

IALL '95

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"IALL '95 was a time for connecting faces with names, products with possibilities, questions with answers ... and methods with means."

IALL '95 at Notre Dame, "Language Labs on the Leading Edge," was quoted as being "one of the world's best-ever conferences dealing with the integration and management of technology in and out of the foreign language classroom." Few attendees, I'm sure, would contradict this anonymous source, for IALL '95 was jam-packed with a myriad of presentations, workshops, demonstrations, and panels all filled with an abundance of keen ideas and stimuli for fostering growth in knowledge and professionalism.

The following report includes descriptions and personal reflections by members who attended these sessions over the five-day conference period. These summaries should be helpful to any of our colleagues who were unable to attend.

Individuals reporting on these sessions were selected at random and have graciously contributed a brief overview and comments about several of the sessions which they attended. Contributors include Roberta Brown (Pacific Lutheran University), Virginia Fichera (State University of New York—Oswego), Maria Elena Fonseca (College of William and Mary), Jennifer Wood (Scripps College), Stephanie Kufner (Bard College), Peter Liddell (University of Victoria), Marianne Owens (Princeton University), Nancy Stenson (University of Minnesota), LeeAnn Stone (University of California, Irvine), and Dick Kuettner (Washington and Lee University).

"Surviving Start-Up and Early Growth I: Defining the Role of the Director"

Presenters: Virginia Lewis (Haverford College), Jan Marston (Southern Methodist University), Pete Smith (University of Texas—Arlington), Jan Richard (Haverford College), Edward Dixon (Swarthmore College)

The most effective directors are generally language pedagogues with some—though limited—teaching responsibilities. They do not need to be computer gurus or technical dead-heads but must also be team leaders who inspire and fully

involve personnel within the lab and who are able to connect with faculty and administrators across campus. Knowledge of instructional technology, ability and willingness to take initiative and to write grants are also necessary qualities, as a good director quickly becomes a key person in the language department(s). Once selected, the director should be involved in (re)writing her/his job description, while recognizing that it will become obsolete as soon as it is written. The composition of this panel wisely represented universities of varying sizes, making an invaluable session particularly for those of us presently installing our first fully-equipped language lab.

“Surviving Start-Up and Early Growth II: Advocacy”

Presenters: Virginia Lewis, Jan Marston, Pete Smith, Jan Richard, Edward Dixon

Getting students and faculty to use the lab effectively and assuring administrative support can be a challenge for directors—but one that members of this panel had successfully met. To bring in willing students: (1) professors must not base grades on seat time, because students will then use the time at best doing other assignments; (2) lab work must have a direct impact on grades, as students will do only what they get credit for; and (3) the technology must work well, or the reputation of the lab will be at stake. To involve faculty, lab directors must be pro-active. Efforts might include: demonstrating software uses to faculty; team-teaching with a technically challenged colleague; offering a traditional language course as a demonstration class in using technology; providing card-key access to all language faculty; arranging for faculty training seminars. The pedagogical goal is to do in the lab what faculty do not have time for in class, thus freeing up class for conversation that follows up directly on the work in the lab, and thus forcing students to use the lab. Administrative support is enhanced when key administrators receive regular reports from the director and are able to point to the center with pride and to use it as an attraction for prospective students. As in Part I, the information this same lively panel provided made the trip to Notre Dame more than worth the cost.

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“Surviving Start-Up and Early Growth III: Budgeting and Funding”

Presenters: Virginia Lewis, Jan Marston, Pete Smith Jan Richard, Edward Dixon

Practical budgeting tips included the following: create a zero-based budget particularly during initial years; get everything you possibly can in year one; look for used equipment; duplicate when possible what materials the university has already purchased; consider charging a student lab fee; maintain a careful budget analysis that includes a five-year plan and realistic outlay for equipment replacement; know the return policy before ordering instructional materials and don't hesitate to take advantage of it; recognize the high cost of site-licensing. Savings can be made with careful organization of student assistants. Jan Marston (SMU) has created a faithful group she calls "The Brain Trust" who are involved in Center decisions and thus remain beyond one semester, making retraining less of a problem; Pete Smith (UT—Arlington), who devotes eighty percent of his budget to personnel, also has graduate students work as interns in program development for faculty. Several important tips for acquiring the necessary financing included: establish a working relationship with the administrator who holds the purse strings; convince language faculty that they are not the orphan child of the Arts and Sciences and that they can ask for something; describe educational goals before asking for equipment; establish credibility in terms of pedagogy and mission, keeping meticulous records from the start; become a campus for learning through technology. Such rich content again speaks to the value of this panel's third session.

“The Global Learning Lab: From Concept to Reality”

Presenter: David W. Allan (Mankato State University)

This presenter surveyed the process and chronology of his institution's experience in planning and opening a learning laboratory. He shared a brief history of his project, detailed the constituencies and players involved and the services to be provided, the funding, design and research components of the process, and a prognosis for the laboratory within the institution. Allan provided a wealth of information and advice on virtually every aspect of the planning from local organization and grant-writing to federal ADA regulations and equipment selection. Public relations (e.g., even the name of the facility is important) and day-to-day operational realities (e.g., materials check-out systems) were also covered. The lecture ended with a brief video tour of the completed labora-

tory. The session was more than an excellent introduction to the topic; it provided unusually thorough information on the complex and necessarily protracted process of creating a learning laboratory in an educational setting.

“Issues in Commercial Distribution”

Presenters: Carolyn Fidelman (Agora Language Marketplace), Joel Goldfield (Fairfield University), Bernard Rochet (University of Alberta), James Harmon (Harcourt Brace), Lee Silverthorn (Salix Corporation)

Panel members addressed commercial distribution issues from four distinct points of view: the author, the language laboratory/user, the electronic marketplace, and traditional publisher. Bernard Rochet surveyed the expertise, market assessment, and pedagogical goals which must underlie and support an author's work. Joel Goldfield outlined the concerns and needs of faculty and laboratory directors: time, cost, and personnel effectiveness which must interface with the capabilities of an institution's equipment and operating system. Carolyn Fidelman, author and creator of Agora Language Marketplace, presented the buyer's guide, industry directory and bulletin board services for study abroad and job and title searching which Agora offers via the Internet. James Harmon detailed the mainstream traditional approach to distribution, which is in transition. "Books" are replaced by "programs" or "integrated programs" and limited edition "custom publishing" is also available. Lee Silverthorn spoke with the audience concerning their personal needs and interest in the session's topic. Issues of intellectual property, cost, change, and market/distribution constraints were considered. During the discussion period, profitability and marketability factors together with the specialized needs of less-commonly taught languages surfaced as major themes.

“Copyright Issues for Media Decision Makers”

Presenter: John M. Ashby (Saint Louis University)

This plenary lecture on copyright was a clear and thorough review of this important and complex topic so central to the conduct of the media professions. In the context of a definition of copyright as a "label" and not just a set of laws, Ashby outlined the principal applications of the "label" to educational media materials. He detailed five categories of concern: (1) ethical issues—the "cost of doing business," intellectual

"Be prudent. Be reasonable. Do not be paranoid."

property rights, and the temptation posed by low-cost technology duplication; (2) contract issues—the precedence of contract over copyright, binding and legally enforceable, though often hidden; (3) copyright issues—the rights of the author and the end-user definition of "fair use"; (4) risk management—the necessity for a departmental policy in the context of institutional policy for "safety zone" and indemnification purposes; (5) format-specific issues—the new media challenges posed by computer software, telecommunications, multimedia, the Internet, etc.

In the United States, "fair use" of someone else's intellectual property in an educational setting is traditionally judged by the needs of the teacher. Ashby posed a nice rhetorical question: What about focusing on the "learning moment"? As we move towards synchronous learning, that's a "\$64 question" that might have a very expansive (and expensive) answer. Ashby concluded with the following maxim from the Saint Louis University Draft University Policy: "Be prudent. Be reasonable.... Do not be paranoid."

"Distance Education: A Panel Discussion"

Presenters: John Huy (University of Kansas), Kathleen James (Foreign Service Institute), Jenise Rowekamp (University of Minnesota), Marc Siskin (University of Michigan)

Modes and methods of distance learning were presented from three venues: a public university, a government agency, and a commercial distributor/supplier. Interactive audio/video, email, stand-alone multimedia courseware, networked multimedia, and digitally compressed video via satellite were discussed in case—study format.

The University of Minnesota, through an national grant, offers Russian to students at two distinct campuses in the state. The Foreign Service Institute "moves the learning to the learner" via synchronous materials and email due, in part, to the obstacles posed by different time zones. And SCOLA plans to expand its channels from two to four with the advent of its digitally compressed video format. Channel 1 (international news) and Channel 2 (variety programming) will be supplemented by Channel 3 devoted to courses in several disciplines and Channel 4's support of less-commonly taught languages. Issues raised in discussion included concerns about incomplete project evaluation and outcomes assessment, faculty workload and intellectual property in distance learning programs, and possible negative effects on the teacher-student relationship.

Distance education is clearly the next major issue for IALL'ers (a hint for 1997). This panel gave us three quite varied views of the topic.

"Video Editors Under \$200.00"

Presenter: Frances Rowe (Showa Institute for Language and Culture)

At this demonstration three inexpensive video editors were going to be shown. Even though they only showed one of the video editors, Video Director, the one that uses the Macintosh, it was very interesting to watch the mechanical and electronic relationship between the video editor, the computer, and the video tape. It was exciting to learn that, once the different pieces of equipment are put together, editing is a fairly easy and uncomplicated manner. The steps to edit a video include: filming the video segment (participants at the conference supplied interviews), screening and selection of the desired segments, programming of the selected segments on the computer with the editor, actual editing resulting in a final product.

The software editors used and mentioned were Video Director and Videonics.

"Publishers' Audio Tapes"

Roundtable Leader: Carol Faber (Lake Forest College)

Heinle and Heinle and McGraw-Hill, Inc. were represented. Representatives from each company explained how language audio tape programs are developed and how complex a process this is. Publishers have to work in conjunction with the book and work manual. Participants were polled regarding preferences in for length of the audio tapes (30 min., 45 min., or 90 min.), amount of material included in the tapes, and general structure of the programs. One question dealt with the changing of formats from audio tape to CD-ROM. Neither company is ready to make the switch until academic institutions start to equip their labs with CD-ROM technology. Both companies note that now most foreign languages programs go beyond the standard textbook/audio tape combination. Today they produce multi-media packages that include many different components: textbook, work manual, instructor's guide, student's guide, test/quiz materials, audio tape program, transparencies, computer software, etc.

“LLTI: Your Highway to the New and Old”

Presenters: Otmar Foelsche (Dartmouth College), David Pankratz (Loyola University)

A very valuable demonstration—wisely scheduled for the first day of the conference—with all you need to know about the LLTI (Language Learning Technology International) list. Presenters showed the audience how to sign on and off LLTI, how to use the archives, how to search for certain things of interest, and what to expect in the future from this list server. The demonstration was done in a slow, understandable yet interesting and humorous way (supported by handouts), leaving the audience with the conviction that LLTI is one of the best resources on the Internet for information sharing by language lab directors and language teaching faculty.

“Literature in the Lab? You Bet!”

Presenters: Darci L. Strother (California State University—San Marcos), Francisco J. Martin (California State University—San Marcos)

A well-presented demonstration of how to utilize technology in literature classes even if you did not yet have the chance—or the guts—to “MOO, MUSH or surf virtual reality.” The presenters effectively demonstrated that indeed sometimes all it takes is a set of tape recorders and blank tapes to engage students in analytical and interpretative exercises that enhance critical thinking and are instructional, communicative, cooperative, helpful, and fun! Students are assigned to prepare one question on a novel they are reading as a class assignment. They record this question onto an audio tape during a class session in the language lab, and then randomly move around among the seats, listening to one another’s questions and recording responses (all in the target language). This process continues until each tape has 6 to 8 or more recorded responses. In the next stage, students take their individual tapes home and prepare a written synthesis of the responses to their question.

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A step-by-step handout left the audience with practical advice on two examples—textual analysis and term paper preview exercises—and a detailed outline of pre- and post-activity ideas. A refreshing, low-tech, and well-done demonstration. This session ranked among my top three of the entire conference.

“Teaching Teachers How to Use the Internet”

Roundtable Leaders: Jenise Rowekamp (University of Minnesota), Marlene Johnshoy (Saint Olaf College)

A brief, informative, stimulating and well presented outline on the “whys, whens, hows and whos” of workshop planning started the session, followed by a lively and honest discussion on fears and ideas of how to use and teach to use the Internet.

The discussion brought up valuable advice for many different problems on many different levels: from computer anxiety and faculty frustration over ever changing technology to who to turn to as a lab director and/or language teacher if you don’t want to “reinvent the wheel.”

Despite signs of exhaustion after a long and wonderful conference week, the audience as well as presenters once again proved in this last session how willingly and happily IALL members share information across levels of expertise, to help and support each other wherever they can. An experience extraordinaire —especially for newcomers. Thank you!

“TPR: Increasing Comprehension and Reducing Stress in the Beginning Language Classroom”

Presenter: Barbara J. Mangione (University of Notre Dame)

This demonstration and discussion of Asher’s Total Physical Response approach to language instruction went beyond previous presentations of TPR that I have seen, demonstrating a variety of TPR activities other than the standard “stand-up-sit-down” commands covering, in addition to verbs and body parts: numbers, colors, dates, time, and foods. Testing ideas were also provided.

Best of all, audience members had the opportunity to try their hand at TPR with 4–5 of us teaching our various languages to small groups for 10–15 minutes. I got to try an Irish-Gaelic lesson, which generated considerable interest and taught me a pacing and interaction that I wouldn’t have gotten from simply watching a demonstration. Having participated in TPR demonstrations before using Germanic and Romance languages, I’d harbored suspicions that progress would not be nearly so rapid in languages with less cognate vocabulary and more divergent grammatical systems. I was pleasantly surprised at the success of my lesson and the speed with which learners picked up vocabulary, and came away inspired to try more TPR in future classes. Barbara Mangione was admirably flexible in adapting her presentation to the background and needs of the group, and the session provided a thoroughly enjoyable hour and a reminder that high-tech isn’t everything in language teaching.

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**“Demonstrating
InfoGap 1.3”**

Presenter: Clinton Boswell (Speakeasy Software Company)

Based on visuals only, InfoGap is one of few programs I have seen that could be used by students in very early stages of language learning. Learners at two computers with slightly differing screens converse until one identifies the information that the other has: e.g., which of several pictures is highlighted, or how the pictures on the two screens differ. Samples demonstrated provided the opportunity to use vocabulary relevant to job titles and activities, action narratives, and locative descriptions with various tasks possible for each set. Advantages include the flexibility of the materials, which are language-independent and adaptable to different levels. Disadvantages include limitations on lab configurations that don't allow easy use, and the need to buy a set of materials for each two computers making use in larger classes difficult.

**“Applications of
Technology for
Self-Instruction in
the Less-
Commonly Taught
Languages”**

Presenters: Robert Henderson (University of Pittsburgh) , Mary Beth Barth (Hamilton College), Nina Garrett (George Mason University)

This panel described two universities' programs for less-commonly taught languages (LCTL's) and the general efforts of NASILP—the National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs—on behalf of self-instructional programs.

The role of technology in the presentation was largely limited to a plea for the development of technologies for teaching LCTL's, with particular emphasis on the need for templates that can be used for a variety of languages. A detailed description of the Hamilton College Critical Languages Program was given, including training and supervision of the native speaker tutors, screening and preparation of students, and the structure of the classes and feedback. The University of Pittsburgh program was discussed in less detail.

**“Using Video to
Teach French
Phonetics”**

Presenter: Janet Fisher-McPeak (University of Notre Dame)

The use of video to teach sounds in context was demonstrated in this presentation of the video component of a second-year French phonetics class. Segments from feature films, chosen for specific phonetic features (e.g., nasal vowels), were first used to teach such topics as sound discrimination, intonation, and phonetic correlates of emotion, register differences,

and allophonic variation.

In the last third of the course, students videotape a reenactment of one of the scenes they have viewed, to work on their productive skills. Used in about every third class, this was one of the more thoroughly integrated uses of video I have seen specifically for pronunciation work, and apparently it pays off, for the quality of the student productions shown was very impressive. Although I teach a lower level language course, the presentation nonetheless gave me some new ideas for better integrating the video materials I have used in my classes.

“Classroom Presentation and Project Design Using Powerpoint”

Presenter: Kevin Barry (Notre Dame)

This was a well-organized and hands-on workshop that carried participants from ground zero in terms of knowledge of Powerpoint through the completion of a finished presentation product. The effectiveness of the organization and training skills of the workshop leader and helpers are reflected in the fact that this author was able to move from that starting point and complete a Powerpoint presentation which she used in her workshop the following morning!

In addition to the three-hour hands-on experience, each participant received a comprehensive Powerpoint training manual for future reference and on-going study. This workshop provided the author with a productive and “graphics-opening” kick-off to the conference.

“Reviewing a Language Learning Center”

Michael Andrewes (University of Otago, New Zealand)

This is the kind of session that needs to be given at every IALL. Just hearing of the pitfalls and politics that try the renovating, innovating lab director is, somehow, encouraging. As Michael said, the renewal process is not for the faint-hearted. His keys were: time to plan, collaboration with faculty users (although Michael seemed to make many decisions on equipment without that), network everything humanly and electronically possible, having a good R & D person, and above all ensuring that the purpose of all this is to enhance foreign language teaching.

"Super MacLang"

Presenter: Otmar Foelsche (Dartmouth College)

This session was delivered with Otmar's traditional organization, clarity, emphasis and certainty.

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"The ultimate drill-and-kill authoring program," available Fall, 1995, aims to be all you will need to create, correct, score, analyze and adapt those behavioristic exercises that seem to have survived every methodological onslaught since the 60's. This software package will handle all languages (Roman or non-Roman alphabets) "simultaneously and automatically"; it is compatible with MacOS 7.51 (but not with MacLang or AppleLang), connects to external digital sources and to the Tandberg IS-10 (CD audio driver is in the works) and has a built-in wordprocessor for authoring. Three modes of student activity are available: practice, homework.(which can be set to limit students' path and number of attempts), and test (the most restrictive, linear mode).

"Videodisk Project Development: The Case of the Dialogues"

Presenter: Christopher M. Jones (Carnegie Mellon University)

A step-by-step presentation of the development of the videodisc and software project Dialogues: les Français parlent d'eux—mêmes. This is an intermediate level interactive videodisc package which presents an integrated approach to the teaching of culture, literature, and language. Dialogues features interviews with 40 individuals, videotaped unscripted in France with French speakers of varied ages, ethnic backgrounds, social classes and regional origins. The material also includes annotated texts, literary excerpts and articles from the French press. I had seen an earlier presentation of this project and liked it, in particular the varied backgrounds of the interviewees giving their contemporary views on the timeless subject La famille and Les femmes. I wanted to have another look at it to confirm my first impressions. The presenter did that.

"Creating a Digital Language Lab"

Presenter: Rodney Tamblyn (University of Otago, New Zealand)

This lecture covered all essential issues for planning and installing a computer-based language lab, using the recently-completed language learning center at the University of Otago as a practical example. The presenter addressed the physical

layout of the laboratory, audio communication and video distribution in computer labs, choice of technologies, digitizing of audio and video, and management of digital data. He also discussed the importance of staffing and technical support in a computer lab.

Mr. Tamblyn showed the OnCall laboratory operating system, developed at the University of Otago, and several innovative home-grown multi-media programs for language study.

This was an excellent presentation. All information given was relevant, including essential questions to ask before making decisions on a new digital language lab. In answering a range of questions, Mr. Tamblyn proved to be a master of his domain.

“Internet Skills for Beginners”

Presenter: Marlene Johnshoy (Saint Olaf College)

This was a hands-on mini-workshop to introduce participants to resources available on the World-Wide Web using Netscape. The session was well-planned and well-paced for the “intermediate” beginner. Marlene had made a homepage which we worked through to explore what the WWW offers. These included: video, audio, graphics files, net searching, FTP sites, Gophers, and news groups.

She gave us a useful handout with more addresses on the WWW to explore later. I found this session useful and fun. Marlene is an excellent presenter. This was one of the best sessions that I attended.

“Using International Information Resources in the Foreign Language Curriculum”

Presenter: Sharon Scinicariello (Case Western Reserve University)

This session had several presenters and provided numerous ideas to explore later. Some useful suggestions were to use: foreign language news groups or WWW sites such as that of the French Ministry of Culture for business or civilization courses; Turbogopher to find information for a course on Spanish international affairs; and MOOs for language practice.

All presenters stressed the need to make the information on the Internet a structured part of the curriculum, not just the basis for wild browsing.

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IALL '95 was a time for connecting faces with names, products with possibilities, questions with answers, answers with questions, and methods with means. Ursula Williams, our hostess, her esteemed conference committees, and the University of Notre Dame deserve our appreciation for a magnificent presentation of organizational skills and calmness, coupled with thoroughness in planning. I told Ursula early in the week that there was a certain *je ne sais pas quoi* present which exuded warmth, camaraderie, and a wealth of interdependency among us all. Congratulations, IALL, for a job well-done! ■

Dick Kuettner is the Director of the Tucker Media Center at Washington and Lee University and also serves as Programs Director for IALL.

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— Rudyard Kipling

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