TOWARD A NEW PEDAGOGY

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LANGUAGE STUDY AND THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Everyone is talking about the "global village"—so much so that the concept has almost become meaningless. Language education, however, is a necessary corollary to the new "internationalism," and language enrollments seem to be rising. Language educator Claire Kramsch relates the marketplace paradigm shift to a similar shift in "international discourse competence."[2] The importance of language learning is also illustrated by conclusions of the Governor's Commission, by colleges' and universities' increasing emphasis on foreign language entry requirements, and by the emergence of language proficiency "exit" requirements at such prestigious schools as the Wharton School.[3]

Along with the growing realization of the importance of language learning there has come a pronounced dissatisfaction with the former means (drill and practice) used to achieve linguistic competence. But this dissatisfaction also relates to shifting definitions of "competence." Behavioristic drills a la ALM (audio-lingual method) did reflect the "competency" objective of the 50's and 60's, which was a structure-based, almost unconscious, rote accuracy in language production. The "reigning technology," the reel-to-reel or audio cassette-based language laboratory, supported the objectives of the behaviorist ALM school and developed in tandem with this movement.

As happens with most extremes, the pendulum did swing back: language educators of the late 70's and early 80's seemed again to value fluency over accuracy. The proficiency movement, which actually had begun during World War II, was said to be much more tolerant of linguistic errors than the previously prevailing methods. The simultaneous shift of linguistics studies away from behaviorism toward Chomsky's view of language development also led language educators to steadily abandon a laboratory-based "behavior modification" approach. The pendulum seems for the moment to be arrested somewhere in the middle of the swing from fluency to accuracy, with growing acknowledgment that accuracy and fluency need not be viewed as mutually exclusive phenomena.

THE LANGUAGE 'LABORATORY' OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The support that technology could offer to a proficiency-based pedagogy has not been thoroughly explored. Most

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institutions, even those where the most up-to-date thinking about language pedagogy and methodology takes place, have antiquated and poorly supported language learning centers. The glaring lack of supporting technologies can be directly traced to an abiding disillusionment with the "old" language laboratories and a corresponding reluctance to "recommit" to technology without proof of the efficacy of technology-supported learning. The cost of the new technologies and some uncertainty about changing equipment standards and technologies (i.e. tape vs. disc and analog vs. digital technologies) certainly contribute to the hesitancy of faculty and administrators. Few reasonable software programs are available for off-the-shelf use, and faculty simply do not have time to learn an authoring or programming language to put the software on the laboratory or classroom shelf, however well this software may contribute to language acquisition.

Increasing importance is being placed on the acquisition of language as a tool for understanding culture. Claire Kramsch observes "progress in language acquisition research...(leading to a) broadened and diversified conception of what it means to be communicatively competent in a language."[4]

Although language acquisition research is currently and increasingly highly-valued, it has contributed little to the practice, largely because the two have remained mutually exclusive phenomena. The most respected language journals often contain articles which contain more qualitative and substantive research about second language acquisition processes and the resulting teaching methodologies. What is called for is a new pedagogy, one informed by and reforming language acquisition theory. The new language "laboratory" of the next century will become a place where we will "exercise" the new pedagogy and where we will discover new theories of language acquisition.

TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR PEDAGOGY?

The professional journals we pedagogues read are replete with beckoning calls to technology to "take care of the *unpleasant tasks*" of teaching students the mechanics of the language, "so as to free up class time for more *creative and worthy* activities" [emphasis is mine]. Those of us who identify with both sides of the dilemma—the pedagogical and the technological—think that this kind of arrangement simply will not work. It is demeaning to both parties and creates an artificial dichotomy between the class and laboratory which is somewhat akin to dividing up the halves of the brain without an acknowledgment of the interrelation and symbiosis between the two.

The pedagogy of the language classroom of the 90's does not call for a language "laboratory" and all the behavioristic connotations which its very name implied in the 50's and 60's. Like it or not, that language laboratory is "dead" because its pedagogical and methodological underpinnings, and its very "raison d'etre," are no longer valid. The ruling pedagogical assumptions of today's language departments center around "communicative competence," or, in the alternative, "proficiency." The message is all-important, and the media must convey the message.

"DYSFUNCTIONAL" NOTIONS AND DISCARDED DREAMS

The old "laboratory" facilities live on, however, in some form of another, in most of the language departments of the country where there was heavy investment in the post-World War ALM technologies. Most facilities, even in the most up-to-date language departments, have been relegated to

a basement or another out-of-the-way corner where ancient audio machines languish away the idle hours in virtual solitude.

As the old machines break down, however, and as those in other curricular areas express interest in "taking over" space in the old language laboratories, some response is sought to the question of "what to do with the language lab?" In most cases, computer labs are proposed. Else the space be filled with computers and turned over to the campus computer center, pedagogues cling to a vague hope that the "mechanics of the language" might still be somehow taught there. These self-same pedagogues have very little connection to this antiquated "laboratory," yet they persist in sending generations of language students there to while away the hours.

One must not blame these naive pedagogues excessively, however. Banishing students to the laboratory is not altogether inconsistent with the idea that "hours and hours of 'clock/seat time' must be spent hearing the language and practicing it." These pedagogues are, in good faith, trying to expose students to "authentic" [i.e., native] speech acts found on some of the audio tapes currently available for foreign languages. Some of these programs carry authenticity to the extreme by recording the golden tones of native discourse against a backdrop of urban street noise. The result is a general unintelligibility, even to native speakers of the language, and heightened frustration on the part of would-be language learners.

KRASHEN REVISITED?

A facile reading of Stephen Krashen[5] might lead some pedagogues to believe that it is enough to "expose" language learners to native-like "planned or unplanned" discourse and narrative in authentic situations. What is forgotten is the "motivation"

part of Krashen's notions. Motivation to speak or write in foreign language often is linked to a genuine desire to communicate a message—to be understood and to understand another human being. Most of the material found in laboratories today is taken from somebody else's script, usually the textbook author's or publisher's designated "native speaker's." Audio tapes usually are not money-makers for a publisher, so they are often produced with little thought and low budgets.

The motivational interest behind the production of these tapes comes not from the students' possible or probable communicative needs, but from the publisher's need to cut corners—to make money and still satisfy the pedagogues' unfilled and naive hopes that students' "proficiency" or "competence" will be enhanced through more "exposure" or increased time at "drill and practice." It is not too difficult for textbook authors and publishers to record street noise, but it is very difficult for language students (and their teachers) to understand "native-like" discourse recorded over it. This is not motivating stuff, especially if the "someone else" speaking is not even their teacher or anyone remotely connected to the language learners' classroom experience. In contrast to these ill-conceived programs, John Underwood, author of a book on the linguistic basis of the use of computer technology in the language learning[6] has developed HyperCard and interactive video programs which offer examples of well-written and pedagogically sound courseware.[7]

VISUAL SUPPORT FOR AUDITORY PROCESSING

No one who has passed the Piagetian "age of reason," say twelve years of age, is content for long to speak at the disconnected, uncontextualized sentence level, especially in the absence of visual stimuli. It is totally unnatural and downright perverse

for us to require this of students. Video support is something on which most small children learning a first language have come to rely. If the new technologies can offer this, who are we pedagogues to stand in the way? Donna Van Handle of Mount Holyoke College has offered suggestions for video-disc development based on existing materials with this visual support in mind.[8]

Our inability to switch to a more modern paradigm; to rethink the "pedagogy" behind the "technology" of out-of-class learning experiences; and to offer visual support for audio materials have not escaped students, who are consummate video users. Modern "Centers for the Study of Foreign Languages and Cultures" should replace the language laboratories of the post-War era. Video, live satellite programs in a variety of foreign languages, and audio cassettes of important speeches and current world affairs (or even popular songs) should likewise replace the "contrived, uncontextualized "drill and kill" programs of the past. Maria Moux's[9] and William Fletcher's[10] attempts to insert language videodiscs produced from foreign television via satellite are certainly a giant step in the right direction. While it is true that the government's resources and the military academy's students' pragmatic linguistic concerns have given much support to the success of the Naval Academy's endeavors, we pedagogues in the university trenches can take heed and follow their example. Considering academic-corporate alliances helped Curtis Swanson[11] of the California State University at Fullerton realize some very interesting, pedagogically sound interactive video courseware. Likewise, Sue Otto's involvement in PICS (The Project for International Communication Studies)[12] has led to some trend-setting (and agency funded) development of video and interactive computer programming for language teachers. Creative grant-seeking can make it happen.

To accomplish these same ends, we must have authority from our colleagues in high places and money from those in even higher places. We must also have in our camp a virtual army of language pedagogues who are willing to risk all—tenure, the scorn of colleagues, etc.—to get their hands dirty with technology and pedagogy, to rethink and research the teacher-learner-language relationship, to discover new and exciting materials, and to make these materials available to today's language learners. Alice Slayton's[13] "audacity" in conceiving of and funding "Interactions Audiovisuelles" must have initially taken her more timorous colleagues in the early 1980's by surprise.

IT'S ALL IN A NAME

The requisite critical mass of committed and thinking pedagogues is important, because it is difficult to change the behavior of entrenched behaviorists. We must legitimize our dilemma and our research to the outside world (which, in our case, is the university and its myriad of committees), the "R & D" (research and development) activities of a modern media center for foreign languages and cultures. Is it our inability to do battle with the once-ruling behaviorists that has given pedagogues a bad name? Collaborative efforts between government agencies and universities like those Anita Knisbacker[14] developed in her prototypical *Colloquial Hebrew* program help pave the way for innovative collaborative approaches to creating individualized language learning experiences for students.

Perhaps by changing the word "pedagogue," we might, a la Rodney Dangerfield, "get some respect," and change our image. "Methodologist," a term described in detail by Stephen A. Sadow[15] does not appeal to me either. Semantically, "pedagogue" conjures up a somewhat negative picture. For starters, it sounds like "pedant," if we consider the first syllable. "Pedagogue,"

taking it from the back end, sounds like "demagogue." This is unfortunate, for too often the language "demagogues" (who also claim to be pedagogues) give us the buzz words but not the requisite research-based theories on which to ground the new technologies.

We pedagogues must be willing to consider the recent studies of language acquisition and research from cognitive psychology which may suggest to us more valid approaches and theories. We must also be willing to use the newly designed centers to conduct evaluative and theory-driven research of our own design. Major Michael Everson[16] of the Air Force Academy gave us some valuable suggestions for research in L2 as applied to the learning of Chinese, especially relating to the development of reading skills. Everson's colleague, Major Mike Verano,[17] has developed one of the most innovative interactive videodisc-based language learning centers in the nation. Likewise, Janet Murray, Gilberte Furstenberg, and Douglas Morgenstern[18] have combined language acquisition principles to high technology in the creation of Project Athena interactive language programs *Entrez Dans Paris (Philippe)* and *No Recuerdo.*

STAR WARS

The new pedagogy which we are considering inevitably evokes things smacking of technology. Past memories associated with the term technology bring to mind Scotty beaming up Spock and Captain Kirk, or a digitally compressed Princess Leia of *Star Wars* communicating her plight via the new media. It now all seems very plausible, thinking about digital scanners, audio compressors, CD ROM, and video laserdiscs. In a "kinder and gentler" context, "technology" also brings forth images of long rows of identically configured tables with a myriad of workers industriously putting together tiny and intricate silicon chips. This all takes place in a mythical and hence nameless location somewhere west of Detroit.

What we need is a catchy phrase which reflects the merging of technology and pedagogy. Such a term would also reflect the goals of the new Humanist, a "harnesser of technology," who also just so happens to be a teacher of language and literature. Connecticut College President Claire Gaudiani,[19] herself a former language teacher, would have us forming world citizens capable of understanding global cultures, marketplace and mores. Perhaps in our quest to reveal the mysteries of culture and language to breathless students, we will become the new world philosophers, armed with new insights about universal understanding, peace, and good will.

Father Lee Lubbers[20] is such a world philosopher. He had a very good idea about uplinking satellite broadcasts of international news to create international understanding through the media when he spearheaded SCOLA. SUNY's reworking of the Soviet TV broadcasts and listening comprehension exercises originated by the collaborative efforts of Betty Leaver[21] of the Foreign Service Institute and Rich Robins of Georgetown University indicates initiative in making news broadcasts accessible to lower-level language learners. These efforts would have seemed truly implausible and "techy" to the rulers of language "laboratories" of the 50's and 60's, and yet they are pedagogically-based technologies shaping the design of the new Center for Foreign Languages and Cultures, such as that headed up by Robert Davis[22] of Smith College. Smith College Portuguese professor Charles Cutler[23] is one such "pedagogical" innovator in his use of the video-based *Travessia* language courseware.

In the meantime, we pedagogues are

still left without a working definition. Perhaps "being" does, after all, precede "essence," and we are all still "in the process of becoming." We're stuck with the name "pedagogue," and we might as well just make the best of it. In fact, let's consider it as a possible topic for next year's IALL '93 meeting. I like the ring of "the pedagogy of technology for language teachers."

NOTES

1. Dr. Lyman-Hager, on leave from the University of Massachusetts for 1990, is currently an Assistant Professor of French at the Pennsylvania State University and Supervisor of the Pennsylvania State University Learning Centers. This article is based on a paper she read at the Five Colleges Foreign Language Video Conference, the proceedings of which are published by Five Colleges, Inc.

2. Claire Kramsch, "New Directions in the Study of Foreign Languages," *ADFL Bulletin* 2(1, 1989): 4-11.

3. Claire Gaudiani, The Place of Language Study in a Liberal Arts Education. (Keynote address of the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc., June 1-4, 1989.)

4. Claire Kramsch, "New Directions in the Teaching of Language and Culture," NFLC Occasional *Papers* (April, 1989). Washington, D.C.: Johns Hopkins University.

5. Stephen P. Krashen, *Principles and Practices in Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford, England: Pergamon Press, 1982).

6. John Underwood, *Computers, and the Language Teacher: A Communicative Approach* (Rowley, MA: Newbury House,1984).

7. John Underwood, "HyperCard and Interactive Video," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

8. Donna Van Handle, "Use of Interactive Video as a Teaching Device in a German Conversation/Composition Class," (Paper presented at the June 14, 1989 Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

9. Maria de Castro Moux, "The Theory of Communication and the Preparation of Interactive Video Lessons at the USNA," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See; Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

10. William Fletcher, "Interactive Video with Authentic Material for Elementary and Intermediate Spanish," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

11. Curtis Swanson, "Repurposing a Foreign Language Videodisc Deutsch in Deutschland," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989 Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

12. Sue Otto, "Video and Interactive Video and the Project for International Communication Studies," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See; Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

13. Alice Slayton, "Interactions Audio-Visuelles, HyperCard and Hypermedia for the Students of French," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium,

Learning to See; Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

14. Anita Knisbacker, "Adventures in Colloquial Hebrew," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

15. Stephen A. Sadow, "Methodologists: A Brief Guide for Their Colleagues," ADFL Bulletin 21(2, 1989): 27-28.

16. Michael Everson, "Designing Interactive Chinese Reading Lessons: Some Theoretical Considerations," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

17. Major Miguel Verano, "Interactive Videodisc at the U.S. Air Force Academy: Productivity Issues and Status Report," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

18. Janet Murray, Gilberte Furstenberg, and Douglas Morgenstern, "An Update on Interactive Video Programs in French and Spanish at M.I.T.'s Project Athena," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

19. Gaudiani, "The Place of Language Study in a Liberal Arts Education."

20. Father Lubbers was the initiator of SCOLA, and international satellite news and television programming service, formerly associated with Creighton University in Nebraska. Lubbers offers subscription service to universities and cable companies on a graduated-fee basis, depending on the number of enrolled full-time students of cable subscribers.

21. Betty Leaver, "High Technology-Low Pedagogy: It's Time to Narrow the Gap," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.)

22. Robert Davis and Donna Van Handle, "Interviews: Learning German with Interactive Video," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.) Also see Robert C. Davis and Richard E. Parker, "Digital Audio, Networks and Foreign Language Instructionm" CALICO Journal 7 (1, 1989): 71-82.

23. Charles Cutler, "Portuguese Language Teaching via Video," (Paper presented at the June 1-4, 1989, Colloquium, Learning to See: Seeing to Learn. Amherst, MA: Five Colleges, Inc.) See also the Winter 1989-90 issue of the Journal of Educational Techniques and Technologies for further description of the video program Cutler uses at Smith College, Travessia.

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