as reflected in the following remark, “OK, Dr. J, we know the facts on the ground. Now, what does it all mean?”

Indeed, judging from responses to an assignment which required them to examine the sustainability of the American Dream with regard to resource consumption, many students could be seen moving into Position Six, “Pre-commitment”:

“By every American giving a little and sacrificing something, we will make living the comfortable life more just and fair to everyone in the world.”

“Just because we were born wealthy does not mean we should be entitled to more of the resources of the world.”

“[The Peace Corps] interests me and makes me want to get involved in helping out.”
At least one student displayed significant “meta-thought” about his change in opinion:

As an American, I always wanted to get a job I liked and become a member of the so-called middle class, but after going to class the last couple of days, I am not sure if I want to be a part of that dream... The dark side of our lifestyle is that we are killing the very planet we live on.

Here, too, can be seen the struggle of Pre-Commitment:

“I am willing to make a difference, but I just can’t see [how] what I do, one person out of six billion people, can help improve our planet.”

Indeed, when offered a chance to commit, at least temporarily, most students jumped in, coming up with ways to raise money for my daughter’s school in the Philippines.

Of course, responses were mixed, according to level of Commitment. One group of students wanted to find the least labor-intensive means of raising money, collecting soda cans and bottles around campus for the deposit money. When they learned that can and bottle money was already spoken for, some of these students lost enthusiasm. After all, they are attempting to meet many commitments, not the least of which is their schoolwork.

Other students were more willing to work hard at commitment, enthusiastically suggesting a talent show and a bachelor auction. Students contributed a great deal to this plan, writing a proposal to the dean, gaining promises of refreshments from area merchants, holding auditions, rounding up volunteers for the auction. One particularly shy girl overcame her shyness to approach the local supermarket manager. Her effort was rebuffed, but her determination spoke volumes.

Sadly, their plan did not come to fruition by the end of the semester due to an injury I received shortly before the scheduled event. As a result, a number of students dropped out of the project. Nevertheless, I was approached just recently by a handful of students who wish to take up the project again now that I am healed.

Implications for Further Study

Certainly my observations remain at the level of what Composition scholar Stephen M. North calls “lore,” practitioner knowledge grounded in a “pragmatic logic,” the structure of which is “essentially experiential” (23). But as North points out, the validity of lore rests in what works.
Nevertheless, to claim more forcefully that inquiry-based, technology-supported pedagogy is more conducive to ethical and intellectual development will require a controlled study with a larger sample. At present, I am working to design a pilot study which traces two sections of the same series of courses, one Authoritative, one inquiry-based. I intend to administer the Checklist of Educational Views to students as they enter fall semester and interview them before they depart in spring. Should the results be suggestive, I aim to administer the Checklist to an entire First-year student body, followed by interviews.

Meanwhile, although inquiry-based pedagogy may be enhanced by the immediacy of electronic media, technology should not be taken as a panacea. Technology is a tool. Like a hammer, we can use it to build or we can use it to destroy. Our students, therefore, need to learn to control technology, else it control them.

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Language Center Networking in Higher Education in Europe

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This paper explores the dimensions of language cooperation through networking among institutions of higher education within the European Union. Specifically, the focus is on language center networking through the establishment of a research syndicate in response to European project opportunities. Of course, there are various levels of cooperation in the areas of languages and in higher education in Europe; not all necessarily end up as networking but all, in one way or another, are affected by European policies decisions.

The Lisbon Strategy (launched in 2000) is becoming an increasingly important component of the European Agenda, through its declared aim to make the European Union the most dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010. The Lisbon Strategy sees Research as stimulating both Education and Innovation through economic growth, the meeting of social challenges, and generally in enhancing the quality of life. It recognizes, too, the undisputed positive impact of education on active citizenship and social inclusion. Simultaneously, the Bologna Process Agreements (1999, revalidated 2003) have acknowledged the central role of language knowledge in the European Union (EU) and have aimed at building a new public idea about language. These European rulings recognize language education as highly visible for its ongoing broad applications: for job search and performance, growth and employment, research, mobility, multilingualism, migration and citizenship, and for cultural and economic development. Europe itself is in a time of transition and expansion, comprised now of 27 Member states with three Candidate countries. Consequently, the understanding of the relationship between language and culture is one contingent for understanding the culture of member states. Networking could then be viewed as a means of revitalizing dialogue between cultures, considering that the year 2008 has been designated as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

The European Commission is now entering its Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (the FP7), this programme being the EU’s agency for funding research in Europe between 2007 and 2013. The 7th Framework, with a 41% budget increase from FP6 (operative 2002-2006), is the chief financial instrument for achieving the goals of the Lisbon Strategy for growth, competitiveness and employment. On the other hand, more than ten thematic areas comprise the Europe Research Area (ERA). This ERA has some 180,000 cooperation links between academia, research labs and industry with an average 6.7 Member states involved per project and an average EU funding per project of €4.6 million. Project access and application can take place through Socrates (education) which is one of three project portals under the European Commission’s Directorate of General Education and Culture. Leonardo de Vinci (for vocational education) and Youth are the others. Joint networking actions on higher education and language under Socrates can be channeled through Erasmus, which is a thematic network sponsoring projects between departments and faculties
across Europe. Erasmus is concerned with language and mobility, language and social diversity. Alternatively, an option is Lingua, focusing on language teaching and learning. It supports projects engaged in promoting linguistic diversity across the EU, in improving the quality and accessibility of language teaching and learning, the development of language-learning resources, and researching methods to attract ‘non-traditional’ language learners.  

A prestigious winner here is the project eLancenet (European Resource and Language Center Network). This Socrates Lingua project is a provider of dissemination of language-center resources and events in the area of the seven less widely taught and used (LWULT) European languages - Dutch, Greek, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Romanian - with all information on their web portal in a multilingual translation. In 2004 eLancenet won the European label award for the most innovative language learning project, a project that supports continuing education and ensures greater visibility for language learning by linking language services providers with their potential European public. An important criterion of eLancenet is its institutional evaluation in line with EU best practice. Indeed, central to Language Center Networking (LCN) is the whole concept of Quality Assurance (QA), of best practice, one of the most compelling issues in European education today. Essential to any competitive scenario in higher education, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) is a product of the Bologna Process with a specific mandate to develop and maintain a learning culture of quality. The EU aims to have QA standards applied and fully implemented across Europe by May 2007; the ongoing implementation of the European Credit Transfer system (ECTS) reflects one aspect of this goal. Such an implementation implies (1) institutional Quality Assurance labels (2) European QA labels, and external labels as a likely option too. Obviously then, any kind of EU research project such as language networking must be a purposeful, demonstrable statement of QA as well. 

At the same time European universities have become sites of linguistic and cultural diversity, dealing with that ready-made product - the raw material of language and its availability. Language activities in universities are guided by the Council of Europe’s focal document “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages 2010: learning, teaching, assessment” (CEF). Taking this a step further, Language Networking encourages diversity and innovation through a team formed across linguistic, ethnic and cultural borders. Member states, Candidate states and some Associate member countries are all eligible for participation in most networks. (One should also note that more than 100 countries world-wide are involved in EU Research Programmes, helping to integrate Europe into the global community of knowledge and simultaneously lending EU expertise to developing countries). Actually, within the European Union networking has proved to be one very effective means of decentralizing, but also disseminating, European policy decisions on language and learning. Alongside this, ‘Information Days’ and the annual ‘European Day of Languages’ (26th September) maintain the focus. One pertinent network regarding EU policy dissemination is CEFTrain for instance, a five-partner language network project (2003-2005). It was a trans-national initiative aiming to promote common European principles in teacher education in accord with the Council of Europe’s CEF document and also in harmony with the Lisbon and Barcelona summits’ emphases on the common European Values of democracy and multicultural development. As its acronym indicates, the network has aimed to disseminate the common principles outlined in the “Common European Framework…” policy document which has become a European standard adopted by governments as the competence scale for their national examinations. Its language levels have also been adopted by two mobility instruments, the European Language Portfolio (with more than 75 validated models throughout Member states) and the Europass (the EU scheme to facilitate mobility through vocational qualifications). Stand-alone course packages (both print and electronic) have been one tool outcome of CEFTrain’s network findings.

The self-contained entity of a Language Center, with its balanced goals of scholarship, teaching and learning embracing academic and pedagogic domains, is ideally suited to networking which offers an attractive dimension to teacher-trainers in a service center. The cross-European networks of
research and innovation on language emanate from the concentration of facilities, staff and skills in local language centers. What is a Language Network? According to Batson in his work on networked classes a network is a shift away from the traditional, thus signifying a new style in pedagogic and research dynamics.\(^5\) It implies syndicated co-research, co-construction and co-completion of an integrated thematic project. Language networking, made more possible by EU funding, has presented a major break-through particularly in the area of the Humanities, an academic discipline traditionally favoured for its atomic, not collective research. After all, Europe has a long and historic tradition of research in the Humanities. Hence, LCNs have facilitated a change of perspective from higher education institutions who, concerned with funding opportunities, have leant towards their Business school networks for instance, rather than the disciplines of Humanities. The LCN itself represents a channel of ideas and strategies on mutual areas of concern as it translates each LC’s (and its institution’s) experience into a learning that must be applied and replicated according to EU project directives. In this it is a rich sharing experience of culture via language and can help mitigate common ethnocentric misconceptions towards others’ languages within the member blocks of the EU. A Language Network contains numerous potentials since it pools resources and stimulates the mobility of ideas. As a research group it represents a scientific base representative of sound educational and European policies. Co-ordination of partner data, and comparative research findings stimulate, too, career development and competition - in all fostering the human capacity for improvement, for excellence.

An education institution responding to a project call for language networking partners will inevitably weigh up the adequacy of its facilities, including human resources. Some restraints might be counter-productive, resisting new challenges. The key factors in a project response are the initiating Language Center itself, the partner institutions, the technical support, the thematic funded project, and dissemination opportunities. In terms of infrastructure and services, a LC might be a state-of-the-art, self-designated area of a university campus, supporting research and operating immersion programs alongside scheduled language course requirements. Or it might simply be a group of language classrooms with laboratory facilities. Either way it functions as a support center for students in their transition to a new academic community. With the advent of European funded projects the LC can improve the quality of its own teaching and education; once in a network the Center aims for the upgrading of its quality service as a LN partner. In other words the traditional roles of teaching, learning, and teacher training - common yet diverse for each partner - are now augmented, mandatorily, by the researching role. This role is facilitated by the LC as a depository of resources and by the individual university giving administrative and technical support. Many questions will arise as side issues to the network activity and will be tested during the project duration. Questions concerning university students’ perceptions of the LC, about harmonization between teachers and learners on the LC’s goals, about the image of the LC as a service facility within the university, are typical areas for review. The LCN is also in accord with Europe’s challenge to upgrade research productivity, with the European Commission budget for the next seven years set at €50.5 million. For instance, researchers currently represent only 5.5% per thousand of the European labour force compared with 9.1% in the USA and 10.1% in Japan.\(^6\)

One directive of a LCN is to establish and maintain an updated website. Without doubt the Internet has brought about a change in social dynamics, in teaching and learning. Kranzberg, in his work on information technologies and their decisive role in social transformation, has long maintained that ‘Technology is neither good nor bad, nor is it neutral’.\(^7\) Certainly, the Internet by itself does not bring about any automatic, pre-determined results, its impact depending on broader institutional and social contexts. In an LCN its utility is as channel and harmonizer - a site to monitor ongoing work and final results for dissemination - often in plurilingualism. Regardless of the knowledge amassed, the outcome and the product, the network is going to be socially-based, that social ‘group knowledge’ that has been frequently noted of student elearning groups.\(^8\) Use of the Internet is in effect asynchronous conferencing between the sender and the language network group, that is online time versus real time. As such it facilitates distanced and cultural cross-overs, both easily handled in each center’s own time
and pace beyond the network itself. However, what matters is that the distance networking does not exist at the expense of face-to-face interaction; thus imbedded in all EU projects is the imperative for regular contact at whole and sub-network level.

The EU sets its own competent example of effective communication with the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), located in Graz, Austria, which was founded in 1994 as an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe to support its member states in the implementation of language education policies based on the recommendations of the Council. The ECML adheres to the belief that language policies are implemented through dissemination of good practice, promotion of innovative approaches, and, importantly, through formation of European language networks. ECML also conducts workshops on practical issues co-related to LCN, such as: Training for Quality Assurance; Intercultural Competence for Professional Mobility; Web Writing platforms. The European Language Gazette (issued Spring, Summer, Autumn) provides updates on ECML events, projects and resources, and also news from the Council of Europe and the Language Policy Division.

Other potential problems of networking need pre-consideration. Inevitably, online research projects result in a shift in authority. Greater autonomy is inherent to the process yet distance is not without its pitfalls even if it does minimize discord in inter-actional styles. For instance, equality of participation and input is assumed but not guaranteed; definitions of competence are often unhelpful. Patronizing partners (the host partner?) may demonstrate insensitivity with a ‘we know best’ project domination attitude, even if they possess greater proficiency and experience in language networking. Noted linguist Steven Krashen has often talked about ‘comprehensible input’ as the basis of meaningful communication. Insufficient, delayed or sparse contributions from some partners can be problematic and are often rooted in poorer language skills, slower research-gathering, the sheer volume of information overload, and lack of a balanced critical self-perspective. At the least, minimum levels of compatibility are needed to sustain the project.

Even so, within the vast nation of Europe differences in background and expectations certainly exist. EU membership is not only diverse in culture and experience but in local education history. For example, some socio-educational structures are traditionally hierarchical and quell initiative-taking through unilateral control. Joining a network call presumes a competent knowledge of what to do with one’s side of the LC project yet institutional pressure for EU funding can catapult a call response from a partner who fails to acknowledge its own limitations. All in all though, collaborative research brings far greater empowerment. This comes not only from the project in hand and the funds received but from the project as a social discourse. There is also the sense of a newly-devised community seeking a common goal, product and endorsement from the EU for a valued and recognized ground-breaking project.

An EU funded project takes a formal structure in response to a call for Projects from the EU programme, currently the 7th Framework. When the thematic title of the project is conceived the ‘job description’ of the tentative Network falls into place. The host partner or initiator puts out calls for partners and has responsibility for application procedures and submission. The host will discover very intimately the positive and negative aspects of formal procedures - the bureaucratic red tape, the complex variety of information required. For example, a typical Application Dossier requires justification of the relevance of the content and anticipated result of the action (in particular follow-up activities), the matching of demand and supply, and a project calendar demonstrating appropriateness to objectives and methods proposed. Importantly, the cross-European character of the project must be characterized in triplicate by the variety of practice from different countries, the presence of participants from different countries, and the transfer of results to different countries. The capacity of the applicants to meet requirements of all stages of the proposed activity needs documentation. In addition, specifics are required on the quality of methodology, tools and practical approaches proposed for analysis of products and users’ needs, particularly analyses on their suitability for adaptation and transfer. Finally, bearing in mind that an LCN is an artificially-formed research and learning entity,
the capacity of the proposed organizational structure (LCN network) for effective follow-up becomes a crucial issue. Admittedly, procedures have been simplified under FP7. Funding is now more flexible for the Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities, and applications for academic pathways and partnerships are more user-friendly with application guides, and streamlined registration facilities. This re-orientation strikes a new if challenging balance, providing greater trust but along with it an increased risk-taking.

EU projects can be mono-contractor projects as opposed to multi-contractor. The latter is applicable to the LCN where the host institution is co-ordinator. The role of the host partner, apart from preparation of the paperwork (including partner location sign up), is: to play a pro-active role in maintaining and strengthening the network synergy and collaboration; and to occupy a pivotal dual function of liaising with Socrates and also with the partners. The host tentatively conceives the Acronym which reflects the project name. As such it will be publicised throughout Socrates’ and EU information channels. The logical practicalities of acronyms are obvious - product brand label, immediate identification, convenient symbol of a new ‘network’ and its duration of cooperation. As such the acronym is the unique workable identity of a project which will take its place alongside many other language projects, widely recognizable long-term by their acronyms.

Faigley rightly notes that a network can be a means of liberation, particularly for the marginalized. 10 Inevitably, there must be preliminary thoughts about the likely Synergies of the network under creation? What are the integrative motives and dynamics in such a networking group? Who are the real stakeholders? How much expert involvement is needed? In other words, which partner candidates should be turned down because this particular project is a new language education world for some of them that goes beyond their eagerness, their long-standing and no doubt valued training and experience? In another consideration, will this decision be based on elitism or will there be an ‘open door’ policy in order to secure EU go-ahead? Should the host absorb newer member states for whom such networking would be prestigious and remunerative; by doing so the network can score points with Brussels which often stipulates participation of newcomers or the marginalized (termed ‘convergence and outermost regions’) in order to upgrade their potential. For instance, Lingua (for language learning), an Action under Socrates, supports research projects engaged in linguistic diversity, teaching and learning, and resource development. As an offshoot initiative of this one particular project Lingua Connections is a network of Lingua co-ordinators whose goal is to collect methods for the successful dissemination of language products. Coordinated in Greece with six EU partners (including more recent Member states), they have produced their own publication on good dissemination practices. Web sites, web pages and web portals are evaluated as propagation techniques of varying degrees of success.

Obviously some prior history of cooperation (with the host partner or others) at least at institutional level is an advantage; for instance, experience of similar actions, projects, thematic cooperations facilitate network competence. Ultimately some LNs are almost open-ended in partnerships of 20 or more; yet others may not have the luxury of turning down any call response. Equally important is the fact that partners of LCNs are automatically researchers, defined by the EU as ‘a person active in research, including at a training level, of at least post-graduate or equivalent level.’ Are they propelled by the research performance need and / or by institutional pressures for funding? Either way, one presumes that technical support from each institution’s Research Center is guaranteed. Can every LC partner presume confidently that the others have not only solid training in pedagogy and related experience in language learning and teaching, but also a strong research identity in their own institution? Obviously, a LCN requires establishment of good partnership, hampered perhaps by conflicting theories of what constitutes such good practice. Overall, the composition and viable productivity of the group partnership is a complex issue and capable of generating a number of tensions and constraints. Above all, the quality of the working relationship is crucial in that a sense of community needs to take root alongside this task-based approach based on the sharing of ideas, findings and data.
Dissemination - ‘to disperse, to spread widely…’ - has become a key term in EU networking and carries very prominent weight in the screening and the approval of a network-funded project. Partners in language networks and multilingual projects are mandatory disseminators of information. The LCN has real accountability to itself and to society at large to honour funding commitments, deadlines and distribution. In this case dissemination could be synonymous with targeting language teachers, EU bodies concerned with the project theme, local agencies and the interested public. Possible techniques (some obligatory) of dissemination in a funded network include events shared by partners in mini-conferences, training courses (ongoing), workshops, ‘matching sessions’, regional meetings, and especially the foremost event (usually a major conference or showcase) hosted on site by the host partner. The number, profile and quality of such events and participants are required to be stated in the initial dossier. Dissemination must occur throughout the duration of the project. After closure it takes the form of more informal follow-up activities, helping to resolve the process-to-product tensions. In fact, a current cyclical trend of dissemination is underway in Europe. The ‘Call for Proposals DG EAC / 12 / 06’ from Socrates is now awarding grants to promote the dissemination of the results of Socrates projects that have terminated; the target now is a new wave of potential users. For example Erasmus networks on language issues completed as long ago as 2003 are being re-funded to disperse information in areas of mobility, language courses, curriculum development projects and intensive programmes, and in other thematic networks reflecting the Lisbon and Bologna objectives. Dissemination, then, has become an important example of good academic practice by sharing with others the network’s research findings and facilitating their adaptation.

Other distribution formats include Material output such as Publications, Promotional materials and other Tools which will help market dissemination. Stand-alone packages are popular tools, both print or electronic for example, along with CDROMS, Manuals, and newsletters. Website maintenance, ongoing and as follow-up, speeds up publicity, with an increasingly common practice to stay online. Networking with other projects in the EU and with non-EU programmes is another possibility. Contacts with the media, with policy makers and advertising channels are determined by the nature of the project. Regardless, the Socrates’ directives state clearly that activities should ‘facilitate the exploitation and transfer of the project results presented and a possible integration into education systems and practices. Results should be made available in an appropriate range of languages via an Internet site in order to provide information for potential new users.’ A useful illustration in this regard is LINGUALINC (Language Intercultural Network for Communication). Co-ordinated in the UK with eight partners, the project has provided language teachers and trainers with teaching and learning tools in training modules for the new educational technologies. In a different orientation, TIE-CLIL (Translanguage in Europe – Content and Language Integrated Learning) has worked to promote pluralism in five Euro languages - English, French, German, Italian, Spanish. Co-ordinated in Milan with a ten-partner network, it has disseminated through its own yearly Newsletter and website, through books, translations, teacher guidelines and CDROMS. In yet another example the LinC network goal was to provide key multimedia materials relevant to language teacher training and language learning in collective and atomic settings. The outcome of this project, coordinated at the University of Antwerp, is based on LC partnerships in seven EU countries. It produced a series of autonomous-user multimedia materials and CDROMS, blending language with culture, and drawn from news sources across the EU. Typical themes were EU citizenship, racism and xenophobia, and the role of ICT in education.

As noted, strategies for follow-up activities are also required in dossier detail. The usual project duration runs for 12-24 months from the date of official commencement. Official closure of the project brings about a time for reflection, yet the end of the project phase does not mean the end of the networking. Decisions should be made about developing a sound strategy for sustaining the network informally after the financing has finished as with the CEFtrain network. Some examples of best-practice as follow-up include multiple evaluation: self-assessment of one’s own LC (its human and physical infrastructure) and its performance in the network; assessment of the LC’s institution as
indirectly supporting this new learning mission; assessment of the networking experience itself in light of the research findings and possible extended cooperation with some partners; assessment of EU standards of funding, restrictions, complications, impediments, harmonization. Other spin-offs from the networking are likely to be custom-made teacher-training programmes, research into student perspectives on language curricula, and application of research findings to wider areas of the community. As dissemination continues, in one form or another, the networking experience has resulted in each participant enhancing their self-image as a networker, by exercising research and managerial skills in a dialogue over two years or more. Adaptability to change, and a deeper understanding of the project initiatives and processes have promoted a group vision with a European identity label, originating in language centers. The vision also encompasses multilingualism and plurilingual competence for social cohesion, laid down in the link between research and policy in “Education and Training 2010, diverse systems, shared goals; the Education and training contribution to the Lisbon Strategy”. Ultimately, as the European Commission has acknowledged repeatedly in its directives, human resources are Europe’s greatest asset.

NOTES


2 Note that 2006 was ‘The European Year of Workers’ Mobility’; 2007 is ‘The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All’.

3 For a breakdown see the European Commission - Research DG EU-funded Research “FP7 -Tomorrow’s Answers start Today”; www.ec.europa.eu/research. LCNs come under Block 1 (Collaborative Research – Humanities) of the four Activity Blocks in FP7.

4 Other EU funding networks impacted by Erasmus and Lingua are Comenius (School education), Grundtvig (Adult education and life-long learning) and Minerva (ICT in education). In 2006 Grundtvig supported language networks looking into such varied adult areas as: language learning opportunities for adults with disabilities, adults in sport, in social detention, in hospitals and in art and culture pursuits. Minerva supports research in new methodologies, Integration of project findings into LCs and institutional curricula, guided instruction to accommodate students with learner-disabilities, Online teaching / learning.


6 See EU-funded Research op. cit.


9 For instance, in earlier publications such as S. D. Krashen Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1982).


11 In fact, most LC projects have a long-term applicability. DIALANG (Diagnosis of Foreign Language skills), a project of 14 partners operating in the late 1990s, presented guidelines on Internet-delivered assessment by disseminating information on DIALANG and facilitating its implementation among new members. Translated into 14 European languages, a unique and admirable measure in itself, a self-assessment system and tests invite continual feedback through an online questionnaire. As a project it was computer-based and Internet-delivered. Now in 2007 the project data has been given universal availability, indicated by the fact that the materials have been reviewed and piloted by numerous universities and testing organizations across Europe.
The Role of Music and Folklore in the Reconstruction of Racial Identity in the Multicultural Classroom: Notes on the Concept Oriented Culturally Eclectic Approach

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To teach, one has to cultivate minds and touch lives. Multicultural education fosters the miracle of locating a medium for communication that surpasses the linguistic arena; such a medium in turn enhances student understanding of the cultural base that nurtures and supports language. Although multicultural education is a celebrated tradition that is decades-old, not so much attention, has been invested in functionalizing the myriad teaching paradigms and theoretical approaches. This study, however, proposes a new venue of vision that adopts a concept-oriented, culturally-eclectic approach which in turn capitalizes on total cultural immersion in the literary classroom. Immersion, as the study proposes, cannot be made possible except by drawing upon art as a cultural resource represented in musical folklore, painting and story telling as a means for the reconstruction of ethnic identity in the literary classroom.

Moreover, musical folklore, painting and story telling is presented as a forum for empathy and conflict resolution in the literary classroom that follows the concept oriented, culturally eclectic approach of education. The proposed approach renders possible social reconstruction based on understanding self and otherness. This paper is divided into two parts: part one introduces the theoretical proposition of the concept-oriented, culturally-eclectic approach and presents art as the proper medium for immersion while part two deals with an excerpt from a course proposition that applies the concept presented.

I.

The main goal of a multicultural classroom is the reconstruction of a world of education in which might does not make right; an environment that rehabilitates a world of deformity in which students participate. Multiculturalism represents an act of empowerment to live and celebrate cultural difference based on a clear understanding of one's identity and role in the enrichment of such a culture. Coexistence engendered by an enlightened act of understanding self versus otherness represents the core of a true democratic setting that fully perceives of conflict generating difference but is capable of controlling it, if not diverting such negative emotions. Multiculturalism recreates a student's world by simply offering such an artificial starter environment that guarantees self-understanding, understanding and appreciation of otherness, personal empowerment, equality, the conviction that no style of living is better than the other and the ability to act as translators of culture.
To exact a world of such ambitious proportion, teachers feel excessively burdened with the necessity to mediate rather than play their traditional power centered role. Mediation in this case implies an organizational role akin to that of a maestro to an orchestra- a role that does not impose on the classroom but one that maintains a clear sense of direction that leads students to maximize the benefit of their new learning environment and to help them understand their role as major contributors to the classroom. A multicultural classroom also builds on the students’ previous knowledge and interpretative potential. The decentralization of the teacher’s role, an idea introduced by several educators including Laurie Grobman in her essay "Toward a Cultural Pedagogy: Literary and Non Literary Traditions," ensures a certain equitable environment in which students feel empowered to socially contextualize their learning which becomes a shared value based process:

When teachers decenter their authority in multicultural classrooms, they give students greater responsibility for their own learning. Students enter into the specific conventions of the academic discourse community, thereby recognizing that knowledge is socially constructed. In such pedagogy, teacher and student together create meaning and value. (Grobman 227)

Such process of decentralization transforms the role of student from a passive recipient of knowledge to an active participant and critical thinker capable of contributing to the classroom. By the help of the instructor, students become authors of the learning process by helping shape and reshape a classroom that becomes uniquely their own.

The dialogic nature of the multicultural classroom should be highly encouraged since it never takes knowledge for granted, always invites constructive skepticism of all ideas under scrutiny and therefore creates a democratic environment that interprets culture from the point of view of those who have been done out of the privilege of controlling their own story. In addition to this, such a development also helps in the social contextualization of learning. John Alberti introduces the concept of multicultural education as a "dialogic process of cultural analysis rather than the static transmission of information" (xix). The dialogic process empowers students to assume responsibility of the knowledge presented in a course which endows multicultural classrooms with creativity and uniqueness akin to the level of student performance. Multicultural classrooms capitalize on participation and cooperation between teacher and student with the aim of deconstructing the old method of teaching. Multicultural classrooms invite students to participate in "personal transactive, deconstructive, reconstructive, and transformative intellectual, affective, and ethical engagements" (Fox & Gay 73) which therefore lead to constant shifting styles of teaching.

The concept of effecting change is central to the multicultural classroom. The question that poses itself, however, is which kind of change is needed in order to meet the criteria that render multiculturalism possible? Sleeter and Grant dealt with five different approaches all of which compartmentalize multiculturalism and therefore limit both one's objective and one's prize. The proposal at hand attempts to bring a holistic vision to the experience of multicultural teaching by best appropriating such models to one's objectives. For example, the first model presented focuses on teaching the exceptional and culturally different with the aim of healing the cultural breach that renders it difficult for these students to fit within the cultural norm. Multiculturalism in this case is defined as a form of therapy that deals with minority groups as though they are diseased and therefore need help. By extension this approach disregards the possibilities of social change by ruthlessly abstracting these students from their actual cultural context with the aim of sub-planting them in mainstream culture.

The human relations approach brings diverse groups in the classroom under the banner of love, respect and effective communication. The human relations approach helps students get along better by promoting group identity and pride. Practitioners of this approach find it expedient to bring the concept of social difference and conflict into the classroom since they will be in direct contradiction to
the need for harmony. Patricia L. Stuhr argues in her essay "Multicultural Art Education and Social Reconstruction" to the same effect:

A human relations approach to art education often stresses cultural celebrations, holidays, and festivals and emphasizes the visual symbols, decorative clothing, and other accoutrements that go with these events. Sharing cultural foods and regional musical performances are often included in the celebration of these events in addition to the visual elements. For instance, an art teacher might … invite an African American parent to come in to help make soul food, and play jazz music for students to enhance their appreciation of African American culture and bring a sense of pride to the African American members of the class. Emphasis is placed on cultural similarities rather than difference….The shortcoming is that unique differences in knowledge and understanding, and areas of cultural conflict will probably be overlooked in the search for universal qualities. (173)

While the human relations approach succeeds measurably in presenting a positive definition of the nature of multiculturalism, it dismisses difference as a conflict- igniter and therefore sacrifices the complexity of experience to superficiality that negates the need for social change.

The single group studies approach focuses on one cultural group to the exclusion of the others with the aim of promoting respect, pluralism and social equality. Such an approach acknowledges prejudice, negative social practices and conflict as means of motivating social change represented in a more equitable distribution of power and equal opportunity. However, one may criticize this style of learning on account of the excessive reference to the group of students as ultimately antagonized by a powerful entity or an oppressor; a fact that engenders unhealthy conflict that hinders motivation for change. The excessive focus on one group renders it impossible for multicultural education to succeed since the designated group will fail to rise above the limits of their condition and will not be in any way empowered to apply the concepts discussed in the classroom to any other minority group.

The multicultural approach, however, is a celebration of human diversity, equal opportunity and cultural democracy. Such an approach pleads for a more equitable distribution of power brought about by empowering minority groups to take the lead in interpreting the texts that deal with their cultural ordeals. Presentation of lesson content should be highly democratic referring to the feelings and thoughts of artists representing the same groups under study. Interpretation should take place from the perspective of the groups under study; in which case students are given the full potential to vent emotions, to get them heard and empathized with. Discrimination against cultures may be discussed in the classroom as the teacher draws upon the student's store of knowledge and skill in analyzing material. However, excessive focus on difference may negatively engender conflict since this format lacks the shock absorbent quality that maximizes the benefits of conflict while warding against its evils.

A study by Brain A. Jacob entitled "Defining Culture in a Multicultural Environment: An Ethnography of Heritage high school" deals with the notion that too much stress on difference may lead to negative conflict and separation. The study focuses on a multicultural program set in a high school with a 30% black and a 70% Latina populations. The results of such an attempt were based on interviews with the students that represented the African American group's malaise based on the fact that they were not as engaged as the Latinos in the program (335). Moreover, the lack of equitable presentation led to more inter-group conflict (362).

Finally, several people speculated that an emphasis on differences between cultures reinforced separation and uneasiness among students. An ESL teacher observed, "It (multicultural program) goes more toward discussing differences and self validation; … it's almost people spending all their time studying themselves and maybe that, that's a
good thing at first, but there hasn't been the turning to look at commonalities on these yet. So I have a feeling it's almost like a balkanizing thing at this point." several students noticed the same phenomenon. A group of successful African American students debate the extent to which an emphasis on difference leads to separation. (363)

The Reconstructionist social approach tends to socially and culturally contextualize the multicultural approach by simply positioning it in the realm of social action and by taking the edge off conflict. Such an approach prepares a student thinker since it capitalizes on student analysis and group work regardless of whether such groups include students from other minority groups. This approach aims at organizing a system of social activism that empowers the students in dealing with oppression and victimization. In this type of class, art is integrated within a social and cultural context which in turn encourages students to gather data, challenge concepts and values, reflect on ways to make them different and then implement their decisions. In this kind of social education, curricula are based on varying social, economic and political conditions of a nation. Teachers may encourage students to take part in building curricula depending on their level of education and willingness to participate.

Negotiation is important in order to reflect upon the nature of conflict while bearing in mind that the instructor should be prepared to help students deal with conflict in a democratic setting that allows for an acceptable form of psychological resolution. Negotiation as a format should also guide students in reaching decisions about issues raised in the classroom. While this approach maintains a transparency that allows for dealing with conflict, the instructor has to be very careful in gauging the level of student response to conflict and finding ways to deflect it. Dealing with conflict depends on the type of students, their culture and the instructor’s deftness in managing the classroom.

While the previous approaches celebrated group cultures, the need to focus on the concept oriented culturally eclectic approach might be in order. If one assumes that one has a group of students representing two or three different minority groups: what is the best way to engage them? Is it to represent their cultural alignments sequentially in a course or to construct a concept oriented course that invests more on value and standard based systems of representation than on a separation of cultural groups? A course that responds to all the cultures represented in the classroom with special emphasis on the values and standards that unify such divergent cultural groups represents the ideal paradigm. The aim behind this, however, is not to blot out differences but to deal with them within an academic framework that ensures cohesiveness and consistency of course objectives.

Educators should be encouraged to make the best use of the concept oriented culturally eclectic approach since it complies with the exact standards represented in the reconstructionist social approach with the only difference that it sets a unitary academic framework that insures consistency, equity and variety that allow for empathy based on standard and therefore no matter how culturally different the students are, they can easily share each other’s cultural ordeals by simply ascribing to the cultural value that the course or program stands for. One has to note, however, that the selection of course content should be carried out based on the cultural backgrounds of students in the class without any tendency toward bias. The selection should display an equitable portion of the cultures represented in the classroom with the emphasis on an academically connective methodology that ensures depth of vision, consummate understanding, constructive comparison and referencing among the groups under study. Bias, however, even if simply implied may backfire leading to negative conflict that can hardly be contained or redirected.

To evade negative repercussions represented in conflict, instructors should create an equitable academic environment conducive to total immersion in the culture of the self and the culture of otherness. Students should also be made aware of how the variety of cultural discourses presented in the classroom impacts one another (Powers 62) and that they in turn enrich the cultural fabric of a nation. Adelman represents immersion as a means for the contextualization of learning both socially and culturally; a process that helps students know how to functionalize their learning outside the
Immersion is real multicultural education .... It involves establishing cultural literacy in another community, not by being able to identify and define those items on a list, but by knowing how and when to use those items in complex situations" (38).

Immersion focuses on the social constructedness of concepts brought about in the classroom regardless of whom these concepts belong to. Students in this case are invited to delve deeper into their own culture while being able to envision it from the outside; something that empowers them to act as evaluators of their cultures as well as the cultures of otherness. Ethnicity in this case is presented as a generic concept that accommodates different cultural paradigms. In addition to this, immersion also encourages multifaceted debate that minimizes the possibility of judging based on preconceived notions of the groups under study (Downey 243). Therefore, this modification of the social Reconstructionist approach contextualizes learning through immersion with the hope of defining learning as an interpretative, transformative experience for both instructor and students. The study presents art represented in literature, story telling painting and musical folklore as proper media for effecting cultural immersion and learning.

Art stands for the proper medium for total immersion that helps in the reconstruction of racial identity in the multicultural literary classroom. Art in that sense is viewed as an integral part of a creative language that helps consolidate the literary experience by connecting it to a larger artistic mosaic that helps comment on it and engage the students in a dialogue about their proposed associations. The importance of referring to the cultural bearings of a literary text borders on ways to humanize the academic process of learning that renders ideological and psychological involvement possible and thus creates a level of empathy with otherness from a civic and global perspective.

Elizabeth Manely Delacruz argues that multicultural art education is "a reconceptualization of the nature of art itself and our manner of interacting with it" (59). Multicultural education considers the function and content of art "as a symbolic expression of belief about the nature of the world and one's place in it" (Delacruz 59). One cannot help noticing the interpretative nature of art including literature, musical folklore and paintings. While literature may be thought of as an attempt to negotiate cultural codes, music and paintings maintain the same cultural context that allows for the humanization of the experience by stretching it out of its contours of race and social class to involve a wider spectrum of people to whom the concept of victimization may be different but is in no way less painful. Such a connective metaphor endows the class with the ability to synthesize the wholeness of an experience by conjuring it up in detail and therefore ensuring total immersion.

II.

The paper presents a proposed excerpt from the African American Poetry section of an American Literature Course on the 'Reconstruction of Ethnic Identity.' The course includes literature written by Arab- American and Indian American poets and short story writers. The African American section focuses on poetry selections presenting the construction of racial identity together with the development of the African American cultural experience from the Harlem Renaissance to Postmodernism. The course presents corresponding musical pieces, paintings and stories that offer the cultural scaffolding that brings poetry to life. The paper, however, will restrict its scope to an introduction of the age and to the literary and artistic productions of the Harlem Renaissance namely on the poetry of Langston Hughes.

The introduction of music and painting in the classroom helps the instructor play the role of the mediator depicted above in the sense that the decentralization of his/ her role is accompanied by the centralization of art that encourages student interpretation, connotation and referencing. In this context, the instructor's role is summarized in helping students synthesize the experience by tying up all the loose ends through dialogic engagement. Conflict in this setting can be easily identified and discussed based on students' personal experiences, experiences as outlined in the literary text, music or
paintings. However, such conflict will always be mitigated by the pacifying effect of art that attempts to create a sense of resolution that balances students’ sense of being.

Instructor starts the course by familiarizing the students with the evils of slavery using in this task both paintings and documentaries. The first section of the course defines the black predicament represented in the identity crisis in the Harlem Renaissance; an epoch within which the dilemma and the resolution of the crisis are contained. Students are introduced to the concept of discrimination and stereotyping and their meanings in the African American context. Students are then invited to create associations from their own cultural world that render a different meaning to the same concepts, hence the globalization of cultural terms.

After such representations about race are established, the instructor introduces central writers and thinkers in the epoch including W.E.B Dubois, Allen Locke, Richard Wright, Aime Cesaire and their concepts about seeking a new form of consciousness. Such concepts, namely Dubois’ double consciousness, help the students envision the new consciousness that the Harlem Renaissance propagated. The new consciousness as students learn from the several readings is represented in the quest for identity and an evaluation of the past and its relationship to the present. Students in this case are invited to reflect on how history or someone’s past be operative in seeking a proper self definition in different human experiences. Students are invited to read a selection of poems that represent the early writings of the Harlem Renaissance namely Countee Cullen and Claude Mackay. Black is beautiful is introduced as the philosophy of Langston Hughes and the anchor upon which the Hughes selection is reeled. Students are expected to compare and contrast the artistic utterances of the three poets and translate such difference in terms of cultural consciousness and attempts to deal with conflict. Reading Hughes’ “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” clarifies Hughes’ different methodology of dealing with segregation, pain, loneliness and trauma.

Special focus is brought to bear on musical folklore as the core behind Hughes's prosody. Students are invited to research blues and jazz which are later introduced both thematically and technically in a debate format. Students are invited to listen to a selection of the blues made by the instructor and then comment on the nature of such music as a form of cultural and artistic expression, its possible themes, emotions and technical construction. The selection presents variety of blues music that includes but is not restricted to Cow Cow Blues, Blues in the Ghetto and Broken Hearted Blues. This section helps students live the experience of music and relate it to Romare Bearden’s painting “The Last of the Blues Devils” featuring a pianist and a saxophone player. Students’ comments are registered so that the instructor can easily review with the class their early impressions. Students are then requested to research the logistics of the blues, followed by a detailed session that reflects on the blues in terms of theme and technique.

The instructor comments on the dual nature of the blues as songs that express predicaments while bringing about laughter. Class deals with the history of the blues as a musical form that verbalizes the forbidden longings of the slave and therefore rewrites the history of blackness. Students are then introduced to Hughes’ definition of the blues as “Songs folks made up when their heart hurts, that’s what the Blues are. Sad funny songs - too funny to be sad” (Hughes Reader 492). Students are also introduced to the blues as a communal form of artistic and human expression; even though the blues are cast in highly personal terms, they represent the collective sensibility of its people (Neal 59). Blues are also repositories of brutal experience stored with the hope of conjuring a denied past that would eventually help in seeking final transcendence.
The image of the blues singer is brought center stage with Romare Bearden’s Painting “Show Time” followed by Larry Neal’s definition of the blues singer as “The voice of the community, its historian and one of the shapers of its morality. He may claim to speak for himself only but his ideas and values are in fact, merely expressions of a general psychology of his people” (60).

The different themes that make up the blues are discussed in class, including family blues, loveless blues, left lonesome blues, broke blues, hungry blues and desperate going to the river blues (suicide blues). This section is followed by blues patterns of one long line repeated and a third line to rhyme with the first two. Sometimes the second line in repetition is slightly changed and sometimes, but very seldom, it is omitted. The class deals with the types of blues style typical of Hughes’ poetic composition which fall into three categories: First, the Primitive Texas Blues Style (Twelve- Bar Texas Worried Blues), second, the Classical Vaudeville Form and third, the Twelve or Eight Bar ABCB pattern (four line stanzas). Narrative compression is introduced as a very powerful feature of the dramatic monologue which, in fact, calls out for audience participation in the ritual of cleansing.
The Weary Blues is presented for analysis as Hughes’ most famous blues poem. Instructor reads the poem with the students and then the class reflects on the meaning of the poem and on how it relates to the blues music selection and the Romare Bearden painting. This technique offers a connective vision for all the forms of art displayed; a process that ensures total immersion and conflict resolution. The class presents the pianist as a central figure replacement of the blues singer.

Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
I heard a Negro play.
Down on Lenox Avenue the other night
By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light
  He did a lazy sway..
  He did a lazy sway..
To the tune o’ those Weary Blues
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody
  O Blues!
Swaying to and fro on his rickety stool
He played that sad raggy tune like a musical fool.
  Sweet Blues!
Coming from a black man’s soul.
  O Blues!
In a deep song voice with a melancholy tone
I heard that Negro sing, that old piano moan-
  “Ain’t got nobody in all this world,
  Ain’t got nobody but ma self.
  I’s gwine to quit ma frownin’
And put ma troubles on the shelf."

Thump, thump, thump, went his foot on the floor
He played a few chords then he sang some more-
   "I got the Weary Blues
   And I can’t be satisfied,
   Got the Weary Blues
   And can’t be satisfied-
   I ain’t happy no mo’
   And I wish that I had died."

And far into the night he crooned that tune
The stars went out and so did the moon,
The signer stopped playing and went to bed
While the Weary Blues echoed through his head,
He slept like a rock or a man that’s dead.

The class opens discussion regarding the mood and symbolic reference of the piano player together with his potential at recreating archetypal history. The class comments on the quality of music produced at the hands of the pianist; being both melancholic and transcendental. The story that the poem implies is brought to the fore as an exercise in synthesising the experience of pain both intuitively and logically. Instructor and students comment on the type of pain as life affirming through empathy. The function of the blues is represented in purging the pianist's body of the pain that his music described. The class discusses the blues as a possibility for cleansing the soul by drawing upon Aristotle’s concept of catharsis. Students comment on the possible rebirth that the blues promises into the morbid world of the pianist.

The class deals with the form of The Weary Blues which seems influenced by the Vaudeville blues structure. Instructor calls attention to the narrative bent in the poem that lends itself to compression, one of the major features of the blues. Students discuss the functionality of such compression together with the tendency toward improvisation vis a vis the process of telling the story in music and poetry. The interplay of the dramatic and the interior monologue represented in the fusing of the singer’s song is dwelt upon followed by the discussion of the importance of using rhymed couplets separated by refrains or interjections - to create a form of heightened dramatization of conflict.

Students then analyse the images in the poem; namely the juxtaposition of images of death to those of light. Students dwell on the potential of color in the poem particularly that of blackness represented in “ebony” hands bringing the racial dialectic to the fore. The instructor calls attention to the personification depicted in “the piano moan” in terms of its authenticity in delineating the pianist’s agony. The hypnotic effect of the blues is introduced in the simile “sleeping like a rock.”

Students are then introduced to jazz by listening to several musical Jazz pieces selected by the instructor. Such a selection includes but is not restricted to Louis Armstrong's 'Cabaret,' 'A Kiss to Build a Dream On,' and 'Please Do not Talk about me When I am Gone.' Students are then requested to share their impressions about Coleman’s “Dancing to Jazz” and to relate it to the music they listened to. A definition of Jazz is then presented as the music of self-determination and revolt that has come to the limelight in the Twentieth Century. By and large, jazz chronicles not only the struggle of the oppressed peoples, but also the psychological tendencies to redefine blackness and thus attain new meanings for self- determination. The students are introduced to jazz as a metaphor of a resolved antithesis.

The whole class examines the origins of jazz as an oral tradition and the difference between jazz and blues music. Students are requested to research jazz as a product of confrontation between
Black and Western music leading to a polyrhythmic musicality representing revolt and redefinition in the character of 'swing.' The instructor introduces syncopation as a form of improvisation that the students dwell on. The definition of syncopation as outlined in the Encyclopedia of Black America is presented in the classroom as "the absence of an accent where one expects to hear it and the placing of an accent where one does not expect to hear it." This interruption of rhythmic regularity produces a feeling of unrest in the music with consequent arousal of feelings of stimulation and excitement in the listener creating a spontaneity and vitality of musical production. The call and response technique is presented as one of the cultural hall marks of African American culture that traces its origins back to the "talking drum." Students deal with the relationship of music and dance to the sensibilities of black people as represented in a jazz setting.

The individuality of the jazz experience is brought to the fore. Students are invited to pin point differences between the jazz and blues singer; namely the fact that Jazz, unlike the blues, stresses its singer’s identity while linking him/her to the collective experience of the race. The jazz man has to lose himself in his improvisation in order to find it in a different light. Students deal with Hughes’ vision about jazz as an attempt at capturing life itself. The instructor presents the panoramic potential of jazz by presenting a montage of shots taken randomly from all the walks of life thus creating a mosaic of human endeavor that summarizes pain and laughter in a jingle. The instructor presents the revolutionary thrust in jazz as informed by the urge for an alternative future mode of life. Students then learn the main characteristics of the musical sentence being short, curt; and rapid.

Dancing To Jazz- Coleman

The instructor presents Trumpet Player: 52nd Street as a representative of a jazz poem. Students are requested to dwell on the character of the trumpet player and compare him to the pianist
in the Weary Blues. They also reflect on the relevance of this poem to Coleman’s Dancing to Jazz. Students deal with the representation of the history of the black man summarized in a note of the trumpet.

The Negro
With the trumpet at his lips
Has dark moons of weariness
Beneath his eyes
Where the soldering memory
of slave ships
Blazed to the crack of whips
About his thighs.

Students deal with the type of memory presented by the trumpet player in which case jazz is presented as a forum for the rewriting of black history. The instructor calls attention to the symbolic reference of the crack of the whip about his thighs as an attempt to rewrite black history rife with turmoil and struggle.

The Negro
With a trumpet at his lips
Has a head of vibrant hair
Tamed down,
Patent-leathered now
Until it gleams
Like jet--
were jet a crown.

Students discuss the spirit of mutiny represented in, “honey mixed with liquid fire” and “ecstasy distilled from old desire” and then dwell on the idea of metamorphosis of all natural pleasures into motifs of cabaret life as a constant reminder of the futility of the attempt to escape. No matter how painful, the dialectics of past and present authenticates the trauma not only of the trumpet player but also of a whole people to whom he is but a symbol.

The Negro
With the trumpet at his lips
Whose jacket
Has a fine one-button roll,
Does not know
Upon what riff the music slips.

The hypnotic potential of jazz is brought forth represented in the hypodermic needle that recapitulates the same motif that whatever comfort sought through jazz is only band-aid; like a narcotic - pain wells out again the minute its effect wears off. Students are then invited to recall their impressions about the jazz pieces that they heard and reflect on their feelings and thoughts regarding the experience of jazz as self expression. The trumpeter is introduced ‘as a maker and a preserver of the historicity of his people’. Just as long as his trumpet is at his lips, he is committed to reminding everybody with the victor-vanquished dialectics of slavery times; the major let-down that formulated his past and a similar disappointment that communicates with his present. The final stanza enhances the credibility of the trumpeter as a maker not only of music but also of history.

Its hypodermic needle
To his soul--
But softly
As the tune comes from his throat
Trouble
Mellows to a golden note.

Students are then invited to visit the world of Harlem cabaret and dwell on its music and charm. **Jazzonia** captures the alluring world of the cabaret that is introduced to the students through several paintings and Louis Armstrong's 'Cabaret.' The cabaret is elevated in the poem to a Garden of Eden or an ancient Africa of ritual; an idea that recalls its transformative powers:

Oh! silver tree!
Oh, shining rivers of the soul
In a Harlem cabaret
Six long-headed jazzers play.
A dancing girl whose eyes are bold
Lifts high a dress of silken gold.
Oh! shining tree!
Oh, shining river of the soul!

Students deal with Hughes’ capturing of the syncopation of music and the cabaret atmosphere studded with seductive eyes, come hither looks and violet fumes of avid desire. The instructor focuses on the transformative powers of jazz poetry and music represented in the refrain:

Were Eve’s eyes
In the first garden
Just a bit too bold?
Was Cleopatra gorgeous
In a gown of gold?

Instructor calls attention to the ecstatic union of sensory and spiritual faculties represented in the reference to ‘Eve’s’ eyes which delineates the voluptuously Edenic perspective that the poem builds. In the poem, the pictures of both Eden and the nightclub merge; the simultaneity of which blurs the beauty of Eden and brings the cabaret into sharp focus. The students comment on the possible relationship between the dancing girl in the poem and Eve who has recently lost her innocence at the tree of knowledge. (Jemie 34). The instructor presents the idea of metamorphosis of the whole cabaret from some cheap place to a sacred Edenic setting where the reaffirmation and the celebration of life are enacted as one of the most important hallmarks of jazz. The metaphor of the cabaret is discussed as the only means of escape and a sanctuary of illusion, where footlights replace the moonlight, the synthetic smell of perfume replaces the flowers and the dancer’s feet replace the rolling waves of the sea.

The three representative poems dealt with in the study dwell on three major images that the students can easily identify with: the blues singer and pianist, the trumpet player and the dancing girl in the cabaret. This brief introduction helps students grasp the process of reconstruction of identity through art; namely musical folklore, paintings and story telling.

The excerpt of the African American course component presents a functional example of the concept oriented culturally eclectic approach in which the framework of learning is more important than the knowledge taught in the course. It is worthy to mention that such an excerpt is only representative of the portion of the African American component in which case the best way to apply it is to seek ways to expand on it depending on need. Not to mention that the course itself adopts the
same concept of reconstruction of identity and consciousness in other ethnic cultural groups like Arab Americans and Indian Americans which fully represents the eclectic features suggested in the study. This trial portion of a course created the proper academic environment for total cultural immersion through enlisting art as a metaphor represented in musical folklore, paintings and story telling. The form of immersion achieved created a healthy venue for conflict expression and resolution together with the call for understanding self and otherness in the context of change and social reconstruction.

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When the media is the classroom, humanities are the media. Using the media and technology to support the argument in favor of second language teaching.

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Abstract - Summary

Recently there have been many reports on several American news stations on how companies are sending their employees back to the classroom. The media, journalists, television, film and professional webmasters, are rightly becoming part of our classrooms. When the media become the classroom, they must be held to a high language standard. Having access to written and listening materials in other languages is a key aspect to improving the learning process and the media provide authentic language usage. They are a wonderful tool in language learning despite the widespread improper or non standard use of language. What happens, then, to the language classroom when the experts, the natives make language mistakes? Might we not want to teach our students the new variation of the language they hear? Well, if no one in Italy uses the subjunctive, why should our students learn it. If the past perfect in English is not used, why should foreign students learn it?

The answer to the question “what happens then?” is simple it is important to learn the language properly in order to then achieve native command in other registers. Despite the improper use of language, implementing media in teaching is positive. Today's technology boom can only strengthen the argument in favor of humanities and languages, because the media represent the humanities disciplines. However, the media must achieve and maintain a high language standard in order to truly be an asset in the language classroom. After all, companies would not send their employees back to the classroom unless there was a newfound and recognized need to improve language use.

I. Introduction

In today's media and technology-oriented world, the role of the humanities in general and languages in particular has been questioned because the majority of university students choose to pursue a course of study geared towards the scientific and technical subjects. Funding, as well, is less for the humanities than it is for such fields as engineering, business, law and medicine. Nevertheless, due to the disappearance of geographical borders and popularity of wireless technology, humanities,
and in particular languages, still have value. It could even be argued that media, particularly communication media, in addition to representing the technological fields, also represent the humanities and especially the languages, because language is a crucial part of any type of media where the principal scope is communication. Therefore, especially today everyone should be in favor of languages and the humanities. It goes without saying that the importance of the relationship between language and media is also true in the reverse: in language classrooms media and new technology should be a growing presence. It is because of this reciprocal relationship that media in particular must be held to a higher standard of language.

First of all, there are a few undisputable facts that must be noted, which this discussion is not meant to contradict.

a) there is a difference between the spoken language and the written language and, accordingly, there are also differences between varieties of the same language and between dialects which originated from the same language;

b) languages evolve and will continue to evolve;
c) the technique of poetic license has always existed and will continue to exist;
d) certain levels and registers of language are different; as pertains to both internet and other media, they also differ according to whether sites and programs are created by an individual or by a company (however, even the most reputable sites contain non standard language, major language mistakes and improper usage);
f) finally, no one, including myself, can be perfect, and everyone is bound to make some sort of language usage mistake at some point in time.

In spite of all this, especially in this era where the importance of the humanities is being questioned and where there is a preference allotted to the technological fields, these technological fields, and specifically media, must be held to a higher standard. In particular, media in general must be held to a higher language standard because they reflect what is taught in the language classroom and they represent the best tools to incorporate technology in the classroom. In addition, despite the differences between spoken and written language, it is unacceptable to use language improperly at its most basic levels, especially when, as often appears to be the case, educated users are not aware of their improper usage of language.

For the purposes this essay, the word "media" incorporates all the types of media presented in the next section, with particular attention given to communication media such as television and the internet. This analysis will include only the standard language registers used in what can be considered professional situations and official websites, e.g. language used in websites of informative and encyclopedic/textbook nature. Therefore, this analysis excludes language that relates to regional varieties, dialects, poetic license and colloquial informal conversation. It also excludes language found in discussion boards, blogs, and personal websites, unless these websites are designed with the scope of an educational or informative/encyclopedic nature. Though I must further research the topic, I am inclined to include Wikipedia among the websites in this analysis for the following reasons. First, since Wikipedia’s name itself derives from the word “encyclopedia,” it implicitly becomes a website of informative educational nature, even though it is created by the mass of internet users and anyone has the right to modify information on it. Second, the format’s scope and the content of the website resemble that of an encyclopedia.

II. Media and their uses in the classroom

Humanities, technology and media are intertwined in learning, and especially in second language learning. They continue to be a wonderful tool for the classroom, especially "live" and "interactive" media such as internet and news media. The multimedial classroom that incorporates media and technology is more engaging for the students as it is more lively. Students see the media
that is brought into the classroom as directly related to the world outside the classroom, more specifically to the world outside the language classroom. Nevertheless, a line must be drawn as far as technological improvement in the media is concerned. For example, though internet dictionaries and encyclopedias have become part of our lives, perhaps they should not ultimately replace their paper counterparts. As I will analyse in the next "problem" section, online, automatic translators were discovered not to be acceptable when compared to traditional paper dictionaries. In addition, it should be noted that most students do not know how to use neither internet nor paper dictionaries proficiently. However, this discussion could lead outside the scope of this of this essay; therefore let us limit the discussion to the benefits and problems of using media in the classroom.

A significant benefit represented by media is access to culture. Culture is the most challenging aspect to introduce students to in the classroom. For all classes, and more specifically for second language classes, media in general are the best and perhaps the easiest way to bring culture into the classroom. Sadly, in fact, it has been widely observed and reported in the media that people read less, as far as both books and newspapers are concerned, because other media and pastimes have replaced this activity. This observation alone should support the use of media in the classroom, in order to bring culture to students and make our students cultured. By itself, it could also entirely support the need for proper language usage in media: since media are replacing texts written in a higher language standard, they should maintain the same standard of language required of those texts that they are replacing.

There are several types of media that can be brought into the classroom, all of which, however, show some sort of major improper or non standard language usage. At the top are news programs and news magazines; they offer direct contact with current events happening in the country where the language the students are learning is spoken. News journalists are often the first out-of-classroom contact students have with the language; oftentimes, newscasts are also the only foreign language program carried by national television and educational television stations like Scola or PBS and similar TV stations. The positive aspect of news is brevity of the news segments, which are therefore particularly indicated for use in the classroom, where the allotment of time is always a concern.

The next type of media that can be used is the internet. I would have classified it as the first for its easy accessibility. But, considering the fact that a very large portion of websites can be viewed in many languages, the internet is not really the first contact with another language. However, when accessed in the classroom, in an environment supervised by the teacher, then it provides an excellent contact with the other language. Since anything can be explored via internet and most, if not all, questions find an answer somewhere online, the internet provides perhaps the most complete cultural access other than travel and study abroad. As I will point out, it also contains educational websites that are a mine full of resources.

Television programs, like dramas or sitcoms, are next in line. They are excellent both because of their brevity and varied content. Visual images are an excellent aide in providing content in context and in helping learners with comprehension, since words and expressions can be associated to the images they are accompanying. Of course, these programs contain a large amount of colloquial language and other jargon. However, they also provide a window on a country's current cultural trends and they offer use of language in authentic "life-like" situations, as opposed to the over-acted exaggerated situations provided in language learning videos that either supplement textbooks or are language courses of their own. In addition, at times, through their storylines, television programs offer situations to which students can easily relate. Sometimes, they also offer terms of comparison, as each country has its own version of many given popular programs.

Last but not least, films and music represent perhaps the best and worst type of media. They are the best, as they provide variety, are always available in other languages and offer subtitles or lyrics to accompany them. They are the worst, because, as we will see, three alerts need to be made
for both these kinds of media. Films offer similar benefits to those offered by television programs and students even expect to see movies in their classes, especially in language classes. In addition, movies can be discussed and analysed from the most basic to the most in-depth point of view. With the advent of DVDs movies also offer ready scene selection, providing easier access and therefore less time preparation for the teacher, who no longer needs to fast forward and rewind several times, before finding the appropriate scene. Music is another wonderful tool, as songs can be material for activities on vocabulary, verb tenses, adjectives and, for a more in-depth analysis, themes of their content. At the same time, of all media, music is probably the one that, due to poetic license, contains the most non standard language usage.

Therefore, three important alerts for both movies and music must be made. The first is that many excellent movies or songs are in regional dialects, which might pose a challenge. The second is age appropriateness and content appropriateness as relates to the classroom. Finally, most of all, the need for the teacher to keep up-to-date. Obviously, today's students want to see recent movies and listen to the music of the moment. Oftentimes, this is not possible, as video and music retailers and rental stores, even via internet, tend to carry the classics, i.e. the foreign movies and CDs from times past that have made history.

III. The problem and its implications for learning

In the United States, several major news-stations, such as NBC, ABC and CBS have reported on the new trend that sees employers sending their employees back to the language classroom. This is because employers observed some or all of the following: widespread misuse of language, lack of basic language skills, and improper use of language. Some examples of errors and misuse that our university students also practice are, for example, the difference between the words good/well, effect/affect, unify/unite, check in/checking, improper irregular plurals such as "leafs" or "rooves", and the widespread misuse of prefixes. These include the variety of words that do not have a grammatically correct opposite beginning with the prefixes "un-" and "re-" but are being incorrectly used by affixing those prefixes (unbreak, unmake, uniform, unregister, relook, etc.). The prefix problem also creates incorrect vocabulary usage because, for example, the contrary of "unload" is not "reload" unless speaking about a firearm. Misuse of language also includes all those spelling mistakes which are possibly derived from abbreviations and popular culture names (S.O.R.C./source, lil', drive-thru, Makiavelic, etc.).

The phenomenon of improper language usage is not only specific to English or to the United States. A widespread media related language mistake in Italian is the use of the adverb "cattivamente" in the place of its grammatically correct version which is "male". Any grammar book will explain that to transform an adjective to an adverb in Italian we add the suffix "-mente" to the feminine form of the adjective, but there is an exception for the adjectives "buono/cattivo", their adverbs being "bene/male". Another example from Italian, is the direct translation of several words, in particular those related to technology, which almost all of us practice ... creating a new kind of language interference. The interference of language used within cellular text messaging is another good example: when young people do not realize the improper spelling and transfer it to their academic writing (ex: perké in Italian). Another example from my experience as an instructor and through discussions with other instructors, is direct translation of misspelled words. A student who confused the words "skim" and "skin". For this last example, though I am just a language instructor and not properly a linguist, it was obvious that the student’s translation into French was due to either to the phonetic confusion and mispronunciation -which made her look up the word "skin" instead of "skim"- or to a simple typo - which the student did not realize was incorrect- while looking up the word on an online dictionary. I shall conclude this panorama of mistakes and improper language usage by reminding everyone of the current near absence of the past perfect tense in English and that of the subjunctive tense where appropriate in the romance languages. These last two examples could be overlooked particularly
when it comes to the spoken language; but they are present (or shall we say absent) more and more in
the written language as well. This should not be the case if the standard language, still currently
presented in current textbooks, is to be observed.

Therefore, what does this erroneous or improper use of language in the media mean for the
language teacher? The answer is simple: all the improper usage present in the media is relevant to the
humanities and languages because it then transfers into language learning. What must one respond
when the students say "I heard that word on TV" or "I found that word in an article on the internet", in
particular when they cite a reputable news-station or website, or even other programs which provide
authentic language use? After all, in most classes professors ask for bibliographical sources or items
that students consult to get a more in-depth explanation of the language, grammar and vocabulary.
Furthermore, language instructors justifiably encourage their students to listen as much as possible to
programs in the language they are studying because this activity provides extra language practice and
extra immersion in both language and culture. However, no instructor will want to use media that
does not support the language usage taught in the classroom. This has already been the case with a
technological media tool that, at first, seemed wonderful: web translator programs. After noticing
some inconsistency, having wracked their brains for hours to figure out how students came to certain
translation mistakes, now foreign language instructors discourage students from using web translator
dictionaries for their homework and papers. One of these mistakes was the above mentioned, "skim";
another is the ever present erroneous translation of the words "spring break", "education" and
"factory" for English, "chemise" for French and "libreria" and "facoltà" for Italian. A current example
from misusage of web translators is a student in an intermediate Italian course who looked up the word
"foundation" in the historical sense and translated it as "fondotinta", which means make-up for
women.

Some might suggest that the answer to the above-mentioned question of "what does improper
language use in the media mean for the language teacher" does not lie in improper language usage by
the media but it lies instead in language evolution. Even so, there still would be different but very
important questions to consider: where do we draw the line and set a limit for what is acceptable in
language evolution, which is a natural process of language? Particularly, where do we draw the line
for acceptable language usage by the media? Obviously, we do not want to exaggerate towards the
purist side, because it is true that languages evolve. Nevertheless, even for language evolution, a line
must be drawn, particularly when the improper usage mistakes are found at the most basic levels of
standard language usage and grammar.

IV. Conclusion

Due to the disappearance of geographical borders and the growing presence of wireless
technology, there is no question that technology and the media are part of the current learning
environment. In particular, they are becoming part of the classroom and are especially useful in the
language classroom because of the many benefits they offer towards bridging the gap between the
textbook and authentic language and culture. Therefore, the use of media can only strengthen the
argument in favor of the humanities and language learning. However, because of this close
relationship between humanities and the media, and because of the media's many benefits and uses in
the humanities classroom, the media must be held to a higher language standard. It is therefore of the
utmost importance that any official or professional media, in television and on the internet, use
standard language properly at its most basic levels, in order to support what is being taught in the
classroom. After all, if this were not true, companies would not be sending their employees back to
the language classroom in order to improve their language and writing skills.
Bibliography

  <http://newsroom.eworldwire.com/wr/020306/13679.htm>
- Examples taken from my students’ papers and from popular culture.

Internet As An Education Medium of Media Literacy:
Internet Literacy In Turkey And Digital Divide

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Internet As a Medium of Literacy: What is Internet?

The Internet is the worldwide, publicly accessible network of interconnected computer networks that transmit data by packet switching using the standard Internet Protocol (IP). It is a "network of networks" that consists of millions of smaller domestic, academic, business, and government networks, which together carry various information and services, such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer, and the interlinked Web pages and other documents of the World Wide Web. In this medium the common language is TCP/IP.

The beginning of the Internet goes back to a Defense Department project in 1969. ARPA’s point of exit is unique and strategic: the assurance of the shipping and management in case of war. Because at that time the telephone system was about the only theater-scale communications system in use. That time, a "web" of datagram network was built, called an "catenet", and use dynamic routing protocols to constantly adjust the flow of traffic through the catenet. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) launched the DARPA Internet Program. DARPA Internet, largely the plaything of academic and military researchers, spent more than a decade in relative obscurity. In 1975, DARPA declared the project a success and handed its management over to the Defense Communications Agency. Several of today's key protocols (including IP and TCP) were stable by

1980, and adopted throughout ARPANET by 1983. was then called ARPANET. In that Period, few companies had Internet access and the Internet community was dominated by universities and military research sites. It's most popular service was the rapid email it made possible with distant colleagues. In August 1983, there were 562 registered ARPANET hosts. ARPANET was fundamentally unreliable in nature, as the Internet is still today. Then, in 1986 The National Science Foundation (NSF) started the Supercomputer Centers program. Until then, supercomputers such as Crays were largely the playthings of large, well-funded universities and military research centers. NSF's idea was to make supercomputer resources available to those of more modest means by constructing five supercomputer centers around the country and building a network linking them with potential users. NSF decided to base their network on the Internet protocols, and NSFNET was born. For the next decade, NSFNET would be the core of the U.S. Internet, until its privatization and ultimate retirement in 1995. Of at least as much interest as Internet's technical progress in the 1990s has been its sociological progress. It has already become part of the national vocabulary, and seems headed for even greater prominence. It has been accepted by the business community, with a resulting explosion of service providers, consultants, books, and TV coverage.15

Development of the Internet in Turkey: A Brief History

In 1986, a BITNET connection was established between Ege University in Izmir and the European Academic and ResearchNetwork (EARN) via Pisa, Italy, through a 9600-bps leased line. The network was named the Turkish Network of Universities and Research Institutes (TUVAKA) and was administered by a committee consisting of representatives of each participating organization. The first activities to establish an Internet Protocol (IP) based network started in 1989. In 1991 the initial request for connection to the Internet was sent to NSFNET. In 1993, the Middle East Technical University (METU) and the Turkish Scientific and Technical Research Council (TUBITAK) established a dedicated 64-kbps Internet connection between METU and NSF with funding from the state planning organization. At the same time, METU and TUBITAK also formed an informal organization known as TR-NET to promote the use of Internet technologies throughout Turkey. By early 1995, the number of hosts had grown to nearly 3000 and the total number of daily users was estimated to be between 10,000 and 15,000. Of these users, more than 1300 had individual connections; others access TR-NET through more than 100 connected institutions. Personal applications were being received at the rate of about 200 per month. At these levels of usage, the international link to NSF was saturated. The link was upgraded to 128 kbps in October, 1995.

To address the growth issues, individuals at TR-NET in 1995 proposed a plan consisting of technical, organizational, and funding components. The technical component envisioned a triangular backbone, connecting the three most populous Turkish cities: Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. The organizational component envisioned a layer of service providing organizations at each of the three backbone nodes, which would provide Internet information, connectivity, and consulting services to both institutional and individual end users. Users would not connect directly to the backbone.16

Between 1996 and 1999, the backbone was upgraded, but not significantly. In 1997, Ankara’s link to Sprint was upgraded to 2 Mbps, and an additional 2 Mbps link to Sprint was established from Istanbul. While the backbone links terminating in Izmir had the same capacity as they did in 1996, the capacity between Istanbul and Ankara was increased by 300 percent through the addition of two new frame relay lines, with 2 Mbps and 4 Mbps capacity. The international capacity has also increased substantially, so that now Istanbul and Ankara each have three 2 Mbps fiber-optic links to AT&T, Sprint, and MCI/Worldcom, all terminating in the United States. Once TURNET went online in the fall of 1996, the Internet service provider (ISP) market exploded. Prior to TURNET, fewer than 10 companies offered Internet service. By the end of the first year of operation, the total number of ISPs

15 http://www.freesoft.org/CIE/Topics/57.htm (access 8.08.2006).
leasing connections to TURNET was 69. Between September 1997 and May 1999, the dynamism of the ISP market and some constraints were apparent. The aggregate capacity of connections to the backbone increased by 164 percent, but the number of ISPs increased by only 16 percent. Of the 69 ISPs in operation after TURNET’s first year, 15 (22 percent) failed to survive until May 1999. During the same period, 26 new ISPs came into existence. The barriers to entry for ISPs were low. There were no licensing fees to speak of. The costs are in hardware, connection fees, personnel, and operating costs. The technical barriers to entry were low in Turkey because of the requirement that all ISPs had to connect to TURNET. A new ISP did not need to acquire for itself an international connection; it merely needed to obtain a leased line from Türk Telekom to TURNET, a much simpler and cheaper proposition. Because the ISP market is unregulated, ISPs are free to offer whatever services they wish and charge whatever price they can. Competition for customers is intense and has led to some creative marketing strategies.  

Turkish Telecom now has a service called TurNet. TurNet is a three-city Internet backbone with 2-Mbps (megabits per second) lines between cities and 512-Kbps (kilobits per second) international connectivity to US Sprint. Also there are private several service providers.

### Internet Literacy and Internet Users?

Internet literacy is required to access both hardware and online services, and to regulate the conditions of access. Internet literacy is crucial for effective, discerning and critical evaluation of information and opportunities online. It permits the user to become an active producer as well as a receiver of content, enabling interactivity and participation online. Each dimension of literacy supports the others. Across many domains – not only leisure but also education, work, relationships, health and civic participation – internet literacy (and media literacy more generally) is increasingly important. Its absence may contribute to social exclusion and inequality.

The number of the Internet users is an important indicator on the way to information society. In 1995, the number of Internet users were 16 million all around the world and in 2006 the number is increased to 1,022,063,282.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Regions</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>World Percentage</th>
<th>Number of Users</th>
<th>Development Rate 2000-2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU Countries</td>
<td>462,371,237</td>
<td>%7.1</td>
<td>230,396,996</td>
<td>%147.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World (other</td>
<td>6,037,325,823</td>
<td>%92.9</td>
<td>787,960,334</td>
<td>%194.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countries)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,499,697,060</td>
<td>%100.0</td>
<td>1,022,063,282</td>
<td>%183.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Digital Gap

New communication and information technologies present both an opportunity and a danger. While their use can strengthen the economic, cultural, and social progress of people and societies, there is also a risk that they could exacerbate the differences in development both between different countries.

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19 http://personal.lse.ac.uk/bober/UKCGOonlineLiteracy.pdf, p.6 (access 22.11.2006).
nations and within the societies of a single country. Digital divide is simply the gap between those with regular, effective access to digital technologies and those without. In other words, those who are able to use technology to their own benefit and those who are not. Digital divide can be local as well as global. Digital gap can exist in different regions of a country. Also, in global dimensions, can exist between developed and undeveloped countries. The digital divide is related to social inclusion and equality of opportunity.

The variables for measuring digital divide are as follows:

- Number of PC
- Internet access
- Information and communication technologies ownership
- Demographic variables
  o Age
  o Gender
  o Income
  o Education
  o Race

The digital divide is not a clear single gap that divides a society into two groups. Researchers report that disadvantages can take such forms as lower-performance computers, lower-quality or high-priced connections (i.e. narrowband or dialup connections), difficulty in obtaining of the Internet and technological advances in developing economies. Many people can get low cost access in local Internet Cafes, but the evidence still suggest that people are much more likely to make regular use of an Internet connection at home than anywhere else. Today the discussion is moving from the technologies themselves to skills and literacy. Training people in computer skills entails teaching them to read and write first and then how to search and use information effectively but regular practice and the access to practice will still be a limiting factor. Another key dimension of the Digital Divide is the global digital divide, reflecting existing economic divisions in the world. This global digital divide widens the gap in economic divisions around the world. Countries with a wide availability of internet access can advance the economics of that country on a local and global scale. In today's society, jobs and education are directly related to the internet. In countries where the internet and other technologies are not accessible, education is suffering, and uneducated people cannot compete in our global economy. This leads to poor countries suffering greater economic downfall and richer countries advancing their education and economy. And the worry that as people in the rich world embraced new computing and communications technologies, people in the poor world would be left stranded on the wrong side of a digital divide.

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22 The Economist, 10.03.2005.
Information and Communication Technologies Ownership & Usage:
Turkey- 2005

The first 10 Provinces in socio-economic development in Turkey are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANGING</th>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>REGION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>İstanbul</td>
<td>Marmara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ankara</td>
<td>Central Anatolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>İzmir</td>
<td>Aegean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kocaeli</td>
<td>Marmara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>Marmara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Eskişehir</td>
<td>Central Anatolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tekirdağ</td>
<td>Marmara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yalova</td>
<td>Marmara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Antalya</td>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.tuik.gov.tr

The "digital divide" refers to the fact that certain parts of the population have substantially better opportunities to benefit from the new economy than other parts of the population. But there are also two other types of the digital divide:

- Economic Divide
  
  In its simplest form, the digital divide is manifested in the fact that some people can't afford to buy a computer. We should recognize that for truly poor developing countries, computers will remain out of the average citizen's reach for 20 years or more.

- Usability Divide
  
  Far worse than the economic divide is the fact that technology remains so complicated that many people couldn't use a computer even if they got one for free. Many others can use computers, but don't achieve the modern world's full benefits because most of the available services are too difficult for them to understand. Lower literacy is the Web's biggest accessibility problem, but nobody cares about this massive user group. Senior citizens face the second-biggest accessibility problem, but again there is little interest in the guidelines for making websites easier for older users.

- Empowerment Divide
  
  The empowerment divide, however, is the hard one: even if computers and the Internet were extraordinarily easy to use, not everybody would make full use of the opportunities that such technology affords. Participation inequality is one exponent of the empowerment divide that has held constant throughout all the years of Internet growth: in social networks and community systems, about 90% of users don't contribute, 9% contribute sporadically, and a tiny minority of 1% accounts for most contributions.

Table 3: ICT Ownership in Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICT OWNERSHIP RATE IN HOUSEHOLDS</th>
<th>ICT OWNERSHIP WITH INTERNET ACCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Graph 1-2: PC And Internet Usage in City and Rural Area By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Rural Area</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Rural Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>11.62</td>
<td>16.11</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>8.39</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAP-TOP</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDA</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell/Mobile Phone</td>
<td>72.62</td>
<td>79.86</td>
<td>59.91</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television (Cable TV + Satellite)</td>
<td>97.74</td>
<td>98.97</td>
<td>95.59</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household owns at least one of the above</td>
<td>98.35</td>
<td>99.40</td>
<td>96.51</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>11.62</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [www.tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr)

The other findings about the dimensions of digital divide in Turkey are:

- The Turkish people uses the internet mostly in the work place (% 43,28)
  - Internet cafe: %36, 62
  - Home: % 27,64

- When we look at the PC usage & internet access rates by age & gender:
  **PC Usage**
  - Ages 16-24
    - Woman: % 21.07
    - Man: % 44.4
  - Ages 25-34
Woman : % 13.1  Man: % 26.41

- Ages 35-44
  Woman : % 7.05  Man: % 19.16

- Ages 45-54
  Woman : % 2.76  Man: % 12.91

**Internet Access**

- Ages 16-24
  Woman : % 15.95  Man: % 38.3

- Ages 25-34
  Woman : % 9.67  Man: % 21.47

- Ages 35-44
  Woman : % 4.92  Man: % 13.89

- Ages 45-54
  Woman : % 1.66  Man: % 9.28

- The Turkish people uses the internet for:

  E-mail: 66,84

  Chat: 40,39

  Information about product & services: 43,31

  Game: 43,58

  Journal & magazine reading: 55,77

  Internet banking: 12,90

  Education: 26,83

  Health search: 22,38
• Table 4: ICT Ownership By Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>TELEPHONE</th>
<th></th>
<th>CELL PHONE</th>
<th></th>
<th>PC</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>96.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Anatolia</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>91.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aegean</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>11.20</td>
<td>88.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Anatolia</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>98.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>13.60</td>
<td>86.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marmara</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>16.80</td>
<td>83.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Anatolia</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>86.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.tuik.gov.tr

• Graphic 3: PC Ownership By Income Groups

• Table 5: PC Usage and Internet Access By Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>POPULATION (million)</th>
<th>PC USAGE</th>
<th>INTERNET ACCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Rural Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Education</td>
<td>7 851 283</td>
<td>3 779 824</td>
<td>4 071 458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>20 827 732</td>
<td>11 814 089</td>
<td>9 013 643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>6 396 657</td>
<td>4 225 055</td>
<td>2 171 602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>9 551 080</td>
<td>7 420 125</td>
<td>2 130 955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Graduate &amp; Post Graduate</td>
<td>3 551 909</td>
<td>3 095 811</td>
<td>456 098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.tuik.gov.tr
• The numbers about the key indicators, PC ownership and internet access reveals that there is a digital divide in Turkey. It is observed that in addition to the difference between the low-income families and the high-income families, there are important differences between the regions and the education levels.

**Digital Divide Around The World**

We can briefly summarize the digital divide around the world;

• In Internet usage ranking, U.S.A is the first country. The population of the country is 299 million and there are 205 million Internet users. Turkey, has the twentieth place in internet usage ranking.

• There are 312 million Internet users in English language. Chinese and Japanese follows English.

• A confrontation can be made between Turkey and the other European countries in PC ownership and Internet access in household as seen below graphics:

**Graphic 4-5: PC Ownership in Household and Ownership of Internet Access in Households**

[Bar chart showing PC ownership and Internet access comparison between various countries including Turkey.]
• The digital divide indicators can be compared between countries by income rates. In high income countries information and communication technologies ownership rate are high relatively to the low income ones.

Graphic 6: Digital Divide Indicators – Comparison Between Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>TELEVISION (%)</th>
<th>TELEPHONE (%)</th>
<th>PC (%)</th>
<th>INTERNET (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH INCOME COUNTRIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEDAN</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANADA</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAPAN</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANCE</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIAN INCOME COUNTRIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGENTINA</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKEY</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLAND</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAZIL</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUNGARY</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW INCOME COUNTRIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDIA</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDONESIA</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAKISTAN</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUDAN</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion
ICT has a bidirectional effect on increasing the inequalities between the individuals.
- The diffusion of information and communication technologies in economic life, decreases the demand for the unskilled labor
- The diffusion of ICT, causes the relocation of Machine-Human. So, the number of unemployed increases and the wage rates decreases.
Many countries drive many politics to overcome the digital divide. These politics are mostly encouraging the individuals to use ICT. So, what can we do?
- Socio-economic policies can be developed which can increase the purchasing power
- The public’s capacity and ability to use present technologies are not high. Informative studies can be executed.
- In order to make the public reaches information and communication technologies, some privatized opportunities can be provided.

Defining A Curriculum For LSP Teaching: A Syntax-Oriented Approach

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Introduction

In the past decades, a striking number of LSP (= Language for Specific Purposes) workbooks have appeared on the market, obviously in response to the rapidly increasing globalization and the advent of new technology. It is therefore evident that the teaching of foreign languages, especially at university level, must be extended to the level of LSP knowledge. However, the kind of LSP knowledge that should be taught remains a topic of heated debate among university staff. What should an effective LSP curriculum look like?

So far, LSP teaching has been more or less restricted to the lexical aspect. In other words, the dominant content of LSP classes has been – and still is – the teaching of technical terms (tt). Without doubt, this is an important and necessary element of LSP teaching. However, in this paper I argue that there is a second, perhaps even more crucial element that should be taught in LSP classes: the LSP specific syntax. Departing from the assumption that an LSP specific syntax does exist, and that it can be systematically derived from the LGP (= Language for General Purposes) syntax, I base my paper on two main requirements for an effective LSP teaching: 1.) the most important LSP specific syntactic structures – to be introduced later on in this paper – should be taught, 2.) these structures should always be taught in relation with the corresponding LGP structures. The significance of looking at the interrelation between LSP and LGP syntax, and of teaching this interrelation to university students, becomes obvious in the following subchapter.

The relation between LSP and LGP in professional communication

When talking about the use of LSP and LGP, the complementary distribution between these two language styles seems clear at first sight: LGP is used in everyday communication, whereas LSP is the language used in professional communication. Thus a common assumption is that the more tt (or LSP structures) are taught in an LSP class, the better. However, it is not true that the mere accumulation of tt etc. prepares students for successful professional communication: A survey
carried out by Weiß (1992) shows that large firms expect particularly their leading employees (general management etc.) to foremost have a good communicative grasp of LGP rather than LSP:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>good LGP skills important for:</th>
<th>technicians</th>
<th>37.4%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>commercial clerks</td>
<td>62.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leadership position</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Weiß 1992:109]

This is a rather unexpected outcome. However, it has to be noted that in the survey, LGP is contrasted with different fields of LSP, such as the language of economics, of science or of the courtroom. Thus, LSP is apparently regarded as an equivalent of subject-specific terminology here, and – as the results of the survey demonstrate – this is not what leading employees are expected to be experts in. In other words: The primary goal of LSP courses should not be to teach students what a “rev counter” is in Spanish, French or German. Instead, “effective communication skills” are required of a prospective (leading) employee.

Now, what exactly does this imply? On the one hand, the demand for “effective communication skills” certainly implies that students must acquire a good command of LGP in a given language: It is important that people in leadership positions are able to lead negotiations, address conversations and communicate their ideas in a clear and understandable way, including to workers that may not be well trained. As the survey demonstrates, this ability is more important to employers than an extensive knowledge of it, which can easily be looked up in an appropriate dictionary.

However, a good command of LGP is certainly not enough for successful professional communication: What students must be taught in their LSP courses is, above all, the interrelation between LGP and LSP, the characteristic features of the two language styles and when to use which style. This goal should always serve as the basis of an LSP course, and it will become obvious that the interrelation between LGP and LSP is not limited to a difference in terminology/vocabulary:

Take advertising for example: Here, LSP specific structures are often skillfully used to convey the impression of a scientifically grounded content, which is suggested by the language style, but is not really there. In such cases, it is precisely the LSP specific structures that suggest the scientific seriousness behind the qualities of a product. – One example from the promotion of RENACER, a Spanish beauty product:

“Cada gota de RENACER activa, estimula y renueva las células de tu piel, deteniendo de forma natural el envejecimiento de los tejidos y devolviéndoles la belleza de la juventud.”

= Every drop of RENACER activates, stimulates and renovates the cells of your skin, decelerating the process of aging (…).
The same contents could also be expressed like this:

“Con RENACER tu piel estará estimulada. Por eso se envejece más lentamente con RENACER. Gracias a RENACER, tu piel ganará la belleza de la juventud.”

= With RENACER your skin is stimulated. Therefore it ages more slowly with RENACER (…).

However, the first version sounds much more convincing and trustworthy to the consumer, and this impression is not caused by any tt, but rather by certain - LSP specific - syntactic features. Which ones?

LSP specific syntactic features (derived from LGP features)

a) Nominalizations and relational verbs

Analyzing the advertisement of RENACER, two systematic strategies can be detected which transform the LGP into LSP style:

I  LGP: Con RENACER, tu piel estará estimulada.

   With RENACER, your skin will be stimulated.

   complex statement 1 (noun + passive verbal construction)

   → verb(s)

   LSP: RENACER activa, estimula y renueva las células de tu piel.

   RENACER activates, stimulates and renovates the cells of your skin.

II LGP: Tu piel se envejece más lentamente con RENACER.

   Your skin ages more slowly with RENACER.

   complex statement 2 (verb + adverb)

   → verb + N°

   LSP: RENACER detiene el envejecimiento de los tejidos.

   RENACER decelerates the aging of the tissues.

To begin with the second example, we find a strategy that is widely known as being typical of LSP style: the nominalization (N°) of verbs (in this case: envejecer > el envejecimiento). However, this is not all, because the strategy of nominalization is often embedded into a broader syntactic feature: the transformation of whole statements into the structure noun – verb - noun. As illustrated in the examples above, LSP syntax tends to convert adjectives, adverbs or even complex statements into verbs, thus opening up an additional agent position within the sentence (X es estimulado > Y estimula X; X envejece lentamente > Y detiene el envejecimiento de X). The respective verbs are
called relational verbs (Forner 1994, 1998), because they express a relation of either cause > effect or effect > cause:

```
Liposomes provoke an improvement of the skin.  
cause > effect

The improvement of the skin requires the use of liposomes.  
effect > cause
```

The frequent expression of dependencies and causal relations makes the contents of LSP texts sound more logical and thus more convincing. As a result, relational verbs constitute an essential part of LSP syntax.

In addition to nominalizations (N°) and relational verbs (Rv) there are two more important LSP specific syntactic structures: analytical verbal constructions and relational adjectives.

b) Analytical verbal constructions

In analytical (verbal/ nominal) constructions both verbs and nouns can be split up into two parts:

```
planificar algo > hacer la planificación de algo   “verb splitting”
  to plan sth. > to do a planification of sth.
producción  > actividad de producción   “noun splitting”
production  > activity of production
```

As illustrated in these examples, the lexical meaning remains in the second part of the analytical construction, whereas the first part (hacer/ actividad) does not add any additional meaning to the construction. The splitting abides to the following scheme:

```
planificar   >  hacer   la planificación   de   producción   “verb splitting”
  verb Vx   functional   nomialization of   functional   noun
producción   >  actividad   de   producción
  Vx
```

So, what is the function of such analytical constructions in LSP? – There is a considerable variety of explanations, of which only a short selection shall be mentioned here, as exposed by Forner (1998):

1) LSP technology is based on nouns/ nominalizations and these often lack the existence of a corresponding verb. This problem is more acute in some languages, a little less in others. Generally speaking, the Romance languages have a stronger tendency towards analytical verbal constructions, because they lack more “technical verbs” than English or German: For example in English, we have the noun “management” as well as the verb “to manage”. In French, however, the verb “manager” is rather uncommon and thus a sentence like “Mr Chang is to manage this project” would translate into French by using an analytical verbal construction: “M. Chang a assumé le management du project”.
2) If a simple verb is polysemous, like “prouver” [French]/ “probar” [Spanish]/ “to prove” [English], the functional verb of the analytical verbal construction can clarify this polysemous meaning and thus facilitate the understanding of the contents, e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>probar</td>
<td>aportar la prueba de</td>
<td>to prove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[activity/state]</td>
<td>[activity]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constituir la prueba de</td>
<td>[constitute proof of sth.]</td>
<td>state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) The same function holds for the technique of “noun splitting”: The functional noun is able to differentiate between “action” and “fact”. Thus in our Spanish example, “actividad de producción”, the functional noun indicates that “producción” is meant as an activity, not as an economic factor. In other words, the “noun splitting” can also facilitate the comprehension of an LSP text.

c) Relational adjectives

Just like any adjective, relational adjectives are dependent on a noun and take on its number and gender:

* el estudio económico, la tarea económica; 
* los estudios económicos, las tareas económicas

Despite this evident similarity, relational adjectives do not behave like “ordinary” adjectives, because they cannot be combined with “to be” (sp.: ser), nor can you form a comparative/superlative with them:

Sp.: un estudio económico > *el estudio es económico
*el estudio es más económico que el otro

E.: an industrial injury > *an injury which is industrial
*this injury is more industrial than the other

This difference compared to “descriptive” adjectives arises because relational adjectives take on different functions than that of “specifying a noun”. In the above example they represent the genitive object:

un estudio económico > un estudio de la economía (= se estudia la economía)

Other possible functions include the expression of:

- place: la exposición mural (= exposer en el muro, to expose on the wall)
- goal: la vacunación preventiva (= se vacuna como prevención de una enfermedad, a vaccination in order to prevent an illness)

To sum up, the relational adjective – obviously - gets its name from its ability to replace any function a noun can take on within a sentence. This ability leads to a wide variety of functions,
making the relational adjective an important component of LSP style. E.g., it can summarize a complex contents which has been discussed previously:

“(…) se ha descubierto de nuevo el dinamismo de la economía de libre mercado y se ha perseguido la competitividad de las empresas (…). Esta evolución económica y política ha favorecido la creación y la puesta al día de las legislaciones de competencia (…).” [Frevel 2001:17]

In this case, the construction “esta evolución económica y política” summarizes information concerning the economic and political changes in Latin America, which have been discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

However, the most important function of relational adjectives is that they are used to create new terminology in LSP: Both noun and (relational) adjective generally dispose of a huge variety of possible combinations, e.g.:

Sp. una empresa pública/ industrial/ bancaria/ agrícola…
una relación/ defensa/ producción/ promoción/ explotación/ …. comercial
E.: an industrial dispute/ tribunal/ relations/ ….

This is due to the fact that there is usually an assortment of meanings implied in the corresponding noun from which a relational adjective is derived. “Comercial”, for example, is derived from “comercio”, which can mean “trade, market, business, deal….”.

For the students, the knowledge of the syntactic structure behind this terminology is essential, because it can be quite tricky - especially with relational adjectives, which often refer to a so-called “intermediary noun” that tends to be omitted in the Romance languages.

Frevel (2001) discusses the following examples from Spanish:

la planificación industrial = la planificación del desarrollo industrial
el efecto monetario = el efecto de la crisis monetaria
la crisis comercial = la crisis en las relaciones comerciales

“Un efecto monetario” is not a “consequence of the currency” (which would be the literal translation of the compound “efecto monetario”), but the “consequences/ effects of the monetary crisis”. “Una crisis comercial” is not a “crisis of commerce”, but a “crisis in the trade relations”. In all three examples, the Spanish and English terminology obviously differ from each other in their underlying syntactic structure. Therefore a businessman – and particularly a translator – is unable to understand and translate these Spanish constructions correctly without knowing there is an omitted intermediary noun that must be derived from the context and then translated. Examples like these clearly demonstrate that the mere knowledge of terminology/ tt does not sufficiently qualify students without at least a basic understanding of LSP syntactic principles.

Examples of exercises to practice LSP syntax

Now that the four basic structures of LSP syntax have been introduced, the question arises: How can the LSP syntax be taught in class? In this short paper we can only give a representative
example of possible exercises to make students practice the respective structures: In the following
text, “La inflación”, the LGP syntax is to be transformed into LSP structures. By carrying out
tasks like this, the students become aware of the fact that one and the same content can be expressed
in very different ways, which have varying effects on the reader. In the following excerpt from “La
inflación”, the left- hand side shows the LGP text which is to be transformed, whereas the right-
hand side lists possible solutions, including the respective syntactic transformations applied:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Una inflación puede</td>
<td>An inflation can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venir del hecho que</td>
<td>occur because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el nombre de las mercancías</td>
<td>the quantity of merchandises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demandadas por los clientes</td>
<td>ordered by the clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>es más grande que</td>
<td>is bigger than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lo que la industria es capaz de producir</td>
<td>what the industry is capable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Una inflación puede</td>
<td>An inflation can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>producirse, porque</td>
<td>occur because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>los empresarios están obligados a pagar</td>
<td>the employers have to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trabajos de los obreros.</td>
<td>the employees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This short exercise aptly illustrates how LSP syntax and its terminology interact with each
other. Moreover, the similarity between the Spanish and English version shows that LSP syntax
follows the same basic principles/structures in a lot of languages, therefore constituting a
qualification which is not restricted to one particular language.

Summary

When establishing a curriculum for LSP classes, it is important to bear in mind the demands
of the business world that require prospective (leading) employees to be well-rounded in their
communicative ability. This implies enabling students to switch between LGP and LSP
appropriately and to know when to use which style. As a result, an effective LSP class should
always depart from LGP as the basis.

As for the question “What kind of LSP should be taught?”, two key competencies are
required: a) As “users”, students must be able to apply LSP appropriately and effectively, e.g. if
they are to work in the field of marketing/ advertising.; and b) As “recipients”, students must be
able to understand LSP. This paper has demonstrated that neither competency can be achieved by
merely teaching terminology. Instead, more emphasis is to be placed on LSP syntax.

24 The complete exercise can be found in Forner, Fachsprachliche Aufbaugrammatik Französisch (1998), for
French (p.82).
GREEK MYTHOLOGY:
AN INCENTIVE FOR YOUNG LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

Radulescu Rocsana
Teacher of English

‘I CANNOT TEACH ANYBODY ANYTHING; I CAN ONLY MAKE THEM THINK” (SOCRATES)

The modern world has not yet freed itself from the ancient myths and they still play an important part in our lives. This legacy is our pride and a resourceful material for young generations who can be tempted to explore it, resorting to state-of-the-art equipment the 21st century can provide.

Stories behind the myths are frequently echoed in contemporary culture and this may be another reason for students to find studying myths interesting. The film “My Fair Lady” or even “Pretty Woman”.

The merger between high technology gadgets and the study of ancient civilizations no matter how odd it may sound, at first, is actually a good stimulant for students to study both English language and mythology.
The importance of Multimedia in education has revealed itself as being of paramount importance in Romanian schools as well, as its efficiency has been proved against other classical methods given its new integrative approach to a wide age range as well as to life-long learning.

Computer-assisted language learning has been trying to bridge the gap between “technocynism” and “technoinfatuation” by sorting out problems like unequal access to computers and dominance of computers. The use of computers and the internet when teaching English through Greek mythology to second language learners, must not be seen only as an extension of a method used in class but a teaching method in itself as long as it confers the class with a greater flexibility. The supply of new ideas to the students does come through the use of the Internet as a study basis and it also ensures learners a higher number of meaningful contacts with the foreign language they are studying.

With the view to meeting the modern educational standards, I have considered all the existing state-of-the-art equipment, which I consider a prerequisite, and integrated it in modern language teaching by building up an environment favorable to internet-assisted learning.

An internet-based project on Greek Mythology is supposed to collect culturally-authentic myths, genuine photographs of ancient Greek monuments and works of art, and culturally-authentic songs and develop computer skills.

**MAIN GOALS OF THE PROJECT**

- **Gain insight with Greek Mythology**
- Help students develop their expertise
- Enable students to do research in the respective domain
- Encourage the higher order of thinking skills
- Use information technology
- Engage the community of scholars
- Improve the language skills

Greek Mythology is a source of many languages today. It helps us understand the beliefs of other people. It is often taught as a basis for later literature studies and much literature derives from its archetypal stories. Shakespeare is universally taught and his literary works rely heavily on mythical allusions.

Students have developed their expertise in information technology and English language. Doing research on the Internet required the ability to select the most relevant information and make use of it in one of the assignments given.

Investigating different myths enabled students to find out about their connection to the modern world and explain the reason for the myths’ endurance. Students were exposed to a great deal of information about Ancient Greek civilization as well.

Students were taught to think critically and creatively. Given the fact that as Robinson points out, ”while the importance of cognitive development has become widespread, students’ performance on measures of higher order thinking ability has turned out to be rather critical” . . the project considered Bloom’s model which includes six models of thinking. Knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation and encouraged students to go through all these steps.
The information technology was construed in this project as a tool meant to make research more effective as regards time and amount of information.

There was a fruitful collaboration between teachers and students which enabled them to exchange ideas and benefit from mutual support.

The best developed language skills were reading comprehension with good opportunities to improve vocabulary, by reading various materials and writing skills in letters, reports, and essays.

STANDARDS PROMOTE MULTIMEDIA USE IN EDUCATION

Among the educational standards imposed by modern education, I considered as relevant:

- the computer literacy
- information transfer
- access and engagement
- collaboration
- promotion of excellence
- building on own strengths
- group-working pilots

Besides the knowledge acquired during the Information Technology classes, within this project students had the opportunity to create a web page comprising all the information they were able to gather about Greek myths and their “implication” in the modern world. The information was processed and well organized.

Information transfer turned out to be beneficial for students’ capacity of selecting and synthesizing information, tailoring it to the practical needs of the project.

Interdisciplinary collaboration as well, was seen as a target given the nature of the project aiming at gathering information on history, geography and not least English language.

The different tasks considered students’ skills and penchants for certain domains providing them, thus, with increased motivation for what they were doing.

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL USING MULTIMEDIA

The web can be seen as a digital global multimedia library with steadily increasing classroom use of multimedia resources.

The main skills developed in the case of information retrieval

- search skills
- ability to locate information
- evaluation
- conducting searches using Boolean logic

acquainted students with working on the computer and broadened their horizon.

They learned how to find information on the Internet by using the appropriate expressions and the appropriate syntax according to Boolean logic which is meant to refine the determination of system status. It also compares individual bits. It uses operators to determine how the bits are compared.

The use of Boolean logic enabled students to learn how to implement the appropriate syntax to make their search more effective. Thus the use of “and” means that the search will be
successful only if ALL the inputs are on while the use of "or" will be successful only if ANY inputs are on.

EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGES

Becoming involved in such co-curricular activities students enhanced their abilities of

• researcher
• author
• designer
• writer

Their creative skills combined with the language knowledge helped students to become reflective enabling them to reflect formatively on their own development. Their work was integrative as long as the project was used to follow-up additional lectures and iterative to such an extent that it enabled students to return to earlier stages.

ASSIGNEMENTS

Story told in the first person point of view

Prometheus 'legend was better taken in by having the students assume the identity of the hero and tell his story in the first person. It turned out to be a good comprehension strategy through which students were asked to react spontaneously in the circumstances given by the original story.

Application letters

Students were explained a situation in which Zeus was too old and had to retire. Students were asked to write application letters to fill in the vacancy.

Hercules’ Labors

After reading about Hercules’ labors eleven graders organized a talk show to weigh up the pros and cons of his situation and decide on the fairness of the punishment. They were also assigned to write an argumentative essay on the same topic.

Writing a modern-day odyssey

After reading the original odyssey students were asked to imagine the return of a soldier from a conflict developing somewhere in the modern world.

• on the first step they had to look on the world map and decide the itinerary
• secondly, they had to imagine all the obstacles the soldier will come up against during his journey back

The above-mentioned tasks are only the most relevant included in the project. They had a positive influence on students’ intellectual and educational development and can be seen as a really a step forward in their education.
Visual Rhetoric and Usability of Interfaces for Online Courses

Creating a User Manual for the Digital Classroom

Anne R. Richards, Kennesaw State University
Iraj Omidvar, Southern Polytechnic State University

Abstract

This article provides and illustrates practical guidelines for effective design of interactive interfaces used in online course delivery. We suggest that teachers of online courses and of digitally enhanced courses think of the interface as an instance of, among other things, the user manual—a genre that most teachers and students are familiar with. We also suggest that teachers consider the usefulness of both visual metadiscourse and usability guidelines in interface design, frameworks that have originated within the professions of technical and business communication. Finally, we provide suggestions for universal design that will enhance the online experience of students with limited sight or hearing.

Designing Digital User Manuals for Online and Digitally Enhanced Courses

To help teachers respond to differences in student expectations and behaviors in traditional and online teaching environments, we suggest the user manual as a metaphor for organizing online and digitally enhanced courses. Teachers who are beginning to struggle with the challenges of creating usable digital interfaces also may learn from the literature that has arisen around web sites published by scientific and technical, business, industrial, and nonprofit organizations. Designers and usability experts such as Jakob Nielsen have been critiquing professional websites for more than a decade, and their ideas reflect and are reflected in best practices in usability design today. This article identifies many of the key suggestions of user manual publishers and web design experts, tailoring them to the online teaching context.

Studies continue to demonstrate that reading performance drops precipitously as soon as the Internet is accessed (Churchill). Indeed, those who teach online courses, whether they deliver their courses through an institutional interface such as Vista or through a personal web site, are well aware that they may be doomed to receive hundreds of emails about this and that element of a course from bewildered students who just haven’t read the online materials carefully. In traditional classrooms, simple points of procedure can be cleared up easily for the whole class in brief question and answer exchanges with one student. In an online environment, similar questions of procedure may require epic efforts on the part of the teacher. Given the relation between less-than-careful reading and the digital interface, teachers of online courses may find it in their best interest to enhance the readability and usability of their sites. Doing so will not eliminate the number of emails received from students who have not read course materials carefully, but it should diminish them.

As teachers of technical communication, we are aware of the conventions that have evolved with respect to user manuals, a written genre whose importance has increased greatly since its widespread use by military establishments during the Second World War. Experts on readability and usability have been testing user manuals for decades, and most technical communication textbooks refer confidently to best practices for ensuring that readers of user manuals interact with products
effectively and safely. Unlike student readers of online course interfaces, readers of user manuals often have the potential to suffer grave bodily harm if they misread or read carelessly; thus, the literature on user manuals and on technical communication in general has taken readability and usability concerns very seriously and as a result has much to offer the teacher of online courses who is struggling to make his or her course more understandable to students.

**Primary Sections of the User Manual**

A typical user manual can contain 20 or more sections. We focus in this article on what we consider a user manual’s key seven sections—the table of contents, warnings, mechanism illustration, instructions, troubleshooting guide, contact information, and guarantee. Instead of advocating wholesale transfer of the seven sections without regard for differences in reading context or between Gutenberg and electronic pages, we focus on the rhetorical aims of the elements and on means of achieving them online.

**Table of Contents.** The rhetorical purpose of the table of contents is to provide the readers of user manuals with a map of the entire document so that they can navigate it efficiently and with minimal frustration. All effective web sites have at least one Table of Contents, and it is not unusual to find from two to five varieties of Tables of Contents on one homepage, a testament to the complexity of the online environment. The online equivalent of a Table of Contents in the Gutenberg text is the navigation bar, which conventionally appears on the left hand side of the page and lists a site’s main topics. Some sites also include a combination of the following additional forms of external skeleton: The A-Z menu at the top of a page (See Figure One); the “breadcrumb trail” (See Figure Two), which should not appear on the home page and may remind the reader of a computer file address; the “quick links” box, which is usually designed with key audiences in mind (See Figure Three); and the “related items” drop down or stationary menu, which provides links to items related to the page, thus preventing it from becoming congested (See Figure Four).

**Warnings.** The rhetorical purpose of warnings is to ensure that readers of user manuals will not be harmed in using the product. Because of the potentially dire legal responsibilities of manufacturers, warnings conventionally appear immediately after the table of contents and may be repeated throughout the document. A rough equivalent of this section for an online course might provide information about potential difficulties the student should be aware of insofar as his or her grade might be compromised. Is there a penalty for not engaging in chat discussions? Is there any form of “attendance” policy? Is there a penalty if group work is not handled effectively? Is there a penalty for late work? What other potentially negative outcomes of his or her classroom behavior should the student be well aware of, from day one? Taking a cue from user manuals, teachers might wish to publish this document in multiple locations: In a prominent location on the home page, as well as on homework, group work, or other relevant pages.

**Mechanism Illustration.** The rhetorical purpose of the mechanism illustration is to provide a map of the product in space, e.g., a drawing of a toaster with parts clearly labeled, so that later text referencing product parts, e.g., “place the bread in the toaster basket,” can be understood clearly. A rough equivalent to this for an online course would be a document that lays out the architecture of the interface visually, e.g., an illustration of the key pages and the documents that can be accessed through them, as well as the relation of key pages to each other.

**Instructions.** The rhetorical purpose of a set of instructions is to guide the reader in successful use of the product. Such instructions are step-by-step, unlike a process description, which is general in content. Normally, instructions are written in command form, that is, with the reader as subject, e.g., “#1. Place the slice of bread in the toaster.” Likewise, we recommend that instructions for each online assignment be written in the form of step-by-step commands from performing the first tasks associated with the assignment through its submission. Instructors should consider offering students
links to documents providing both the conventional assignment description and online assignment instructions.

**Troubleshooting Guide.** The rhetorical purpose of the troubleshooting guide is to provide readers with back up information in case the manual is not sufficiently clear to them. We recommend that teachers of online courses create a category of Q&A email exchanges on separate topics, e.g., assignment one, the midterm, attendance policy, etc., (even if the emails merely repeat what has been clearly stated elsewhere; redundancy in this case can help diminish frustration for all), and post them prominently. When students ask questions that have already been responded to, they should not be answered again if the answer has already been provided, but should be referred to the troubleshooting guide. This is a type of behavior modification that may, over time, diminish calls on the teacher for personal attention when none is required.

**Contact Information.** The rhetorical purpose of the contact information section is to provide readers with a direct link to the manufacturer in case the manual remains inscrutable to them or in case the product is defective. Teachers of online courses must provide multiple means of contact to students—email alone is not sufficient as veritable emergencies may arise, and as the teacher’s email may become inaccessible at some point. On the contact information page, encourage students to write down the contact information and keep it handy in case the Internet service goes down at a crucial moment.

**Guarantee.** The rhetorical purpose of the guarantee is to assuage the concerns of users. It is essentially an ethical appeal indicating that the manufacturer places the relationship between itself and its customers above the profit motive. Teachers cannot, obviously, offer any sort of guarantee regarding a grade let alone a product, but they can offer a statement of good will—that is, they can articulate their willingness to get to know students, to listen to their concerns, and to make the class useful to them. The many ways teachers have to indicate these qualities in the traditional classroom—through laughter, a warm tone, a friendly smile, etc., are largely lacking online. Thus a written text attempting to express the teacher’s respect for the student’s worth and, perhaps, the teacher’s willingness to be helpful and to get to know student, would be especially welcome.

Crucially, we recommend that links to each of these key sections, relabeled appropriately (and excluding instructions), appear on the homepage of the online course.

**Considering Visual Metadiscourse in Interface Design for Online Courses**

The preceding section has discussed the content of recommended web documents for online and digitally enhanced courses. Addressing concepts in the visual rhetoric of the web, we move now to the presentation of these and other documents. This section explains certain terms used by Eric Kumpf in his discussion of visuality. Kumpf has provided technical communicators with insights into **visual metadiscourse**, which he conceptualizes as a strategy for helping guide readers through a text. Visual metadiscourse is, according to Kumpf, a form of “considerate” visual expression that can help make prose more understandable. To provide one obvious example: Most of us find a 20-point typeface easier to read than a 10-point typeface. This relation between the visual appearance of a word and readability is, in Kumpf’s terms, metadiscursive. Among the metadiscursive strategies mentioned by Kumpf are external skeleton (or Table of Contents, which we have already explained), chunking, convention, first impression, and style, all of which we will discuss in light of his research and of recommendations provided by Jakob Nielsen.

We should note from the outset that each of the recommendations we make in this section is pertinent to a subset of digital page types. Our recommendations will not all be relevant to all of the various types of pages associated with an online or digitally enhanced course—e.g., the homepage (accessed through an institutional interface such as Vista or through a teacher’s personal web site),
main pages for the course web site, documents to be printed off (e.g., assignments), documents to be read online (e.g., articles, chapters, or books), and linked World Wide Web pages.

**Chunking.** To help students scan text effectively, teachers can consider incorporating visual elements such as bullets, bold text, colors, and subheaders into their online documents in order to create manageable units of text. Color, especially, is a key matériel of the web and often is not exploited to its full potential. We recommend, however, that teachers familiarize themselves with color guidelines re the World Wide Web before using color, since misuse can inspire readers to exit a site (Holtze, Richards and David). Generous white space on a site and between paragraphs, and the use of columns on web pages also enhance readability.

**Convention.** To diminish the level of confusion and frustration with a site, teachers should recall that their readers, even if regular users of the World Wide Web, probably have a narrow experience of web design and will be disoriented if a site has been constructed in an unconventional way. For instance, teachers can respect the expectations of readers by creating links that are unmistakable—that is, links that are in a different color (ideally, blue, if the main text is black) and underlined (for people who do not differentiate well among colors). And since research indicates that Internet users become disoriented when the links they have visited do not change color, a visited link should change color so that users can avoid returning to links that have not been of use to them and can return to those that are.

**First Impression.** The word “surfing” suggests the seriousness with which the average user approaches a web site. Since users are accustomed to entering sites briefly and then moving on to others, the web designer should attempt to encourage the reader to remain engaged with the site by achieving a positive first impression. Strategies for encouraging readers to remain on a site include avoidance of busy backgrounds (See Figure Five for a violation of this rule), fitting all information onto one page so that the reader does not need to scroll down to find information (See Figure Six for a violation of this rule), and using no more than one small image per main page in order to allow for rapid downloading. If a great deal of visual information must be included, consider using zoomable or rotatable photos or larger photos on later pages, and consider cropping photographs to the bare minimum required to get your idea across.

**Style.** When it comes to web design, less is almost always better. This guideline applies to countless aspects of web design; we illustrate the principle by considering, first, typeface selection. Sans serif typefaces are more readable than serif typefaces on line; this is because the small decorative “caps,” or serifs, attached to the typefaces (the typeface used in this article, Times New Roman, is one example) are resolved poorly on the web; sans serif typefaces (e.g., Ariel) thus read more “cleanly.” Plain fonts will read more cleanly than italicized fonts, as well. And mixed caps (or “upper lower”) text will be easier to read than all caps, which the eye is not accustomed to reading for long stretches and which the audience is likely to interpret as online “screaming.” Another style concern that businesspeople bear in mind and that teachers, a fortiori, should be aware of, is that elements of a site that seem to be part of advertising culture are resisted by readers. That is, use of banners, pop-ups, and flash animation will turn readers off and away.

**A Few Notes on Universal Design**

We conclude with a brief discussion of web design for users with disabilities as it is likely that you will, should you teach online for any period, encounter students who are vision or hearing impaired. Designing online courses for all students is a topic about which teachers of online or digitally enhanced courses have a responsibility to become knowledgeable. We cannot, in this cursory article, do justice to the research on universal design, but we encourage those of you who wish to learn more to visit the Web Accessibility Initiative. Following are a few suggestions for making your courses more usable for disabled students.
For the Vision Impaired. Many visually impaired students are capable of using computers with a few alterations of their monitor, for instance of background and text colors, brightness, contrast, font size, etc. But these students may at times prefer, and other students may always need, to use a text reader, which they no doubt already will have acquired for their studies. Considering that students may be using text readers, it will be helpful for teachers to provide roll over texts for all images on a site and to conclude headers and subheaders with periods, which will indicate to the text reader that there should be a pause in narration. For students whose vision impairment is mild, the teacher may be able to help greatly by merely refraining from using low-contrast texts and backgrounds; the greater the contrast, the greater the readability, and the most readable text/background combinations are white background with black text and white background with dark blue text. If you have the option to do so, never specify font size in pixels or points; rather, specify in relative terms, e.g., level one, level two, level three.

For the Hearing Impaired. Audio remains little used in online course delivery because audio files are, to date, often too large to make extensive use practical. (Software such as Impatica for PowerPoint significantly decrease the size of presentation files containing voice overs, however.) If you include audio files such as MP3s or Podcasts on your site, consider finding a way to provide transcripts. In some institutions, work study students may be available for such work; in others, a solution may be found by contacting the Office of Disabled Student Services or its equivalent.

Conclusion

As a recent article in Ergonomics Today points out, web site readability is a serious concern in business and industry because “much of the information published on the Web may be too hard to read and understand for typical readers. This means you may be losing customers because they cannot find or understand necessary information.” Teachers of online courses have a similar concern. Attrition in online courses is usually high in comparison to that in traditional courses, and online teachers may find that devoting attention to readability and usability of the interface will pay dividends in terms of student satisfaction and engagement with a course.

Bibliography


EMBODIED SPIRITUALITY
Heaven Is Not A Place But A State Of Consciousness & Being

Louis Silverstein, Professor
Department of Liberal Education
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Introduction
There I was, standing next to my goddess, my wife, mother-to-be, holding her hand, caressing her forehead, watching her doing her miracle work as she opened up the doorway into her temple, so that an angel incarnated in the form of our daughter, Ana Rebeca Cofresi-Silverstein, would enter into this world, saying with her body, in the words of Carl Sandburg, “I am! I have come through! I belong! I am a member of the family (of man.)”

Never had I felt so enthralled with the great universal mystery, so entwined in the web of that which is holy, so graced by being in the presence of the divine feminine, so much in harmony with the spiritual journey. At that moment I experienced the heaven to be known on earth, for heaven is not a place but a state consciousness and being.

A spiritual experience is not a spiritual life anymore than a religious experience is a religious life or a high experience a high life. The challenge is to take the potentially transformative experience on the mountaintop, in the cave, in the forests or by the seashore, and integrate it into ones daily life.

Spirituality, like gods and goddesses, is unpredictable. You do not know where incorporating spirituality into your life will take you—it is a path of finding rather than searching. Knowing this, do you want to go for the ride, take a walk on the wild side?

Embodied Spirituality
This very place, this is the lotus land, this very body, this is the Buddha.
In search of the divine we go everywhere. We go to places of pilgrimage, visit temples, follow many paths and disciplines and ignore our bodies. Your body is the most sacred place of pilgrimage you’ll ever come to. It is the dwelling place of the divine spirit; it is the temple of God and Goddess. Go within and experience the glory of God and Goddess within you.
---Yogi Amrit Desai

What would become of our souls?
If they lacked the bread of earth reality to nourish them,
The wine of created beauty to intoxicate them,
The disciplines of human struggle to make then strong?
--Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

In The Return Of the Mother, Andrew Harvey writes:
The yoga of The Father, the patriarchal yogas, are essentially yogas of transcendence; techniques that offer us escape from this ‘illusion’, from this heartbreak, from this body, from nature, into some detached serene, static peace of Timelessness and Freedom. The yoga of the Mother has that understanding of detachment and timeless freedom as its foundation, but takes a much more profound, much wilder, deeper, and more poignant risk—the risk of active divine love. The Mother’s yoga comes
down from transcendence into immanence, down from the safety of detachment into the misery and glory of love.

In always stressing the necessity to get out of the body, to locate heaven elsewhere, to remove the creator from the creation, what patriarchal philosophies have done is depreciate the whole essential value of life itself, and of this experience of being in a body. This has led to nothing less than a catastrophic neglect of our bodies, of the holy connecting powers of Eros in our bodies and of sexuality in general . . .

We are not being asked to ‘go out,’ we are being asked to come in; not to have the out-of-body experience but the in-body experience, to allow our heart to open here, in this place and time.

**Sex and Spirituality--Body As Temple/Sex As Prayer**

There is a rumor going around about sex and spirituality. Have you heard it?

I would imagine that most of us gathered together this evening either know from our own travels in the sea of sexual love, or from what have heard or read or viewed of the secret, yes the secret, that when sexual love, that is, where flesh meets soul, when body becomes temple and sex becomes prayer, lovers are often heard to express in a most fervent, passionate and truthful manner these sacred words: “Oh, my god! Oh, my god! Oh, my god! Why is this so? Because gods and goddesses yearn to become incarnate that they may experience the fruits joys and ecstasies of sexual love.

In *The Soul of Sex*, Thomas Moore informs us:

*Sex takes us deep into the body, deep into the emotions of love and desire, and deep into the entanglements of relationships. Because of this movement inward and downward into the flesh, sex has been regarded as a temptation against higher human aspirations.*

However, Moore goes on to state this is nothing less than a lie, a perspective shared by D.H. Lawrence, stating:

*Forever necessary to burn out false shames and smelt out the heaviest ore of the body into purity with the fire of sheer sensuality. Sex purifies! In various stages of mutual generosity, showing and gazing, touching and being touched, the individuals lose their defendedness and discover what it meant to be present to another, body and soul.*

Riana Eisner, in *The Chalice and The Blade*, reminds us:

*This was the practice we read about in Mesopotamian records where priestesses apparently initiated men through erotic rites into mystery cults in which giving and receiving pleasure—rather than enduring pain, as in many dominator religions—was viewed as an important spiritual experience. Thus, in the Sumerian narrative of Gilgamesh . . . we read that a woman (whom translators alternately call a ‘love-priestess’ of the Goddess, a ‘temple whore,’ or a ‘temple courtesan) transforms the wild Enkindu from a beast to a human being by having sex with him—thereby helping him ‘become wise, like a god.’”*

Philosopher and Zen Buddhist, Alan Watts teaches us:

*The height of sexual love, coming upon us, of itself, is one of the most total experiences of ones relationship to the other that we are capable of, but prejudice and insensitivity have prevented us from seeing that in other circumstances such delight would be called mystical ecstasy. For what lovers feel for each other in this moment is adoration in its full religious sense. Such adoration . . . would indeed by idolatrous were it not that n that moment love takes away illusion and shows the beloved for what he or she is in truth—not the socially pretended person, but naturally divine.*

Wilhelm Reich, in his groundbreaking book, *The Function of the Orgasm*, describes orgasm as involving the whole body, not just the genitals. Reich believed that a person’s emotional health was related to his or her capacity to experience, complete, whole body orgasmic release in the sexual act.
He held that a full orgiastic discharge was one of the most healing experiences, physically and emotionally, that a person could have, and that healthy sexual functioning is connected with an ability to experience higher states of consciousness. Andrew Weil in *Natural Health, Natural Medicine* supports Reich’s thesis writing that:

*Orgasm can give us a glimpse of a higher reality, a sense of connection beyond the finite self.*

We find the truth to be a yes to life and to the sensual as so beautifully described in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*:

…and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes
and then he asked me would I say yes . . .
and first I put my arms around him yes
and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts
all perfume yes
and his heart was going like mad
and yes I said yes I will yes.

And in the universal words of Ram Dass, *Be Here Now*, by breathing in deeply, relaxing, letting go, looking into the eyes of your lover as you embrace each other, and taking where you are into the very depths of your soul—you will experience the heaven to be found on earth. For by a reawakening of, and incorporating into ones sexual life the tantric knowledge of the fundamental divine alchemical secrets to be found in human sexuality when its practice is dedicated and consecrated to, and inspired by, soul-and-heart-love, the human race can be transformed.

Yet there is more if spirituality is to be experienced as an exploration, a path without end, and not as that which is contained within a box called reality as the authorities wish us to be believe in order to enslave the boundless spirit. For, in going beyond the known we find:

*Everybody’s hair was loose, clothing shattered, ornaments gone. The whole place resounded with bracelets, and mad with passion, everyone fainted. Then having done what they could on land, all headed for the lakes.*

*Brahma Vaivrta Purana* as quoted in Walter Spink, *The Axis of Eros*

and

*The ground became everywhere covered with lotuses of the five different colors . . . trunk-lotuses bloomed on the trunks of trees, branch-lotuses on the branches, and vine-lotuses on the vines; on the ground, stalk-lotuses, as they are called . . . came up in sevens; in the sky were produced . . . hanging lotuses; a shower of flowers fell all about; celestial music was heard to play in the sky; and the whole ten thousand words became one mass of garlands of the utmost possible magnificence resembling a bouquet of flowers sent whirling through the air, or a closely woven wreath, of a superbly decorated altar of flowers.*

*The Introduction to Jakata* as quoted in Walter Spink, *The Axis of Eros*

In sum and essence,, we find the spiritual marriage not beyond the sensual/sexual but through it, by means of it. The lover explores the body of his beloved and discovers himself/herself at his/her source. What is exposed in real love is always the deep soul. Sex is the religion of marriage, the golden art of erotic pleasuring . . . a marriage of spirit and body, lifting lovers upward, offering a visionary experience based in love and passion where body is temple and sex is prayer.

*We will make love an art, and we will love like artists.*

--Marianne Williamason

**Recommended Readings**

*Anand, Margo, The Art of Sexual Ecstasy*
Introduction

From 2005 to 2006 I was an academic advisor at United Arab Emirates University Women’s Campus in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. As an academic advisor one of my responsibilities was to work with international students and provide services for them. While assisting these students I noticed that that the western non Arabic students were in a unique and complex situation. Many of these students had never lived in a Islamic country. It was their first experience away from home and the first time to study at a university. So not only were they undergoing a first year experience, they were having this experience in a foreign, Islamic country, which was radically different to their home country. Because of their dynamic position, I felt that their experience should be documented. The experiences of these students could provide valuable insight into the needs of western students who must adjust to the values and cultural norms of a society that is structurally different to their own. I was not aware of research about western students studying in Islamic countries so I set about to find and document information about international students’ experience of adjusting to, living in, and studying in the United Arab Emirates.
Research Methodology

The majority of the research undertaken was of a primary nature. Since there is little information available about international students studying at Islamic institutions, I did not have many secondary sources to draw from. Instead, I concentrated on first hand anecdotal information from international students I came in contact with through academic advising. As an academic advisor, I was tasked with providing services to foreign students, which ranged from giving academic advice, putting them in contact with other foreign students, arranging social and educational activities for them, and helping them access services in the larger university community. In addition, as an academic advisor, I had access to visit the girls in the hostels, where they lived, and I also coached soccer as an extra curricular activity, which also gave me further insight into the life of students both international and local on campus, but outside the classroom. I also spoke with international students who were referred to me by the Assistant To the Dean of Student Affairs. Obtaining information about international students at UAEU was challenging since a lot of information is not documented, and the person responsible for the administration of international students was appointed for the first time only in September 2005. Moreover, it is the Sheikh’s office who decides which foreign students will enter United Arab Emirates University. His office is private so it is difficult to access information about the policy of having international students attend United Arab Emirates University. Also, accessing information about the selection process of international students is difficult. Therefore, the majority of my research was conducted in the following manner. Two focus groups were held with international students in February 2006. One focus group was held with National students in May, 2006. I held two individual interviews with foreign students in April and June 2006. I held an individual interview with a national student in May 2006. Fadwa Lkorchy provided excellent insight into Gulf Arabic culture in her workshop called “Counseling The Muslim Client”. Finally, I interviewed the Assistant to the Dean of Student Affairs, Jane Fulcher in May 2006. Jane Fulcher was charged with developing and improving programs for students in the hostels. Her insights and information were important since the majority of the foreign students are housed in the hostels.

United Arab Emirates University

The United Arab Emirates is made of seven Emirates, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm Al Quwain. Islam is the main religion, and Arabic is the official language. United Arab Emirates University is located in Al, which is in the Abu Dhabi Emirate of The United Arab Emirates. Abu Dhabi tends to have a more traditional culture, especially when compared to the Dubai Emirate. United Arab Emirates University was established in 1976 and was the first university to be established in the United Arab Emirates. It is a national university, receiving students from all seven Emirates. Its mission is as follows “UAEU is the premier national university whose mission is to meet the educational and cultural needs of the UAE society by providing programs and services of the highest quality. It contributes to the expansion of knowledge by conducting quality research and by developing and applying modern information technology. It plays a significant role in leading cultural, social, and economic development in the country.” UAEU has nine faculties, Humanities and Social Sciences, Sciences, Education, Business and Economics, Shari’a and Law, Food Systems, Engineering, Medicine and Health Sciences, and Information Technology. In addition, the university maintains a University General Requirements Unit (UGRU), which is a development program for all first-year students. The mission of UGRU “is to enable UGRU students to become successful through participation in an exemplary developmental program as preparation for their life in university and society.” UGRU is where I work. Within this developmental program students take courses in English, Math Information Technology, and Arabic. If students receive a score of 185 on the university placement exam, Common English Proficiency Assessment (CEPA) and the receive an IELTS score above 5.5, they do not have to complete courses in UGRU. Those who do not obtain this level must take UGRU classes in all subjects. While in UGRU, students may take classes in their chosen faculty. Because the University must abide by the cultural and religious norms of an Islamic
society, males and females are educated separately. There is a men’s campus and a women’s campus at UAE University. 3,196 students attend the boys’ campus and 11,545 students attend the women’s campus. In total there are 14,741 students at United Arab Emirates University. There are approximately 300 international students which includes students from other Gulf countries, and of these 300, only 100 are from countries outside the Gulf region. It is the non-Gulf international students who are the focus of my research. As aforementioned, it is the mission of UAEU to meet the educational and cultural needs of UAE society. Though the focus is on developing UAE society, foreign students have been welcomed into that vision by the UAE government, by giving them places at UAE national university, and by providing financial resources for them to do so. Moreover, international students can benefit greatly by attending university in the UAE. They can learn about a different culture, learn to manage themselves and intercultural communications within that culture, they can obtain an excellent education, and in some cases, such as the case of two Russian students, obtain jobs in the United Arab Emirates once they have completed their degree. Though there are many benefits to be had in attending United Arab Emirates University, there can be many challenges as well and international students must be prepared to meet these challenges.

The Religion and Culture of the UAE and Its Impact on International Students

In the United Arab Emirates Islam is widely practiced, and Arabic is the official language. However, English is widely spoken and other religions are practiced. The society of the United Arab Emirates tries to maintain its traditional values while trying to modernize at the same time.

In order to better adjust to UAE culture it is important that students understand about the religion of the culture, as religion strongly influences the way nationals in the Gulf live their lives. “It is important to understand that Islam as a religion is a way of life, not part of it.” (Lkorchy, 2006) Also, religion affects the perception of women, and thus the behavior of women as well. As aforementioned, the modesty of women is highly regarded in Arabic culture. The mingling of males and females who are not immediate family members is forbidden. Dating is not allowed, and socially, it is taboo for females to speak with males who are not family members. The United Arab Emirates University maintains this practice by segregating the students by gender. The university has a male and female campus. The faculty of medicine is slightly different. The faculty is housed in one building, but it is divided down the middle, having a male side, and a female side.

Education is available to both men and women. However, in public institutions males and females are educated separately. The male and female campuses are approximately 10km apart. The international students who were interviewed for this report were all female and study and reside on the women’s campus. The women’s campus provides five different hostels for female students, and hostel number 1 is where the majority of the female foreign students are housed. The international students there have to abide by the same rules as the national students who are housed in one of the five hostels during the week. The hostels offer a very secure environment. There is a guard at the gate, and only female students who reside there, trades people, and employees of the hostel have access to get in to the hostels. Entrance out of the hostel is restricted for the female students. The young women are not allowed out of the hostel unless accompanied by a member of their family, or with someone who has been approved by their father or brother via written communication to the hostel administration. These students can also go out shopping or to medical appointments if they take university transport, and are accompanied by a chaperone. Some students see this as restrictive, but it is a culture that wants to protect the safety and modesty of the girls, so these restrictions are in place. The policy for international students is that they must have written permission from their father, or closest male relative in order to leave the campus. Moreover, a list of names of the family or friends who have permission to transport the students is kept at the gate. Female students can only leave with the people who are on the list. Male students, local or international may leave and return to the campus as they wish. The rules for female students are in place as there is a sense of protecting the girls from harm.
However, the restriction of movement is one of the many situations international students find most difficult. Having information about Islam and the perception of women within the religion prior to arriving in the Gulf can help female students cope better once they arrive. Three of the Russian students I spoke with said they did not have any idea about the religion and culture of the UAE prior to their arrival.

Islam

Adjusting to the culture of the United Arab Emirates will be made easier if one shows interest and respect for the Islamic religion and regional traditions. Also, it is easier to build rapport with Muslims when you are knowledgeable about Islamic teachings. (Lkorchy, 2006)

Islam has 800 million followers worldwide. It means submission to God, and Muslims are those who submit. It is a monotheistic religion. There is no God but Allah. Muslims believe God speaks through prophets, and Jesus was one of the prophets. The holy book is the Koran. Muslims believe in spiritual worlds as well as real worlds. They also believe there will be a day of judgment when every soul is judged.

There are five pillars of Islam
Shahadah – This is confessions of faith. It states there is no one worthy of worship except God, and Mohammed is the declaration of faith.
Salah – Salah is about worship. There is prayer five times a day.
Salah is the name for the obligatory prayers. They are performed five times a day – dawn, mid-day, late afternoon, sunset, and nightfall.
Zakat – Zakat is about wealth sharing. Zakat is in regards to financial obligations. ¼ of one’s capital should be given to the poor, preferably in secret.
Siyam – Siyam is about fasting. Fasting Every year in the month of Ramadan all Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. They are to abstain from food, drink, and sexual relations. The sick, elderly, traveling, women menstruating, or nursing are permitted to break fast and make up an equal number of days later. The celebration at the end of Ramadan is Eid-Al-Fitr.
Hajj – Hajj involves the pilgrimage to Makkah, an Islamic holy city in Saudi Arabia. The pilgrimage is an obligation only for those who are financially able to do so. Annual Hajj begins in the 12th month of the Islamic year. People wear simple garments that strip away distinctions of class and cultures. All are considered one before God. The close of Hajj is marked by a festival, Eid Al-Adha where gifts are exchanged in Muslim communities.

In the Gulf one experiences adham, the Muslim call to prayer. It is issued from loud speakers atop the minarets of the mosques. The call to prayer can be heard five times a day. It is a distinguishing feature of daily life, which makes it clear that one is in a foreign environment, and one must live with Islamic traditions.

Muslims are to follow the doctrines of the Koran, the Islam holy book. The Koran forbids alcohol, pork, and shell fish. It discourages the use of caffeine and nicotine, though neither is forbidden.

As aforementioned, religion and culture are closely connected in the Gulf region, and visitors and all who reside her are expected to adhere to the cultural norms, and standards of dress and behavior. Everyone is expected to abide by local standards of modesty. And despite the heat in the region, often hitting 50 degrees celsius, most of the body must always remain covered, and this is especially true for women. There are codes of conduct for men and women, but the codes tend to be more strict for women. Local women are not to talk to males who are outside the family. They are expected to dress in abayas and shalas. Men should not be wearing visible jewelry, and modest clothing should be worn by all.
Other practices include refraining from demeaning the Koran or artifacts associated with Islam. Also, it is considered impolite to refuse a gift. One must also be careful not to admire an item to excess, or the host is obliged to give it to you. It is important to avoid giving gifts of alcohol, perfumes containing alcohol, pork, pig skin products, personal items such as under wear, knives, and images of nude or partially clad women. Men walking hand in hand is a common sight. It is a sign of friendship. It does not have the same connotation as it does in the Western world.

When speaking with Emirati students about what foreign student should know about their culture, they said the following: Foreign students coming to the UAE should know about Islam. They should also know that there are many kinds of Muslims. “We are not all the same.” The Emirati students also said foreign students should know the rules for mosques, and exhibit respectable behavior while visiting them. In addition, the Emiratis see themselves as generous, kind, and easy to deal with.

**Culture Model: Geert Hofstede Analysis**

The Geert Hofstede Analysis is a useful measurement tool to use when trying to understand culture, especially comparisons of two different cultures. This model uses four main dimensions to examine culture. The first is the power distance index. This examines the degree of equality or inequality between people. In the United Arab Emirates, there exists a high power distance in that it does not allow a significant upward mobility of its citizens. The power distance index score for the UAE is 80, which is double that of the USA with a score of 40. (Hofstede, 2001) The second dimension is individualism vs. collectivism, which is the degree to which the society reinforces individual or collective achievement. The United Arab Emirates has a individualism score of 38, while the USA, for example has a score of 91. (Hofstede, 2001) In the United Arab Emirates the group is more important than the individual. This is very different from the UK or America. Therefore, some of the foreign students and teachers are bewildered when students freely share their answers with others. It is the group that is important, not the individual. As a result, a father may tell the child what they must study for the good of the family, rather than the individual. The children often marry because of the wishes of the family, rather than individual choice. Masculinity vs. femininity is the third dimension of the Geert Hofstede. It is the degree society reinforces, or does not reinforce the traditional masculine work role model of male achievement, control, and power. The United Arab Emirates has a Masculinity ranking of 53, which is slightly higher than Canada and 9 points lower than America. Though males dominate a significant portion of the society and power structure, and females are controlled by male domination, “there is no relationship between the masculinity and femininity of a society’s culture and the distribution of employment over men and women… Again, most national cultures cannot be described as falling precisely at either extreme of this measure; the cultures fall along a continuum, and are scored in relation to each other.” (Brooks, 2004)

The fourth dimension is the uncertainty avoidance index. This dimension focuses on the level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity within the society. The uncertainty avoidance index can be defined as the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations. High uncertainty avoidance countries have a low tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. A society like this is rules oriented. Laws, rules, regulations are very important. A low uncertainty avoidance country has less concern about ambiguity and uncertainty and has more tolerance for variety of opinion. Less rule oriented societies more readily accepts change, and take greater risks. The United Arab Emirates has an uncertainty avoidance ranking of 68. To put that in perspective Great Britain has an uncertainty avoidance index score of 35, the USA has a score of 46, and Greece has a score of 112. (Hofstede, 2001) Understanding and applying Geert Hofstede’s descriptive tool can help students understand the different cultures into which they are placed by drawing structured comparisons with their own.
The Needs of International Students

In order to determine the needs of international students at United Arab Emirates University, I asked a small focus group of students from Russia, Mongolia, Kenya, Canada, and the USA the following questions:

1. What is needed to help international students adjust to the university?
2. What services, support, and resources do international students require to help them adjust to life in the hostels?
3. How would you help an international student prepare to come to the United Arab Emirates and United Arab Emirates University?

I received the following answers:

The international students said that from the beginning the rules must be made clear. Often, international students were not aware of the hostel rules until they had broken one. Expected behavior of the girls while in the hostels must be made clear at the onset. Also, local mores and traditions in regards to female behavior should be explained to the female international students as well. Several of the international students were ostracized by local girls because of the way they were dressing. The international students had no idea that their style of dress would cause so much offence, and then in turn, ridicule.

They need opportunities to make friends. Having knowledge of other international students, and opportunities to socialize would allow international students to develop friendships, and support networks. International students would like a club for themselves, and a place where they can meet.

International students want chances to get to know local people and its culture. They would also like access to and knowledge about the culture in which they live. One of the main reasons for coming to the UAE to study was to learn about a different culture, and interact with the nationals. International students felt that this did not occur as easily as they would like. Perhaps more structured programs would have helped them interact more with the national Emirati population.

Information should be presented in both Arabic and English. International students want a comprehensive orientation, which should be done in both English and Arabic since they are many students who are not of Arabic origin. Moreover, several students said they needed an in depth cultural orientation prior to their arrival in the UAE. International students also said they would like to have the choice to take their exams in English as well.

A buddy system would help international students learn about the university and its procedures more quickly. A personal mentor would have been extremely helpful. It would have been useful to have someone to introduce hostel procedures such as what to do and what not to do. International students would like a club for themselves, and a place where they could meet.

Several students said they needed an in depth cultural orientation prior to their arrival in the UAE. The students also needed to know where key resources were located on campus, banks, restaurants, classrooms, administration, libraries, etc. Handbooks and leaflets about the UAE University and the hostels would also be very beneficial.

Many of the women I interviewed said they felt alien their first few weeks at UAE. There was a great deal of unknowns, and no one provided them with any information. Several of the girls missed registration deadlines because they were not aware of the procedures for registering. As a result, girls missed taking some of their required and optional courses. The lack of communication hindered their ability to graduate within their specified time. Also, some of the girls did not know about the visa
procedure. An official visa is required for them to study in the United Arab Emirates. If they do not have this visa, they are fined on a daily basis. This presented financial problems for some of the girls, as they did not have the money to cover the fines.

Two of the Kenyan students I interviewed said they felt fortunate because they knew a Kenyan girl from their home town who had previously studied at United Arab Emirates University. She told them about the university and Al Ain, and thus they were a little more prepared for their university experience at UAEU than the others.

The students felt that having an official guide to the university, which was aimed specifically at international students, would be very helpful, and it would reduce a great deal of anxiety caused by ignorance of crucial details. For example, some students did not know of the specific course requirements of their program. Moreover, some students came to the university hoping to get into the medical faculty. However, they were not aware that the places in the medical faculty are reserved for national students only. In addition a guide could provide a map and or physical lay out of the university to assist the students in finding their required buildings and offices. Along with a guide, a list of current international students and their contact details could be provided to incoming international students prior to their arrival in the country so they can obtain first hand information about studying and living in the United Arab Emirates.

Foreign students also require advice and counseling about post-graduation issues and re-entry to their home country. These international students are faced with having to look for a job in either their home countries or in the global market place once they have completed their degree. This is a daunting task for anyone, but these students have the added complication of being away form their home base and community contacts for four years or more. They have lived, studied and experienced a very different culture, and now they must face some big decisions. These students can experience reverse culture shock when they return to their own countries after a prolonged absence away. Nina, one of the Russian students I worked with, had some anxiety about this. However, she resolved her issues around repatriation by deciding to work with an international company, Price-Waterhouse in Dubai. She left the university, but not the UAE.

**Challenges Faced By International Students**

The majority of international students are starting their university career for the first time. So as well as having to adjust to a completely new culture, students are having to adjust to the demands of being a first year university student as well. As a first year university student, an individual may have to be a lot more responsible than they have in the past. They must mange their time and schedules. They must deal with living away from home. They have to start forming new friendships and support groups. In addition, they must keep up with the academic demands required of them in their classes. It is well documented that the transition from high school to university is quite difficult. This transition is made even more difficult if one chooses to start their academic career in a culture that is radically different from their own.

The international students at UAEU have faced this situation. At first, they found the transition very demanding, but later were able to see how the experience forced them to grow and develop strength. As a first year student in one’s own country, students are faced with loneliness, having to adjust to new people, having to make important decisions, dealing with more difficult subjects than in high school, different learning environments, and building new support networks. Plus “Students are arriving at the University with a broader array of personal and familial challenges. Their demands on health our health care facilities and our counseling services, for example, have increased dramatically”. (Spanier,2004)
During one of the focus groups I spoke with a Mongolian student, a Russian student, and a Kenyan student. The Kenyan and Mongolian student are Muslim, and the Russian student is non-Muslim. The following is a summary of the situations and challenges they faced upon arrival at United Arab Emirates University. “Arriving in the UAE was a big shock because I did not know about the culture”. “I spent a week in my dorm room because I was in shock”. “The buildings were all in white and but people were all dressed in black like you were visiting a graveyard.” A big concern of all the students was that there did not appear to be a leader. No direction was provided. They felt that they did not have access to admissions or information. They did not even know where the restaurants were. Also, they had no idea about other international students. They had no awareness of, or interaction with them. The female international students needed to buy toiletries, but they were told they could not leave the campus. “We were stressed for month” one of the Mongolian students told me. On top of the stress, the lack of direction and information given to them caused them to miss placement exams. All students must take the CEPA placement exam, and if they missed the exam, they are not placed. Starting at the university was difficult and stressful for these international students. Not knowing Arabic, and not having information hindered their ability to progress. These students said “We had to depend on ourselves, if not, no one would look out for us. We had to be self-reliant, and seek things out”

The international students I worked with came from democratic, countries, and were able to freely move around, and do as they wished in their home countries. However, they were brought to the UAE University and provided with accommodation in the UAE hostels, which is very structured in how it operates. The structure and operation of the girls hostels is designed to help maintain the cultural norms and features of the larger society. UAE society does not permit dating or the mixing of genders prior to marriage. Males and females may only interact with each other if they are members of the same immediate family. The modesty of women is highly prized. Girl’s movements and choices are limited. For example, many female students do not choose their own faculty. Their fathers or brothers tell them what they will study and this decision is based on whether or not the genders are segregated in a particular field. As an academic advisor I dealt with this issue a great deal. Often students would come to me because they wanted strategies to help convince the male head of household to let them study what they wanted. There are several cases of girls studying education because this is a gender segregated field, and a choice encouraged by their fathers and brothers. Several students I saw expressed desires to study engineering, science, or journalism, but since they would likely work in an environment along side men, they were not permitted to enroll in these faculties.

Young national women do not have unlimited access of movement outside of the home. When a young woman, or a middle aged single woman goes out, she is usually accompanied by either her family, an older male relative, or an older female relative. Culturally, young women do not go out on their own. In addition, generally when girls travel to other cities or countries, they are chaperoned. Young women tend to travel with their families, which includes at least one male relative. Rarely are young women allowed to travel on their own. Even when they are participating in a study abroad program, they are usually accompanied by a relative, or respected female professor. When female students travel as a group, it is important that a chaperone be present.

The restriction of movement is what western foreign female students find extremely challenging. Essentially, the foreign students are to stay within the university compound unless they have permission to leave, or they are transported somewhere with a university driver using university transport. Within the university compound are faculty buildings, gyms, cafeterias, hostels(students dormitories),mosques, libraries, etc. It is effectively self contained so students only need to go out for personal items. The ability to obtain these personal items is important to the girls, so they are incredibly frustrated when they lack the ability to do so. A university bus transports groups of girls to the local mall once a week. However, only 40 students are able to go each week and over two hundred and fifty international students live in the hostel. As a result, the female students do not have the opportunity to leave the campus as often as they would like I order to obtain the personal items that
they need. The students tell me that there is a small convenience shop located on the women’s campus. However, the merchandise is limited and the prices are inflated. Overall, this shop does not meet their needs.

Some female students have the opportunity to leave the campus on weekends if they are have permission to do so. A letter must be faxed to the hostel by the students’ father which states that their daughter may be escorted off campus by certain individuals. A copy of the escort’s id must be provided and he or she must produce this id each time they arrive to provide transport for the student. This system allows some girls the opportunity to go away at weekends. However, students who do not have friends, or family contacts in the UAE, are deprived of the opportunity to have a weekend away.

The male foreign students are free to leave their hostel and university whenever they want. They can use their own transportation or other transportation. They do not need permission to leave their hostel. There are differences in how each gender is treated.

Another challenge for students involves dealing with the organizational structure of the university, while having a limited knowledge of Arabic. Rania, a Kenyan student said that “if you don’t know Arabic, you are isolated. It is not a welcoming place.” Nina, who arrived in 2001 said that at that time, there was no guidance, and no one told them what to do. She also said that interacting with the staff at the hostel was difficult because the hostel staff did not speak English. As a result, a lot of important information was not communicated to them. No one informed these students about registration procedures, and as a result, they started their classes late, and they did not get the classes that they needed. Rania was fortunate in that she knew another Kenyan girl who had studied here before. This friend told Rania about the university, and what to expect. She informed her about visa and registration procedures. Recently, procedures and flow of information between the university administration and the foreign students has improved. In 2005, an International Student Coordinator was appointed. Her responsibilities include meeting with the foreign students, taking care of their visa requirements, and being a source of information for them.

The lack of knowledge about their host culture was also a huge challenge for the foreign students. The non-Muslim students were at an even greater disadvantage as they did not know the expected behavior of women in a Muslim society. As previously mentioned, the Islamic way of life is a great part of the culture in the UAE. Following the tenants of Islam is reflected in the daily practices of students in the university. Prayer breaks are given to students, and classes are stopped while this takes place. During Ramadan, one cannot be seen eating or drinking in public places. Fasting is conducted from sun up to sun down. During the day, cafeterias are closed and there is no where on campus, besides one’s own dorm room, where students may eat or drink. Furthermore, young women are to dress modestly. The majority of students wear abayas and shaylas, the black cloaks and head covers, and there is peer pressure among the women to conform to this type of dress. Those who deviate from this and wear western style or tight fitting clothes are ostracized, and sometimes criticized by the other women. Two of the Russian students informed me that they were chastised for wearing jeans and T shirts. Because some students do not have prior knowledge of expected dress, they were surprised and intimidated by the comments directed at them.

Ann*, an American/Palestinian student, who is Muslim felt singled out as a “foreigner” who covers. She said that she thought teachers did not want to be seen as playing favorites so she was not called on in her classes, and she was docked points. She also said that she felt like an outsider, an oddball when she expressed opinions that expressed a different view. She thought that the local students were not accepting of her because they had never socialized with foreigners before. She said that many of the local students “make you feel bad like you should go back to your own country.

Ann also said she experienced a severe form of culture shock because she came from a take charge culture, and was placed in a culture where the girls are more passive. She said the nationals she knew
tended not to speak up. “They have a fear of making their family look so they won’t speak up” Ann further adds that “Even if a local girl has been wronged by a teacher, say a grade miscalculated, local girls tend not to speak up. I, as an American would.” In speaking with the local girls, Ann found out that girls are often put down by their family members, and their brothers make the decisions. It seems like males have control over females from an early age, and this affects the girl’s confidence. Ann further adds, “It is like they (females) have given up, and they don’t believe those in authority will let them do anything. Ann said she tried to start many activities for the girls, but they fail to show interest, and it becomes discouraging.

Ann also said that she noticed that “the culture puts pressure on girls to be a certain way”. She said that the girls act chaste and cover in public, but act another way with friends. As a result of examples like this, she sees a lot of hypocracy.

Helping International Students Adjust to UAEU

The international students I spoke with felt that the university could be more pro active in helping them acclimatize to the university. The following is a list of tasks that could be done to help the international students.

1. Provide handbooks about UAE culture.
2. Provide handbooks about residence life.
3. Provide information about university departments including personnel offices, registration procedures, student development and assistance, youth care, and the International Office.
4. Provide information about faculties, faculty members, and contact information.
5. Give them maps of the campus.
6. Designate someone to be responsible for assisting and answering the questions of international students, and this person should be available during the evening as well as the day.
7. Provide an orientation specifically for international students.
8. Develop programs where international students are matched with local families.
9. Allow more transportation to the malls and other places in the community.
10. Connect international students with others.
11. Provide more social space.

There was also a sense that students could have done more to help themselves prepare for and adjust to a new culture, and academic environment. The international students said those coming to the UAEU must be calm and accepting. They also need to be laid back. To best cope, students need to be willing to work with what is in front of them. To a great extent, they need to leave behind their own practices, but they should not change who they are. International students ought to be aware that the operating systems here may function differently. Awareness was seen as the key. The more students read and learn about the culture of the United Arab Emirates prior to their arrival, the more they will understand. They must not expect systems to function the same way as it does in their home country. They must be aware of the differences as well as the similarities they will face while studying in a foreign culture.

The Rewards of Studying in the UAE

I spoke with a focus group of Emirati girls and two foreign students in May 2006. Amena, Shukree, Zahra, Rukieh, Mouza, and Haifa met with me to discuss the culture of the UAE, and how foreign students could adjust to the UAE culture. As the discussion was coming to a close, the young women started talking about the benefits of having foreign students at their university. They said that they could exchange information about cultures, meet new faces, learn and practice other languages, learn
from others’ experiences, and develop new friendships. These Emirati students were able to
sympathize with the foreign students too because coming from a strong family centered culture, they
realize how difficult it must be for foreign students to be away from home. Several of the young
Emirati women said they couldn’t ever leave their families and go away to school. At the most, some
of them could study abroad for one month.

Ann, the American student said that having foreign students is a big benefit to the university. “The
university can thrive on diversity- diverse opinions, perspectives, and ways of doing things. She
further adds” Many Emirati students at our campus have not been exposed to foreign students so it is
an opportunity for them to learn from exposure to different perspectives as well. It is important that
they hear other opinions in order to broaden their outlook.

The majority of the foreign students felt they had undergone a great deal of growth while they were
here, and they felt stronger and more capable because of the experience. Ann felt many of her
encounters on campus taught her she needed to be strong and persevere in order to survive the
experience. She said “I am glad I went through the system the way it was. It made me stronger.” She
further adds “I had many struggles, but I survived it.” For Ann, trying to start clubs, facing apathetic
students, and meeting resistance from staff and students were all part of her struggles. She said that
going through a growing up stage in a different culture had allowed her to gain more.
Developmentally, she says she has really grown up over the past year. She has developed patience and
acceptance. Furthermore, even though Ann considered herself to be open minded, she became even
more so while attending UAEU. She also realized that some of the rules at UEAU make sense. An
example she gave was that if the rules at the university were not so strict, many Emirati girls would
not be allowed access to higher education by way of UAEU.

Living in a country with such a different culture was also exciting for the foreign students. They feel it
is an interesting part of the world, which has both traditional and highly modern aspects to it. One of
the foreign students said she developed a more clear view of the world, one that is more than about her
culture and self. As a result, she said her thinking is more reasonable and balanced. Two of the foreign
students were also able to obtain jobs in the UAE, when they completed their degree last year.

Most importantly, the majority of the foreign students felt that they had received an excellent
education. They were educated by some of the best professors from all over the world. They had very
good texts, were challenged by the curriculum, and had access to vast amounts of knowledge. They
also had many opportunities to accept different ways of doing things. And because the students were
all generously provided with a scholarship from the UAE, their education and living expenses were
covered for the whole time they spend studying at United Arab Emirates University.

Conclusion

International students benefit financially, academically, and culturally while at United Arab Emirates
University. Scholarships cover tuition, books and living expenses. Moreover, students gain valuable
knowledge and insights from being taught by professors from all over the world. In addition, they
experience growth and development while learning about different cultures. Since they are placed in a
unique environment where they can interact with local people as well as with many other people of
different nationalities, students can gain valuable insight and understanding. However, the transition
both into and out of UAE is challenging for many of the international students, and they need adequate
preparation in order to cope with a different culture and society. The university can assist these
students by providing specific services and programs that would meet their needs, and in turn, the
international students must take responsibility for learning as much as they can about the religion,
society, and practices of the United Arab Emirates prior to their arrival in the country.
Questions For International Students

1. Why did you decide to study at United Arab Emirates University?
2. Did you have any knowledge of the United Arab Emirates or United Arab Emirates University prior to your arrival?
3. What are some situations you faced while adjusting to the culture in the United Arab Emirates?
4. What has been the most positive experience of studying in at United Arab Emirates University?
5. What have been some of your challenges?
6. What is the quality of instruction?
7. How much has the culture impacted your university experience?
8. What do you plan to do after completing your studies?
9. Is re-entry to your home country a concern?
10. Would you recommend United Arab Emirates University to others?
11. Do you have a support system here? How have you developed it?
12. What can the university do to help you better adjust to living and studying in the Emirates at United Arab Emirates University?

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The modern university is in trouble. Not only has it lost its focus, but it has also lost its following. Young people go to college today without any real understanding of why they are there or what they are doing. They have arrived on campuses all over the world, or enrolled in distance courses, with one single thought in mind: getting a degree. They believe the degree will be their ticket to a job and a successful future. Until then, they must go to classes, endure quizzes and tests, write research papers, listen to endless lectures, study subjects they despise and labor over dozens of textbooks. All the while, they hope they will be able to find a place to work at the end of this long academic journey.

It is indeed a difficult and tedious process. The student, said Alan Bloom (1987) in *The Closing of the American Mind*, “has four years to discover himself in a space between the intellectual wasteland he has left behind and the inevitable dreary professional training that awaits him after the baccalaureate. In this short time he must learn that there is a great world beyond the little one he knows, experience the exhilaration of it and digest enough of it to sustain himself in the intellectual deserts he is destined to traverse. He must do this, that is, if he is to have any hope of a higher life.”

At first glance, it might seem as though Bloom is condemning the current state of higher education. His perspective on the university, however, is not as negative and pessimistic as it sounds. In fact, there is distinct note of optimism that serves as a challenge both to students and educators alike. He points to the “great world beyond” the ivory towers of education and the fact that students need to “experience of exhilaration of it.” Such is the lofty aim of higher education: to teach what will sustain learners throughout their entire lives. According to novelist James A. Michener (1973), this task is simple and, at the same time, complex. Students need to learn how to learn, said Michener in the essay “When Does Education Stop?” “Nothing that I studied in college has been of use to me in my various jobs. But what I did learn was how to learn, how to organize, how to write term papers.” How to teach someone how to learn is at the heart of the issue, but the first order of business must be to determine and decide what is meant by the term higher education.
Michener explained that a unique experience at Swarthmore College taught him how to get the most from his education. He began to learn how to make connections between subjects and to use knowledge in practical ways. “I got there just as the college was launching an experiment which was to transform the institution and those of us who participated. At the end of my sophomore year the faculty assembled a group of us and said, ‘Life does not consist of taking courses in small segments. A productive life consists of finding huge tasks and mastering them with whatever tools of intelligence and energy we have. We are going to turn you loose on some huge tasks. Let’s see what you can do with them.’ Accordingly, we were excused from all future class attendance and were told, ‘Pick out three fields that interest you.’ I chose logic, English history and the novel. The faculty said, ‘For the next two years go to the library and learn what you can about your fields. At the end of two years we’ll bring in some outside experts from Harvard and Yale, whom you’ve never seen, and they will determine whether or not you have educated yourselves.’ What followed was an experience in intellectual grandeur. The Swarthmore professors, realizing that when I was tested they would be tested too, helped me to gain as thorough an education as a young man could absorb. For it was in their interest to see that I understood the fine points of the fields I had chosen.”

At the conclusion of the two-year experiment, Michener said he was tested and examined by the experts for one full week. When he was done, one of the examiners pronounced that he had “the beginnings of a real education.” No doubt we have all heard similar words at one time or another in our careers. My time came at the conclusion of many years of working and writing to obtain a doctorate in English literature. For five years, I took classes that taught me about life, society, writing and writers. I sat through three full days, 12 to 15 hours each, of doctoral exams on three different areas of American and British literature; I wrote until my hand was numb and sore and I could not write anymore. I also completed a lengthy dissertation and passed an oral defense. When it was all over, my dissertation director took me aside and gently said, “Now your education really begins.” At the time, his profound insight contradicted what I was feeling and thinking – that my education, my time of training and studying, was over at last. Now I could begin living again. Many years later, I realized the subtle meaning of his words. Education is more than remembering facts, data and details. That is what the process of a true higher education is all about.

Scholars through the ages, ever since the time of Aristotle and Plato, have attempted to articulate the meaning and purpose of education. But what learning meant in antiquity no longer applies today. “The young man,” said Rowan Williams (2006), “whose future was likely to be in law and administration, or whose family position at least meant that he would have some sort of
authoritative role in society, would spend a number of years, probably in more than one centre, absorbing skills that would seem to us a curious mixture of the literary, the legal and the logical. How much of each of these elements was to be studied was not controlled by an overall curriculum – though if you decided to stay for some years with one main teacher, you would follow what he prescribed. You would learn how to read certain classic texts of your civilisation – to ask questions about the text so that you could understand it better and apply its content to understanding other settings and situations.” In short, one was taught skills that could be developed, refined and used in such a way to allow an individual to learn the virtues of being a good person and living a productive life. The whole purpose behind education, especially in ancient Greece and Rome, was being able to live within and for society. Education today seems to have just the opposite intent and effect: it is all about the individual – what each person can do and achieve in order to be better than the rest.

Modern higher education has lost its focus. It has become somewhat myopic about the reasons for all of the courses, classes and requirements. What are we trying to teach students in our institutions of higher education? Is the primary purpose to provide fundamental instruction on essential subjects (i.e., science, psychology, math, history, grammar), how to make connections between one course of study and another, how to understand what to do with all of this newly acquired knowledge, or how to become a better person (one who has developed good, moral ethics and can make sound decisions based on knowledge and experience)?

Poet and author John Milton (1630) believed that the full aim of education was to learn more about all the world. He believed that in doing so a person would draw closer to the One who created everything. “Therefore nothing can rightly be considered as contributing to our happiness unless it somehow looks both to that everlasting life as well as to our life as citizens of this world. Contemplation is by almost universal consent the only means whereby the mind can set itself free from the support of the body and concentrate its powers for the unbelievable delight of participating in the life of the immortal gods. Yet without learning, the mind is quite sterile and unhappy, and amounts to nothing. For who can rightly observe and consider the ideas of things human and divine, about which he can know almost nothing, unless his spirit has been enriched and cultivated by learning and discipline? So the man who knows nothing of the liberal arts seems to be cut off from all access to the happy life – unless God’s supreme desire was that we should struggle to the heights of knowledge of those things for which he has planted such a burning passion in our minds at birth. He would seem to have acted vainly or malevolently in giving us a spirit capable and insatiably curious of this high wisdom. Scrutinize the face of all the world in whatever way you can. The Builder of this great work has made it for his own glory. The more deeply we search into its marvelous plan, into this vast structure with its magnificent variety – something which only Learning permits us to do – the more we
honor its Creator with our admiration and follow him with our praise. In doing so we may be securely confident that we please Him.” Notwithstanding the religious import of Milton’s overall view on education, what is significant is his emphasis on what learning and education can do. It can elevate, empower and lift us out of the ordinary: “Yet without learning, the mind is quite sterile and unhappy, and amounts to nothing.” In other words, there must be a purpose, a direction, a reason for education. Learning for the mere act of learning produces little or nothing. But when education and learning are used in the right ways and for the right reasons, the individual and society become a whole greater than the sum total of all of its parts.

In much the same vain, Matthew Arnold (1882) said great and worthwhile education comes in knowing ourselves as well as the world around us. “When I speak of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, therefore, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, I mean more than a knowledge of so much vocabulary, so much grammar, so many portions of authors in the Greek and Latin languages. I mean knowing the Greeks and Romans, and their life and genius, and what they were and did in the world; what we get from them, and what is its value. That, at least, is the ideal:...knowing ourselves and the world. The same also as to knowing our own and other modern nations with the like aim of getting to understand ourselves and the world. To know the best that has been thought and said by the modern nations….” The “best that has been thought and said” means learning, analyzing and understanding what is most significant through the ages, much like Michener’s experience at Swarthmore. Being able to make connections – between the past and present, the individual and society, one culture and another – the process of education becomes a holistic endeavor, not an enterprise that exists for the mere acquisition of information.

In *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, John Milton Gregory (1886) discussed two critical “laws” that deal with the overall learning process and how actual learning occurs. The “law of the learning process” is that, “The pupil must reproduce in his own mind the truth to be learned. The practical relations of truth, and the forces which lie behind all facts, are never really understood until we apply our knowledge to some of the practical purposes of life and of thought.” For any learning to occur the student has to transfer the theoretical (textbook knowledge) to the practical (experiential knowledge). Columbus may have studied charts and maps for years, but he did not become a sailor until he traveled across the Atlantic to discover the new lands over a thousand miles away. This great explorer used his limited knowledge of the world and sailing to propel him on a new adventure – one that allowed him to learn more about himself and the world by building on “truths” already known.

We are living in an era of artificial intelligence; where people can access information on any subject at anytime and then repeat what they have read. No real learning occurs in this environment –
though it might seem so – because the person has not “reproduce[d] in his own mind the truth to be learned.” Computers and the Internet are remarkable tools, but they are only part of the overall process of learning. These things are resources – similar to books, journals, periodicals and encyclopedias – that allow us to gather and collect vast quantities of data. It is then up to the wise student to work with and apply the information to some great task. Then, and only then, will learning occur. Knowledge is just a tool and the student must be guided in how to use it.

In the seventh and final law, Gregory stresses the importance of constantly reviewing both what the student knows and is learning. “The completion, test and confirmation of the work of teaching must be made by review and application.” The aims of this particular law are “to perfect knowledge, to confirm knowledge and to render this knowledge ready and useful.” But he warned that review is “more than a repetition. A machine may repeat a process, but only an intelligent agent can review it. . . . [A] repetition by the mind is the rethinking of a thought. . . . Even in the best-studied book, we are often surprised to find fresh truths and new meanings in passage which we had read perhaps again and again. It is the ripest student of Shakespeare who finds the most freshness in the works of the great dramatist. The familiar eye discovers in any great masterpiece of art or literature touches of power and beauty which the casual observer cannot see. So a true review always adds something to the knowledge of the student who make it. . . . If we would have any great truth sustain and control us, we must return to it so often that it will at last rise up in mind as a dictate of conscience, and pour its steady light upon every act and purpose with which it is connected.” State-of-the-art computers make this process much quicker and more efficient. Like a warehouse, we can store information on hard drives and on disks. Still, it is up to us as humans to take what we are gathering and allow it drive us ever closer to new adventures and journeys.

One of the essential goals of higher education must be to produce individuals who will enhance and contribute to society, not just because of their knowledge and intelligence, but also because of their desires and longings to improve the world. John Henry Newman (1854; qtd. in Sullivan), explained more than a century ago in The Idea of a University that higher education involves learning the proper principles of society: “A university training . . . aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself
into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society, he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak and when to remain silent; he is able to converse and able to listen; he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably. . . He has the repose of a mind which lives in itself, while it lives in the world.” Newman’s emphasis is clearly on the individual’s ability to function within the community, “at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind.” A university education should give one “a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments” for “cultivating the public mind.”

Theoretically, the university exists to foster knowledge. In the process, though, it also must teach the values that allow learning to blossom in new and exciting ways. The academy needs to inspire and encourage students – to show them how to reach beyond themselves. “Whether the primary purpose is for teaching, research, or vocational preparation,” commented Stephen P. Heyneman (2006), “all universities attempt to influence a community's social cohesion through two mechanisms. One mechanism is through their curriculum and professionalism in teaching history, culture, biology, physics, engineering, and ecology. High-quality universities are defined by their openness to the world's literature and evidence, provided freely to all students on as many topics as feasible. No great university restricts access to information. The second way is the manner by which a university models good behavior and exhibits professional standards. This includes the degree to which a university rewards academic performance honestly and fairly, the degree to which its faculty and administration openly advertise and adhere to codes of conduct, and the degree to which open discussion is cherished and differing opinions respected. The more a university exhibits these characteristics the more likely will its students exhibit human capital through their knowledge and skills and the more they will contribute to social capital, the kind that generates willingness to sacrifice for a common good, as well as tolerance and understanding of other views and opinions.”

As a result of such education, said Heyneman, there will be a marked difference and improvement in the social and moral fabric of the community. “Universities that exhibit a very high degree of human and social capital are of higher quality, and it is high-quality universities that will have the most positive impact on a nation's social cohesion.”

Higher education is a multi-faceted process. A model institution is one where information, morals, values, virtues and ethics are all taught side by side so students can see one influences the other. More than 2,000 years ago, the Roman philosopher Cicero translated the Greek word paideia, meaning education. He defined it as two Latin words: humanitas and civitas. "The humanities encompassed those studies that make us human as opposed to animal, studies that keep enlarging our
humanity,” says literary critic and professor John Paul Russo (2005). “‘Civitas’ or civic mindedness named the responsibility we owe to our community. The ancient Greeks and Romans did not define the individual solely in relation to a private self, but in relation to the city state or nation.”

In this age of technology, where there is much more emphasis on information than on the individual, institutions of higher learning must be careful to educate the whole person, not just the mind. Intelligence is critical, but equally important is how the intellect is used. Developing the head without taking time to instruct the heart will not create the sort of students who is needed in tomorrow’s world. Society will require the best graduates – those who are schooled in both life and learning – to lead the way. Our hope lies in today’s learners. What they learn now in our colleges and universities will determine where we go as a society in future.

**Works Consulted**


