

# Snapshot Survey IALL '95 at Notre Dame

Trisha Dvorak

*[Editor's Note: The following survey helps give some context for the otherwise ordinary listing of members that appears in this issue. Find out who we are, what we do, and what we hope for the future.]*

## Introduction

What do IALL members think are the most promising trends in language learning technology and which are just "flashes-in-the-pan?" What do IALL members think about the future of audio cassettes as a text ancillary? What skills do they consider most valuable as language lab professionals? And who are IALL members anyway: mostly language teachers, mostly administrators, or mostly technical whizzes?

To satisfy our own curiosity about these and other questions, as well as to help guide IALL in meeting the needs of its members, Marta Lipski of Brandeis and I decided to take a "snapshot" of our membership during the 1995 IALL conference at Notre Dame. With additional assistance from Bruce Parkhurst, Ursula Williams and Tom Browne, a survey was designed and distributed to all 300 conference attendees. Due as much to its snazzy yellow color as to constant cheerful reminders (some might have a different word for this) from IALL Board and Council members during the conference, almost half the surveys came back, full of useful and interesting tidbits. From these, the following image of IALL emerges.

*An important caveat: this image is indeed only a snapshot, true for the individuals who were at the conference and returned the survey during a particular week in May in 1995. No claims to broader representativeness or to statistical validity or significance are made.*

## Who Are You?

Although this question elicited a number of unique and one-of-a-kind monikers, the majority (almost 60%) of IALL members who returned the survey identified their primary appointment as something corresponding to that of "lab director," including one person who admitted to being a Dean as well.

Lab director .....	85
Language faculty .....	26
Media or CALL specialist .....	16
Department Chair .....	7
Computing/Instructional/Tech specialist .....	4
Dean .....	1

## Hopes for 2009

The survey included two questions that asked IALL'ers to pull out their crystal balls and imagine their labs fifteen years in the future. In the year 2009, what would they most like to walk into their lab and find? And what would they most like not to find in their labs in tht year? The answers reveal the dual focus on language teaching/learning and technology. Listed in decreasing order of frequency, the most commonly named items conference attendees *would like to find* were:

- all digitized materials
- more use of the lab
- greater attendance
- interactive equipment and software

Items which those surveyed *would not like to find* were:

- audio tapes
- isolated booths
- outdated equipment
- boring material

## Most Valuable Job Skills

Inspired by a mini-survey of six lab directors prepared for the TESOL '94 presentation (*cf.*, *IALL Journal*, 28.2, 1995), the survey also queried IALL members as to the qualities which they consider to be their most valuable job skills. The traits they named are listed below in decreasing order of importance. Keeping in mind that not everyone who answered this question is a lab director, the results are nevertheless consistent with other studies documenting the multiple roles that lab directors are increasingly asked to play in their institutions.

- organizational/management skills
- experience/expertise in language teaching
- knowledge of another language/experience with another culture
- technical expertise
- expertise w/instructional design [materials development]

## Skill Enhancement

Perhaps not surprisingly, the skills that IALL'ers would most like to enhance resembled an up-ended version of the previous list; again, the qualities are listed in decreasing order of importance.

- technical expertise
- instructional design expertise
- organizational/management skills
- knowledge of another language/experience with another culture
- experience/expertise in language teaching

## What Can IALL Do For Me?

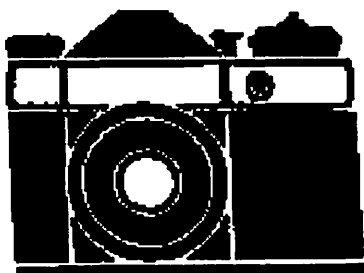
A number of questions on the survey were craftily intended to identify special interests and talents of IALL members that the organization could try to tap for various projects. One question, however, asked attendees what IALL could do *for them*. The responses are both a useful blueprint for organizational initiative as well as a gratifying pat on the back. Two of the items named (software evaluation and hands-on training) are the focus of current IALL projects.

- evaluate software and new technologies
- keep up the good work
- provide more hands on training
- provide research results regarding technology and language learning/teaching

Many thanks to those IALL '95 attendees who participated in the first Snapshot Survey. Look for the second at Victoria in 1997!

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*Trisha Dvorak is Past President of IALL.*



# Snapshot Survey #1 May, 1995

You, your lab, and the twenty first century - what a photo opportunity! We are hereby introducing the first IALL snapshot survey, while a comprehensive membership survey is being prepared for next year.

The information that you give us here will be collated and published in the IALL Journal; some pieces of it will also be revealed at one of the dinners during the conference itself.

We've asked you to give us your name in this snapshot, because one of the questions is intended to help us identify possible participants in IALL activities. However, your name will NOT appear in print or in public together with any of the data you provide us.

So please fill out this survey and return it to specially designated "snapshot survey" boxes around DeBartolo Hall. We want to know what YOU think!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

1. Considering today's trends in hardware, materials and methodology, please finish the sentence: In the year 2009, I would like my language lab to have:
2. By the year 2009, I would like my language lab not to have:
3. If IALL could do one thing for you, what would it be?
- 4a. What do you consider to be your most valuable skills?

Please rate 1=most 6=least

- organizational/management skills
- technical expertise
- instructional design expertise
- experience/expertise in language teaching
- knowledge of a language other than English/experience with another culture
- other:

4b. If you could enhance your skills in one of those areas, which would you pick?

5. In which of the following IALL activities would you be interested in participating?

- being a representative for one of the IALL affiliates (circle appropriate): ACTFL, TESOL, AECT, North-east Conference, CALICO
- the Software Database Project
- IALL Journal (circle appropriate): as writer, reviewer, columnist
- conference planning
- membership drive
- consulting

THINGS THE JOURNAL STAFF WOULD REALLY LIKE TO KNOW:

6. When I receive the IALL Journal, I:

- read it cover to cover, and often review later.
- read only the parts that interest me at the time; later I pick it up again and read articles I skipped the first time.
- glance through it and set it aside hoping to get back to it, but rarely do.
- toss it in the pile with all of my other unread journals.

7. Concerning the advertisements found in the IALL Journal:

- I have been influenced by the ads to buy or seek further information.
- I have noticed the ads, but they are redundant/not applicable.
- I ignore the ads.
- There are ads in the Journal?

***University of Virginia***  
***Arts and Sciences Media Center***

The School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Virginia invites applications for the position of **Director of the Media Center**, a 12 month administrative faculty appointment.

The Director's responsibilities include management of a language laboratory; oversight of several technology-equipped classrooms, including a networked 17 workstation classroom designed for language instruction; and, in collaboration with faculty members and graduate teaching assistants, the design, development, and delivery of multimedia and computer-based instructional aids. The Director will also research and evaluate third-party products, and will participate in school and university-wide analysis and recommendation of classroom technology tools, including both hardware configurations and software needs. The Director supervises 2 classified staff members and 15-18 student assistants. The Director may teach in the department of the College appropriate to his or her area of expertise.

Competitive applicants will possess a Masters or Doctoral degree in foreign language, education, or a related field; teaching experience at the college level; demonstrated administrative and supervisory ability; strong oral and written communication skills including effective communications with students, staff, and faculty at all levels; and the ability to research and develop new uses for the language lab and technology-equipped classrooms in response to technological innovation, new pedagogical trends, and institutional and faculty goals and initiatives.

Applications should be submitted immediately. Application review will begin January 1, 1996, and the position will remain open until filled, with an expected appointment effective July 1, 1996. Salary is competitive, commensurate with experience. Applicants should submit a letter of application, a current resume, and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least three professional references to the following address:

Chair, Media Center Director Search Committee  
Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences  
419 Cabell Hall  
University of Virginia  
Charlottesville, VA 22903

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