

Mosaic

A Journal for Language Teachers

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In this issue...

OUTSTANDING ARTICLES OF THE 20th CENTURY

We are pleased to reprint in this issue and in the next, "Outstanding Articles of the 20th Century." As Editor, my choice has not been an easy one; but, I feel that these theoretical and pedagogical articles, have contributed significantly to the teaching and learning of languages and have made an indelible contribution to the field.

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H. H. (David) Stern's keynote address in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1982 at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) formed the basis of the National Core French Study which CASLT has continued after his death.

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edited by Anthony Mollica

Mosaic

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The language graduate who never reads a professional journal and participates only minimally, if at all, in professional meetings, will stagnate. There is an onus on the profession in all areas to upgrade and keep abreast of current developments in the field.

- Peter Heffernan

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Wilga Rivers

Talking off the Tops of Their Heads

How do we develop communicative ability in a second language? We may intensify practice in the classroom (practice of patterns, practice of variations of patterns, practice in selection of patterns), but how do we engineer the great leap?

In a description of the Defense Language Institute program (1971) I read:

"After basic patterns and structures are mastered, the student can proceed to more and more controlled substitution and eventually to free conversation."

How delightfully simple it sounds! We breathe the fresh air of the uncomplicated. Our students master the basic patterns and structures; we provide them with carefully controlled practice; and hey presto! – they speak freely in unstructured situations.

There were times, in days that seem now to belong to another age, when faith in the efficacy of structured courses and controlled drills to produce fluent speakers of another language went unchallenged. We knew where we wanted to go; we knew how to get there; we were happy with our products – or were we? And were they? Are such cries of frustration as "I can't say anything off the top of my head, it all comes out as phrases from the book" new to our ears?¹ This student complaint of the seventies sounds almost like a paraphrase of the more academic remark of 1948 that,

"while many students could participate in memorized conversations speedily and effortlessly, hardly any could produce at length fluent variations from the basic material, and none could talk on unrehearsed topics without constant and painful hesitation."²

Autonomy in language use

In almost a quarter of a century we have still not come to grips with our basic problem: How do we develop communicative ability in a second language? We may intensify practice in the classroom (practice of patterns, practice of variations of patterns, practice in selection of patterns), but how do we engineer the great leap? Children learn all kinds of swimming movements while loving parents hold them, let them go a little, but are there to support them as they lose confidence; then at some moment they swim.

How can we help the student pass from the storing of linguistic knowledge and information about how this knowledge operates in communication to actual use of this knowledge for the multitudinous, unpredictable purposes of an individual in contact with other individuals?

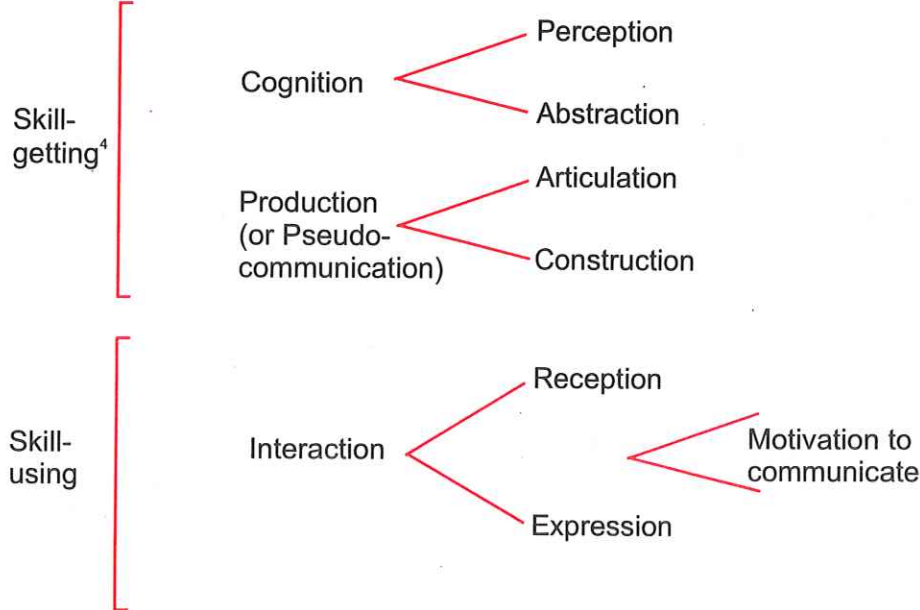
One moment they are nonswimmers, then they are swimmers, if only for a very short distance. The movements are the same, the activity is of a new kind – the difference is psychological. How do nonswimmers become swimmers? They draw on their own resources; they cease to rely on somebody else's support; they become autonomous in their movements; they take off and

they are swimming. *How do we get our students to this autonomous stage in language use?* This is the crucial point of our teaching. Until we have solved this problem we will continue to mark time, developing more and more efficient techniques for producing second-language cripples, with all the necessary muscles and sinews but unable to operate on their own. "Spontaneous expression," "liberated expression," "creative language use," "authentic communication" – the terms may vary with changing emphases in our profession: The goal seems still to elude us.

We must examine the problem at the point at which we are stalled. How can we help the student pass from the storing of linguistic knowledge and information about how this knowledge operates in communication to actual use of this knowledge for the multitudinous, unpredictable purposes of an individual in contact with other individuals? We do not need new ways to help the student acquire linguistic knowledge – we know of many from our "twenty-five centuries of language teaching"³ and each in its heyday has seemed to be effective for this purpose. Here we can pick and choose according to our theoretical persuasion, our temperamental preferences, and our assessment of the learning styles of the particular groups of students with whom we are dealing. In any case, these students will learn according to their personal strategies in the ultimate secret of their individual personalities, even when they appear to be doing as we direct.

Essential processes in learning to communicate

We need a model of language teaching activity that allocates a full role to the student's individual learning in communication. I propose the following division of



essential processes (see schema).

Ability to communicate, to interact verbally, presumes some knowledge (*cognition*) both in the perception of units, categories, and functions, and in the internalizing of the rules relating these categories and functions (which is a process of abstraction). I am not concerned here with how this knowledge is acquired, and I am willing to concede the validity (and probably the necessity) of a variety of approaches to this acquisition. Linguistic knowledge must, however, be acquired. In the process of acquisition students learn the *production* of language sequences: They learn through doing. Whether we use the terms "exercises," "drills," "intensive practice," or "activities" is immaterial; some kind of practice in putting together smoothly and confidently what they are learning is also essential. Each student must learn to articulate the sounds of the language acceptably and construct comprehensible second-language sequences by rapid associations of learned elements. No matter how much we relate these skill-getting activities to real-life situations this practice rarely passes beyond *pseudo-communication*. It is externally directed,

not self-originating; it is a dependent, not an independent, activity. The utterances may even be original in their combinations of segments, but the students are not communicating anything that is of real import to them nor are they receiving any genuine messages from others.

Students learn through doing. Whether we use the terms "exercises," "drills," "intensive practice," or "activities" is immaterial; some kind of practice in putting together smoothly and confidently what they are learning is also essential.

This is practice in formulating messages, and as such it is valuable practice. *It is near-communication with all the outward appearances of communication*, but in these activities the student does not have to demonstrate that great leap into autonomy – the leap that is crucial. Our failure in the past has been in our satisfaction with students who performed well in pseudo-communication. We have tended to assume that there would then be automatic transfer to performance in *interac-*

tion (both in the reception and expression of messages). We may have encouraged some sketchy attempts at autonomous interaction, but always with the supporting hand: the instructor or the native speaker leading the group, drawing the student out, directing the interchange.

Problems with drills

Wolfe suggests that progress toward autonomy is hindered by the artificiality of language learning through drills and exercises that force the student to lie. "From the point of view of true linguistic communication," he says, such "seemingly harmless sentences" as *Yesterday I went to the movies, Last night I went to the game, or Last week I went to the game* "border on the nonsensical."⁵ I do not think this is the problem. We may even maintain that lying is a common form of real communication, but, this aspect aside, sentences in drills of this type are merely pseudo-communication, and it may be clearer to students that this is the case if they are sometimes also incredible or absurd. In a foreign-language text coauthored by the playwright Ionesco, the nonsensical, shall we say whimsical, approach to adult learning is purposefully exploited with students playing manipulatively with such sentences as

"The teacher is in the pocket of the vest of the watch";

"The crocodile is more beautiful than Mary-Jane"; and

"He says his parents are as big as the Eiffel Tower."⁶

Such manipulations are intended to force students to *think of the meaning of what they are saying*, which is one step toward autonomy, and pure nonsense may on occasion be more effective in this regard than the colorless, socially correct actions of Dick and Jane, or Maria and Pedro.

Communication drills

In recent writings on second-language teaching there has been increasing emphasis on communication and on what have been called *communication drills*. I myself have spoken elsewhere of the necessity for relating the content of drills to the student's own interests:

"Participation in the drill can be innovative: providing for practice in the repetition and variation of language segments, but with simultaneous practice in selection, as students express their own meanings and not those of a textbook writer... Practice in selection should not be considered a separate activity for advanced classes: it can and should be included in class work from the very first lessons."⁷

More-over "many drills may be given the appearance of a game, or of elementary communication, by provoking the students into asking the teacher a series of questions in response to cues; or the items of a drill may develop a series of comments about the activities and interests of teacher and students... *The more students are interested in an activity in the target language, the more they feel the desire to communicate in the language, and this is the first and most vital step in learning to use language forms spontaneously.*"⁸

Paulston has developed the communication drill concept in more detail.⁹ She groups drills into mechanical drills, meaningful drills, and communicative drills.

In *mechanical drills*, there is complete control of the response so that the student does not even need to understand the drill to produce the correct response (as in simple substitution drills). Paulston suggests that if a nonsense word can be inserted as effectively by the student as a meaningful word, then the drill is of the mechanical type (for example:

"This is a box";

Wug";

"This is a wug").

Drilling of this type is pure production: sometimes merely practice in articulation, at others in constructing an orderly sequence. As such it has its place in the initial phase of introducing a new structure or for practicing some problem of pronunciation or intonation. An example of a mechanical drill would be:

Pattern: I'm holding a book.

Cue: Magazine.

Response: I'm holding magazine.

Cue: Banana

Response: I'm holding a banana

Cue: Wug.

Response: I'm holding a wug.

Paulston groups drills into mechanical drills, meaningful drills, and communicative drills.

In *meaningful drills*, "there is still control of the response (although it may be correctly expressed in more than one way...) but the student cannot complete the drill without fully understanding structurally and semantically what he is saying." The following is an example of a *meaningful drill*:

Question: When did you arrive this morning?

Answer: I arrived at nine o'clock.

Question: When will you leave this evening?

Answer: I'll leave at six o'clock.

In a *communicative drill*, however,

"there is no control of the response. The student has free choice of answer, and the criterion of selection here is his own opinion of the real world – whatever he wants to say."

This sounds like autonomous interaction, but Paulston continues:

"Whatever control there is lies in the stimulus... It still remains a drill rather than free communication because we are still within the realm of the cue-response pattern."

She gives the example: "What did you have for breakfast?" with its possibility of an orthodox response such as "I had toast and coffee for breakfast," or the unorthodox "I overslept and skipped breakfast so I wouldn't miss the bus." It is clear that the unconventional student may well turn this into real interaction, but my guess is that the majority of students, feeling insecure in their knowledge of the language and fairly certain of what the teacher expects, would remain in the area of pseudo-communication.

Palmer suggests what he calls *communication practice drills*.

"In communication practice (CP) drills, the student finds pleasure in a response that is not only linguistically acceptable, but also conveys information personally relevant to himself and other people."

As outlined, this is an interesting technique. Palmer maintains that "the most powerful technique at the teacher's disposal is his ability to verbally create situations which could be relevant to the student's own life and then to force the student to think about the meaning and consequences of what he would say in such situations."¹⁰ Palmer's CP drills are drills in that they center on practice of particular structures such as:

*I would tell him to shut the door.
her turn on the light.
them bring some food.*

He develops these, however, by a somewhat Socratic method:

Teacher: Karen, if you and Susan came to class at 8 a.m. and it was winter and the room was dark at 8 a.m., what would you tell Susan?

Karen: (with any luck at all) I would tell her to turn on the light.

Teacher: And how about you, Paul, if you were with Mary and you wanted to read, what would you do?

Paul: I would tell her to turn on the light.

Teacher: (in student's native language) You as a boy would tell a girl to do that for you?

Teacher: (continuing in the target language) Paul, if you came alone, and if I was in the room, what would you do?

Paul: I would tell you to turn on the light.

Teacher: Then I would throw you out of class.

In this type of drill Palmer is moving toward interaction in that students who give mechanically what appear to be a correct responses may well be pulled up short because they have not thought about the implications of their responses in the imposed setting. With training in such drills average students would possibly produce more original responses than in Paulston's communicative drills, because of the goad of the teacher's teasing and their natural desire to show that they had recognized the pedagogical stratagem. This type of drill teeters on the brink of interaction, but it is still in the area of pseudo-communication and production practice because the whole interchange is teacher-directed, with the specific intention of eliciting certain structures.

Using language freely for normal purposes

Where do we go from here? We must work out situations, from an early stage, where our students are on their own, trying to use the language for the *normal purposes of language*: establishing social relations; seeking and giving information; ex-

pressing reactions; learning or teaching others to do something; hiding intentions; talking their way out of trouble; persuading; discouraging, and entertaining others; sharing leisure activities; displaying their achievements; acting out social roles; discussing ideas; and playing with language for the fun of it.

We must work out situations, from an early stage, where our students are on their own, trying to use the language for the normal purposes of language:

When I say students are "on their own," I mean they are not supported or directed by the teacher: They may well be working with other students. In this type of practice students should be allowed to use anything they know of the language and any aids (gestures, drawings, pantomime) to fill out their meaning, when they are "at a loss for words."¹¹ *In this way he will learn to draw on everything he knows at a particular moment* in their acquisition of the language, and to fight to put their meaning over, as they would if he suddenly found themselves surrounded by monolingual speakers of the language. This experience is not intended to replace the careful teaching of the language we already supply (the skill-getting activities we organize) but to expand it with regular and frequent opportunities for autonomous interaction (skill-using), thus making full provision for a dimension of language learning, which at present is, if not completely neglected, at least given insufficient place in our programs. As I have said elsewhere:

"Perfection at the pattern-drill level, no matter how impressive to the observer, cannot be an end in itself. It is a fruitless activity unless care is taken to see that the

result of all this effort is the ability to use the language to express some message of one's own."¹²

In 1964, I spoke of the need for developing

*"that adventurous spirit which will enable the student to try to meet any situation by putting what he knows to maximum use."*¹³

In 1968, I wrote

*"students should be encouraged, at the advanced level, to try out new combinations of elements to create novel utterances. This is what the advanced student would do were he to find himself in a foreign country. He would make every effort to express his meaning by all kinds of recombinations of the language elements at his disposal. The more daring he is in such linguistic innovation, the more rapidly he progresses."*¹⁴

On looking back I feel it was a mistake to tag this recommendation specifically to "the advanced student" (a vague entity at best). Where we have been failing may well be in not encouraging this adventurous spirit from an early stage, with the result that the students find it difficult to move from structured security to the insecurity of reliance on their own resources, just as the young would-be swimmers cling to their mother's hand or insist on having one foot on the bottom of the pool.

In Savignon's interesting study, students in the communicative skills program (which consisted of one hour per week supplementing the regular audiolingual type of course)

"were given the opportunity to speak French in a variety of communicative settings. These ranged from short (1-2 minute) exchanges between a student and a fluent speaker of French in a simulated situation to whole group discussions on topics of current interest. Emphasis was put on getting meaning across;

students were urged to use every means at their disposal to understand and in turn to make themselves understood. Grammar and pronunciation errors were expected and were always ignored when they did not interfere with meaning. In other words, the experimenter and the other fluent speaker who participated in these sessions reacted to what was said, not to how it was said.¹⁵

One student commented:

"These sessions taught me to say what I wanted to say instead of book conversations."¹⁶

If we compare this comment with the student's remark quoted at the beginning of this chapter it seems that these students did begin to "talk off the tops of their heads."

Autonomous interaction in the language program

Just how practice in autonomous interaction can be incorporated into the program will depend on the type of program, but incorporate it we must, giving it a substantial role in the students' learning. We must not feel that interaction practice is somehow "wasting time" when there is "so much to learn." Unless this adventurous spirit is given time to establish itself as a constant attitude, most of what is learned will be stored unused, and we will produce learned individuals who are inhibited and fearful in situations requiring language use. As Carroll has said,

"When utterances are not generated to attain communicative goals, they can hardly be rewarded by the attainment of such goals, and language learning is deprived of its true meaning."¹⁷

With careful selection of the activity, *some genuine interaction can be a part of every lesson*, even early in the learning process, with expansion of the complexity of the demands as the student advances.

Practice in autonomous interaction should be individualized in the sense that it should allow for the different ways students learn, the different paces at which they learn, the different things that interest them, and the different situations in which they prefer to learn. *Students should be offered a choice of tasks* (things to do, things to find out, problems to solve, situations to which to react) and then be allowed to choose their own way, their own place, time, and company, for handling them. Some may prefer to work regularly with one other person; some will prefer to work consistently with a small group; some will choose to work with the teacher. Some who are loners will prefer to work through certain situations by themselves, demonstrating their capacity as individuals (and many of these in a quiet way may outpace their fellows through sheer single-mindedness of purpose).

With careful selection of the activity, some genuine interaction can be a part of every lesson, even early in the learning process, with expansion of the complexity of the demands as the student advances.

Students cannot be set down in groups, or sent off in pairs, and told to interact in the foreign language. *Motivation to communicate must be aroused.* Occasionally some fortuitous incident or combination of personalities will cause a desire to communicate something in the second language to emerge spontaneously, but in most instructional situations it will need to be fostered by the intrinsic interest of the task proposed and the students' interest in developing it. Such interest will make the interaction that follows autonomous: a genuine communication from one person to another, not just

another imposed act of pseudo-communication. Because of the personal nature of the activity we are promoting, *the type of reaction to be displayed will always remain consistent with the personality of the particular student.* Some people are temperamentally incapable of interacting with a babble of words; to force them to do so is to force them back into pseudo-communication and into mouthing learned phrases. The quality of the interaction will be judged by other criteria: ability to receive and express meaning, to understand and convey intentions, to perform acceptably in situations and in relations with others.

Earlier I suggested various natural uses of language in interaction that can be incorporated in this type of activity. Here I will expand on these and set down a few elaborations of each.¹⁸ A imaginative teacher will think of many others.

1. *Establishing and maintaining social relations*: greetings between persons of the same and different age and status; introductions; wishes for special occasions; polite enquiries (with attention to the permissible and the expected questions in the culture); making arrangements; giving directions to strangers; apologies, excuses, refusals, mild rebukes, hedging (the gentle art of noncommunication); encouraging, discouraging, and persuading others. Students may be sent to find out from a monolingual native speaker (or one who pretends to be monolingual) how these are enacted in the cultural context of the language being learned.
2. *Seeking information* on subjects for which students have some basic vocabulary. (At some point finding out specific technical vocabulary can be part of this type of interac-

- tion). Once again the native speakers or informants involved act as though they were monolingual. The information may be useful for (1), for (3), for (4), for (8) or even for (11).
3. *Giving information* about oneself, one's background, one's country, or about some subject in which one is proficient. The student may be giving information to other students learning to do or make something (4), or passing on information gained in (2). Simulated settings like bank or airline counters, customs desks, workshops, or restaurants may be used where the students are confined to the school setting.
 4. *Learning to do or make something.* The possibilities here are limitless. The pressure of intensive courses can be relieved by organizing actual sessions in the second language where students work with real-life materials and activities (sports, physical exercise, hobbies, crafts, music, dance, cooking, making clothes).
 5. *Expressing one's reactions.* Students can be put in real situations or simulated situations where they have to react verbally throughout a television show, at an exhibition of pictures or photographs, or during a friendly sharing of slides.
 6. *Hiding one's intentions.* Each student may be given a mission that must not be revealed under any provocation but must be carried out within a given period of time. This type of activity carries purposeful use of the language beyond course hours as students try to discover each other's missions.
 7. *Talking one's way out of trouble.* Simulated or real situations of increasing verbal difficulty should be set up where students must use their wits to extract themselves from some dilemma.
 8. *Problem solving.* A problem may involve (2) or (4), or even (6) and (7). The problem presented should be an active one whose solution requires verbal activity or enquiry. As early as 1953, Carroll posed the question whether aural-oral methods might not be more successful
 "if, instead of presenting the student with a fixed, predetermined lesson to be learned, the teacher created a 'problem-solving' situation in which the student must find... appropriate verbal responses for solving the problem," thus being early forced "to learn, by a kind of trial-and-error process, to *communicate* rather than merely to utter the speech patterns in the lesson plans."¹⁹
 9. *Sharing leisure activities.* Students should have the opportunity to learn and become proficient in the games and diversions of the target culture. They should be able to participate in verbal competitions. Where there are special activities associated with festivals or national holidays these should be engaged in.
 10. *Conversing over the telephone.* This is always difficult in a second language and should be practiced early. The student should use a phone book in the second language and, where possible, make actual calls enquiring about goods, services, or timetables for transport. The help of monolingual contacts outside the course should be enlisted. (Some incapacitated persons and older people living alone would enjoy participating in this type of communication.)
 11. *Entertaining others.* The student should be given the opportunity to use their natural talents or encouraged through role-playing sessions and skits to act out in front of a group. They may conduct a radio call-in programs or a TV talk or game show. Groups of students may prepare and present radio or TV commercials (these may involve more or less talking interspersed with mime and are therefore very suitable for the early stages of a course). A continuing serial story, with episodes developed successively by different groups, keeps interest alive.
 12. *Displaying one's achievements.* Students may tell the group about what they did in (4), (5), (6), (7), or (8), or they may present and explain special projects. This can be a regular culminating activity to draw together more individualized efforts at interaction.
 13. *Acting out social roles.* In our social life, we are continually acting out roles: the hostess, the guest, the employee, the leader, the impressive achiever, the long-suffering noncomplainer. Improvisations, where students act out various roles in relation to each other, are not only useful and interesting but also provide a cover for those more inhibited students who do not mind expressing feelings and viewpoints when they are presumed to be those of others. These activities also bring in aspects of (1), (3), (5), (7), and (11).
 14. *Discussing ideas and opinions.* This is one of the most frequent verbal activities in any language. It can be linked

with understanding the target culture and similarities and differences in ways of acting and reacting between speakers of the first and second languages. Discussion groups, debates, panel discussions, lecturettes or oral reports with questions and comments from the listeners, and frequent classroom discussion of second-language material read or seen are obvious ways to develop this ability, which also involves (2), (3), (5), and (8).

15. **Playing with language.** This is another frequent activity of all language users. We love jokes, puns, word games, crossword puzzles, and so on. Students can make up poems and learn nonsense and counting rhymes. Charades, in which students act out the various syllables of a word and then the complete word, are useful. As students go further, they become interested in word histories and word formation and learn to create their own words in acceptable ways. They also learn to distinguish levels of language (formal from familiar, standard usage from slang and jargon) and become familiar with regional and subgroup variants.

All of these activities will obviously not be possible for all students from the earliest stage of learning. The teacher will *select and graduate activities from these categories* so that the attitude of seeking to communicate is developed early in an activity which is within the student's growing capacity. An impossible task that bewilders and discourages students too early in their language learning is just as inhibiting of ultimate fluency as lack of opportunity to try what they can do with what they know.

Noncorrective approach to interaction

Some people will have deep-seated doubts about accepting such an approach, because they foresee that the student will make many errors that may become ingrained and ineradicable. It was because of such problems that many turned away from the direct method, seeking something more systematic that would seem to ensure more accurate production. Unfortunately, the emphasis on correct production at all times and the firm determination to create a learning situation where students would not make mistakes seems to have led to an impasse for many students. If we wish to facilitate the "great leap" into autonomous communication that I have described, then *a change of attitude toward mistakes during interaction practice is imperative*. It is during production (or pseudo-communication) practice that immediate corrections should be made. It is then that we should make the students conscious of possible errors and so familiarize them with acceptable sequences that they are able to monitor their own production and work toward its improvement in spontaneous interaction. In interaction practice *we are trying to develop an attitude of innovation and experimentation* with the new language. Nothing is more dampening of enthusiasm and effort than constant correction when students are trying to express their own ideas within the limitations of their newly-acquired knowledge of the language. What is required is that the instructor note silently the consistent and systematic errors made by each student (not slips of the tongue and occasional lapses). These errors will then be discussed with students individually at a time when the instructor is helping them evaluate their success in interaction, with particular

attention being paid to those types of errors that hinder communication. Such an analytic session may be conducted from time to time with a tape of an actual communication sequence, the student or group of students being asked to detect errors in their own spontaneous production and suggest corrections and improvements.²⁰ This technique makes the students more alert to their own mistakes and to other possibilities for expressing their meaning that they have not been exploiting.

Many of the types of activities listed may have already found their place in our courses. The originality of the approach lies not so much in the novelty of the activities as in the way in which they are approached. *To develop autonomous control of language for communication we must at some time allow the student autonomy*, and, conversely, we must discourage dependence. We must give students practice in relying on their own resources and using their ingenuity, so that very early in their language learning they realize that only by interacting freely and independently with others can they learn the control and ready retrieval essential for fluent language use. As Jespersen once said,

"The first condition for good instruction in... languages would seem to be to give the pupil as much as possible to do with and in the ... language; he must be steeped in it, not only get a sprinkling of it now and then; he must be ducked down in it and get to feel as if he were in his own element, so that he may at last disport himself in it as an able swimmer."²¹

Let's work it out

1. Take some structural pattern drills from the textbook you have been using and try to turn them into meaningful

- drills. Now try to rewrite them as communicative drills. Try these out on others in your group. What did you learn from this exercise?
2. Design some classroom conversational practice as pseudo-communication (that is, "near communication with all the outward appearances of communication"). What would you have to do to convert these activities into genuine communicative interaction?
 3. Design some role-playing activities for practice in establishing and maintaining social relations, talking one's way out of trouble, and acting out social roles.
 4. Draw up some lists of words and expressions in the second language that students would need to know to express various kinds of reactions (appreciation, frustration, hesitancy, suspicion, enthusiasm, etc.). Begin to use these with the class you are teaching.
 5. Plan in detail some leisure activities in which students can use the language with each other in a purposeful way. (These may be for a club, festivity, national celebration, dinner, or international day, among others.)
- *Revised version of a paper delivered at the Defense Language Institute English Language Branch, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, on June 30, 1971, (TESOL Project). Originally published in *TESOL Quarterly*, 6 (1972): 71-81. Reprinted with permission of Prof. Wilga Rivers.
3. L. Kelly, *25 Centuries of Language Teaching* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1969).
 4. I have borrowed the division into skill-getting and skill-using from Don H. Parker, "When Should I Individualize Instruction?" in *Individualization of Instruction: A Teaching Strategy*, ed. Virgil M. Howes (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 176.
 5. D. L. Wolfe, "Some Theoretical Aspects of Language Learning and Language Teaching," *LL* 17 (1967): 175.
 6. M. Benamou and E. Ionesco, *Mise en Train* (New York: Macmillan, 1969): "Le professeur est dans la poche du gilet de la montre," p. 44; "Le crocodile est plus beau que Marie-Jeanne," p. 114; "Il dir que ses parents sont aussi grands que la Tour Eiffel," p. 141.
 7. "From Skill Acquisition to Language Control," chap. 3 of Rivers, *Speaking in Many Tongues: Essays in Foreign-Language Teaching*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); or *TQ* 3 (1969): 12.
 8. *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 110. See also 1st ed., p. 109. Italics not in the original.
 9. C. B. Paulston, "Structural Pattern Drills: A Classification," *Foreign Language Annals* 4 (1970): 187-93.
 10. Adrian Palmer, "Teaching Communication," *LL* 20 (1970): 55-68.
 11. S. Savignon used this technique in her "Study of the Effect of Training in Communicative Skills as Part of a Beginning College French Course on Student Attitude and Achievement in Linguistic and Communicative Competence," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, 1971, since published as *Communicative Competence: An Experiment in Foreign-Language Teaching* (Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development, 1972).
 12. Rivers, *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills*, 2nd ed., pp. 110-11. See also 1st ed., p. 109.
 13. *The Psychologist and the Foreign-Language Teacher* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 78. Italics not in the original.
 14. *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills*, 1st ed., p. 201. Italics not in the original.
 15. Savignon, *Communicative Competence*, p. 25. On pp. 28 and 29 are listed a variety of communicative tasks used during the practice sessions. Savignon acknowledges her indebtedness to L. A. Jakobovits, *Foreign Language Learning: A Linguistic Analysis of the Issues* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1970), chap. 3, for guidelines in defining these tasks. Jakobovits was the director of Savignon's study.
 16. Savignon, *Communicative Competence*, p. 30.
 17. J. B. Carroll, "Conscious and Automatic Processes in Language Learning," *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes* 37 (1981): 471.
 18. These activities are described in greater detail in Rivers et al., the *Practical Guides*, chap. 2, with many suggestions for their implementation. Many of the activities listed in the Index of these books under *Games* are also appropriate.
 19. J. B. Carroll, *The Study of Language* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 188. Italics in the original.
 20. This is one of the techniques employed in Curran's Counseling-Learning/Community Language Learning approach.
 21. Otto Jespersen, *How to Teach a Foreign Language* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961), p. 48. Originally published in English translation in 1904.

Notes

1. *The Advisor* (Teacher-Course Evaluation, University of Illinois, 1970-71), p. 122.
2. F. Agard and H. Dunkel, *An Investigation of Second-Language Teaching* (Lexington, Mass.: Ginn, 1948), p. 288.

*Revised version of a paper delivered at the Defense Language Institute English Language Branch, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, on June 30, 1971, (TESOL Project). Originally published in *TESOL Quarterly*, 6 (1972): 71-81. Reprinted with permission of Prof. Wilga Rivers.

H.H. Stern

French Core Programs across Canada: How Can We Improve Them?

In this article the author proposes a multi-dimensional curriculum which formed the basis for the National Core French Study. The project was continued after the Author's untimely death.

Introduction

I am very happy to have been asked to address the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) at this meeting and at this time. The symbolism of your theme "Take a second language to heart in Manitoba, the heart of the continent" has not escaped me. Here we are indeed in the heart of Canada, a geographically central spot at which one is ideally placed to look west and east and north and to get a sense of perspective. In language teaching, no less than in other branches of education, our habits of thinking tend to be provincial rather than continental. Most of us have become so imbued with the idea of education as a *provincial* concern and not a national one or, heaven forbid, a "federal" one, that we quite forget that this educational separatism applies, above all, to educational *administration* and *organization*. Our *thoughts*, our *ideas*, and our *ideals* hardly stop at the provincial boundaries. Nor do the problems we face or even the rhythm of our concerns which is remarkably similar across the country from east to west. But unfortunately we lack sufficient mechanisms for cooperation, and the enormous distances which separate us prevent us from getting together often enough to share our ideas and to deal with our problems by joint action.

This is why I believe that an association like CASLT is so important. CASLT – we ought to re-

member – was founded in Manitoba twelve years ago at the initiative of Dr. Robert Roy, and we should pay tribute to his vision. As an organization, CASLT is probably more important than we may yet have realized. In these twelve years it has not yet played the role it rightly ought to play in matters of second language teaching and learning in Canada. CASLT should take a leaf out of the book of another association, Canadian Parents for French, whose activities range right across the continent. It has become a truly national force in promoting French as a second language. There is no reason why CASLT should not in due course become equally influential in its own way and for its own purposes.

The Council of Europe Modern Languages Project

At this point I am going to digress for a moment and say something about the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project, because I believe it presents an interesting parallel and has an important lesson for us. Europe, as we all know, also has its language problems. Over ten years ago, at the initiative of the Council of Europe, scholars from different European countries came together and during the subsequent years developed a new basis for language curricula for adults in Europe. Some of the linguists and teachers working on this project have become well known to us in Canada; to name only a few of

them: John Trim, David Wilkins, Eddy Roulet, Daniel Coste, René Richterich and Jan van Ek. Out of their deliberations grew the *Threshold Level*, *Niveau-seuil*, *Kontaktschwelle*, and their equivalents in several other European languages.¹ The writings arising from the Council of Europe project constitute some of the finest and most significant studies on language questions produced anywhere during the last ten years.

In February this year, (1982) the Council of Europe organized a meeting at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg which was of considerable importance for the future of this remarkable project. It was attended by delegations from 22 European countries. Canada was able to send a small delegation of six observers of whom I was one, at the invitation of the Department of the Secretary of State. The specific purpose of the February meeting was to take stock and review the project that concluded the first ten years, and now to advance to a new and even more ambitious project, wider in scope and more diversified than its predecessor, but again involving the voluntary cooperation of many people from the different member states of the European community. The most recent publication of the Council of Europe, *Modern Languages 1971-1981*, presents a fascinating review of the past of the project, of current trends of thought and developments, and above all, it gives a glimpse of future directions.² There is a lot one could say about this project. I am not, at this point, proposing to discuss it further or to elaborate on the new directions that the Council of Europe intends to embark on, interesting though this might be. Nor do I wish to imply by talking about the Council of Europe project at some length that this project or its findings could be transferred to Canada lock, stock and barrel. In the pres-

ent context I have dwelt on this experience for a different reason. What struck me in Strasbourg as wholly admirable, and what I want to draw to your attention is, first of all, the fact itself of this cooperative international language venture; it is, secondly, the existence of an imaginative and committed group of language teachers and scholars sharing with one another the task of tackling jointly the language problems of a continent. It occurred to me that we have nothing of similar scope and dynamism across the provinces. And I wonder why we don't.

Interprovincial Cooperation

Yet, there are indications of a similar spirit here, as well; of a great willingness among us to cooperate on language questions. Take, among several instances, the *Canadian Modern Language Review* which has a national editorial board representing different provinces and which under the dynamic editorship of Tony Mollica has become the leading national, and indeed an international, language teaching review. It is now in the process of deliberately loosening its ties with the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association in order to emphasize its national character. Other examples of interprovincial cooperation are the much valued Monitor program administered by the Council of Ministers of Education; or SEVEC, the recently created Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada (Société éducative de visites et d'échanges au Canada). The predecessors of SEVEC, Visites Interprovinciales and the Bilingual Exchange Secretariat, had for many years successfully organized student exchanges between Quebec and Ontario. The new society, which has been brought about by the merger of the two former organizations, is now extending these activities nationally and diversify-

ing its program.³ Other examples are the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (Association canadienne de professeurs d'immersion) which has attracted teachers from all across Canada, and the Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics (Association canadienne de linguistique appliquée). Finally, there are the two associations I already mentioned, Canadian Parents for French and this association, CASLT. All these organizations and activities are evidence that our thinking on language questions in Canada is not narrowly provincial. We are no doubt ready to make Canada-wide cooperative efforts in the interest of second language teaching.

*Curriculum is the key issue
for a renewal and a
strengthening of second
language teaching in
Canada at the present time.*

A National Language Centre?

If we tried to make such a national effort now, what would most clearly demand our energies? There are many projects one could think of. It could be argued that at this stage the most important thing to do is not to launch into this or that project, but to create a mechanism of national interprovincial cooperation, a national language centre or institute, of the kind first proposed many years ago, in the *Report on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*. Such a centre has been asked for again and again, for example, by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, by Canadian Parents for French, and most recently, and quite concretely, by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.⁴ However, these efforts have so far not come to fruition, for various reasons, partly of course financial, but mainly, I fear, because of the reluctance on

the part of provincial ministries to allow an educational body to be created, however benevolent, which transcends the provincial framework. Some people might also be reluctant to support the creation of a new *national* language centre, but for different reasons. They would like to know beforehand what such a centre would be doing that is not being done by existing language centres, such as the International Centre for Research on Bilingualism at Laval, language groups or centres at various other universities, e.g., McGill, Ottawa, Carleton, or the University of Western Ontario, or the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Modern Language Centre. For all these reasons it is perhaps more fitting than to dream about a new national language centre to do some hard thinking about the issues or problems that should receive attention nationwide.

The Plight of the French Core Curriculum

If I were asked to pick out one issue I would have little hesitation in making my choice. It would be the second language curriculum, and more specifically, the French core curriculum. In my view, curriculum is the key issue for a renewal and a strengthening of second language teaching in Canada at the present time. To some extent this is already recognized by the provincial ministries and many school boards. Several of them have produced for their own jurisdictions, or are in the process of doing so, new language curricula, particularly for French as a second language. I am familiar with a few interesting efforts in this direction, for example, the FSL and ESL *programmes d'étude* of the Quebec Ministry of Education and the Core Curriculum Guideline for French of the Ontario Ministry of Education.⁵ But where everybody works in the same di-

rection, would we not gain a great deal if we – like the Europeans did ten years ago – got together and pooled our ideas through a Canadian modern language curriculum project? This would in no way interfere with the freedom of the ministries to act as they wished, but it would give all the ministries, and not only the ministries, but also school boards, provincial language associations, leaders in the profession, and anyone else concerned with language program development access to a common pool of ideas and practices. This would not only save time and money, but it would also meet a genuine need and at the same time establish a cooperative principle from which all the provinces could benefit. Such a project should be much easier to establish in Canada than it must have been in Europe because our traditions and systems are so much more alike.

Let me turn to the substance of this proposal and ask why curriculum is so central. I am going to illustrate with French what I want to say, but I am sure it equally applies to other languages. All languages taught as subjects in school and university are at risk in the present juncture of events, and I suggest that all of us would be well advised to rethink our approach to the language curriculum.

What is meant by curriculum in this context comprises three things:

- *content* (what we teach),
- *objectives* (what we aim to achieve), and
- *teaching strategies* (how we approach teaching).

Underlying any view of the language curriculum is a philosophy or theory of language teaching, a view of language, a view of learning and a view of education, and this certainly applies to the

curriculum concept I propose to sketch.

Core French has been neglected because we have become mesmerized by immersion.

Why then should we focus on French, and more specifically, the French core curriculum (not immersion)? I believe that core French has been neglected because we have become mesmerized by immersion. The success of French immersion is undisputed; but it has been the undoing of the French core curriculum. "Immersion is the only way of learning another language" has, during the last ten years, become a Canadian credo of second language learning. Much as I like and support immersion as an exciting, and, indeed, essential alternative program in school systems, we do language teaching a disservice by overstating its success and, incidentally, also by overlooking its problems, but above all by deprecating, devaluing, and disregarding the potential of regular/core language programs. The majority of French language learners will have to learn French in a non-immersion core program. Most language teachers operate in regular programs. Language learning in other languages at school or university level is inevitably done in regular language courses. In other countries, for example throughout Europe, where immersion as a form of schooling does not exist, all language teaching is "regular," or "core" in our terms. We would therefore be seriously remiss if we overlooked the importance of all these conventional language courses. The plea to you of this address is that we should join together across provinces, hopefully through the medium of this association or with the help of some other agency, and over the next few years *make*

determined attempts to make a thorough improvement in the curriculum of core programs so that the French core program becomes a true alternative to immersion and is no longer its "parent pauvre."

How can this be done? Rather than turning our back on the core program we should, to begin with, ask ourselves what *are* its major shortcomings. Can they be remedied? Or is the French core program (along with other regular language programs) a "lost cause"? Is perhaps language teaching in the conventional sense no longer a practical proposition? I firmly believe that the negative views, implied in the last two questions and sometimes voiced today even by language teachers themselves, are unjustified.

We should join together across provinces and make determined attempts to make a thorough improvement in the curriculum of core programs so that the French core program becomes a true alternative to immersion and is no longer its "parent pauvre."

What then are the criticisms that we or others make of core programs and to which we have to respond? In a sweeping way and without qualifying them, they can be characterized as follows: French core programs and other conventional language courses can be criticized for taking too narrow a view of language and for operating with too limited a conception of the language learner and language learning process. They confine the role of language teacher too much to that of a , and thus often fail to realize the educational potential of second language learning. Courses are accused of being repetitive and not well "articulated." The substantive content of programs has

been described as unsubstantial, the narratives and dialogues in them as trivial and insipid. Students sometimes complain that they go over the same ground again and again and make no headway, and teachers feel frustrated and lose professional satisfaction.

A program cannot be confined to a limited drill routine for years on end. It places upon the curriculum developer the obligation to make sure that the French core program makes a significant contribution to the educational offerings of the school curriculum.

At this point let us remember, in case these rather sweeping judgements are misinterpreted, that what I have characterized are expressions of self-criticisms among the professionals themselves as much as criticisms made by others. They are not accusations of "incompetence" directed against the teachers. What we attempt to do is to improve the quality of our work, and therefore, from time to time, we take a critical look at our own practices. The public would only have something to worry about if we were complacent and did not recognize shortcomings or were unwilling to do anything about them.

The shortcomings in language programs which I have sketched can of course be explained. Broadly speaking, the way French is taught in Canada today has been very much the result of the audiolingual revolution of the sixties which aimed at making language training simple, direct and thoroughly practical, and many of us teach a language in the way we were at that time taught to do it. The techniques which were perfected during those years have considerable merit, and I am not

engaging in the common pastime of "bashing" audiolingualism.⁶ However, we must recognize that in the last twenty years there have been changes in views on language and language learning. There have been major advances which we cannot ignore. One such development has been the immersion experience which has important implications for regular language teaching. Another has been the Council of Europe Project with its challenging approach to new language curricula. A third has been research on second language learning. Here I am thinking of "interlanguage" studies, or Stephen Krashen's stimulating work on the distinction between language "acquisition" and "learning,"⁷ and the growing insights on learners' own perceptions, initiatives, and individual ways of coping with a new language.⁸ We must also bear in mind changes in the organization of language teaching which apply particularly to French in anglophone school systems and to English in francophone systems: a much bigger time allowance is given to the second

language in school programs.⁹ Core programs last much longer; they often begin in the primary or junior grades and often take five, eight, or even ten and twelve years. Moreover, more time per day or per week is allowed for. This means that a program cannot be confined to a limited drill routine for years on end. It places upon the curriculum developer the obligation to make sure that the French core program makes a significant contribution to the educational offerings of the school curriculum.

Framework for a New Language Curriculum

With these considerations in mind I would now like to present to you a curriculum framework which is intended to reflect these changes and which is also meant to respond to some of the current criticisms that language programs have provoked.¹⁰ This is not the time and place to discuss the whole scheme in full detail. The accompanying diagram (Figure 1) and a few explanations may, however, provide the necessary orientation.

An FL Curriculum Model

Content	Objectives				Main strategies
	Proficiency	Knowledge	Affect	Transfer	
Language Syllabus (L2)					Analytical: Study & Practice
Culture Syllabus (C2)					Analytical: Study (knowledge about C2)
Communicative Activity Syllabus (L2/C2)					Communicative Activities (Experimental)
General Language Education Syllabus					Comparative (Crosslingual/ Crosscultural)

Key Suggested major elements Suggested minor emphasis

Figure 1

As will be seen, it is a multidimensional curriculum that is proposed. This curriculum has four components, or, a fourfold focus:

- language,
- culture,
- communicative activities, and
- general language education.

That is to say, the curriculum is not based on an undimensional conception of proficiency as purely linguistic knowledge. Its content is not just language, narrowly conceived. It consists in fact of four interacting content areas or "syllabuses." To each of these syllabuses we can ascribe certain basic teaching strategies, because the different content areas require different approaches which complement each other. Let me now briefly sketch these four content areas:

1. The *language syllabus* is familiar enough, at least in parts. It would have those vocabulary and grammatical components that language programs have always had and which no doubt are necessary for a thorough acquisition of the second language. In addition, however, it would incorporate new elements that derive from semantics, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics, in short, elements that the Council of Europe Threshold Level and other "notional-functional" syllabuses have already demonstrated. They would be taught with the techniques of study and practice familiar to most experienced language teachers, and therefore include "cognitive-" as well as "audiolingual-" type teaching strategies. This syllabus, then, is the least controversial aspect of this proposal, except for the fact that the sociolinguistic and semantic components are relatively new and are still not
2. The *second syllabus, culture*, is in principle also widely recognized in most language curricula but is usually very subsidiary and is often completely ignored. It is this syllabus which would orient the French course openly and consciously towards one or several French communities. In the case of French as a second language in Manitoba, this would inevitably include the Franco-Manitoban community. In addition one would select other francophone communities in Canada, particularly Quebec, as the primary centre of francophone culture in North America, while also taking into consideration France and French-speaking territories across the world. The main teaching strategies for this syllabus are likely to be information sharing and discovery procedures. Culture should of course not only be learnt *about*; it should also be *experienced* at a more personal level. However, in this scheme, the "experiential" aspect is taken care of under the next heading. The cultural component is much harder to implement than is often realized because of a lack of solid information and accessible documentation. There is a shortage of appropriate materials to meet the requirements of this syllabus. It is a deficiency area which needs development. One would hope that French departments in Canadian universities will increasingly help in making good this deficiency.
3. The *third syllabus, communicative activities*, is most com-

monly overlooked and is perhaps the most novel contribution of our own time. It demands a change of approach. It is designed to ensure that all learners are exposed to the experience of natural, unedited and unrehearsed language use. The key concepts for this syllabus are contact, communication and authentic experience. This syllabus guarantees that the learner does not only learn *about* the language as if it were a separate object, but that he/she also "lives" the language in a personal and direct way. In this syllabus we apply to the core French program the lessons gained from the immersion experience, and from other recent so-called communicative approaches to language teaching. In the context of this syllabus, learners are encouraged to involve themselves as persons with the target language community in whatever way they can. Students should be given the opportunity to relate their own lives, their activities, their predominant interests and concerns to the second language. The emphasis in this syllabus is on topics, on information - not on language as such. One of the most readily available ways of doing this is to offer a subject other than the language itself in French or to draw on the other subjects of the school curriculum; in this way the language is used as a means of communication for something else. This has been of course the "secret" of the immersion story. Another important aspect of this syllabus is to create opportunities for students to make direct personal contact with one of the target language communities: visiting, meeting target lan-

guage speakers, taking up residence, taking part in student exchanges. Another approach to this syllabus is possible through reading books, magazines, and newspapers produced for French-speaking audiences, as well as through watching movies, or listening to the radio. In this context we may come to reconsider the role of literature in language teaching. In short, these are all different ways for students to move closer to the target language community. From this perspective, student travel and exchanges are not frills; they are an important part of this syllabus, because they involve students (as well as teachers) and, in the case of class exchanges or visits, whole schools in communicative activities.¹² The main teaching-learning strategy for this syllabus is one of communicative action rather than formal language study or rehearsal-type practice. Students become directly involved as participants in some worthwhile activities. While many teachers have already encouraged such activities and have gained experience in them, these enterprises are not usually fully incorporated in the French program. As a syllabus, communicative activities need pioneering development.

4. With the *fourth and final component* of the curriculum, which we have called *the general language education syllabus*, we change our perspective again. We stand back from learning French and from learning about French-speaking communities. Instead, in this syllabus we attempt to think about language and languages in general, about language learn-

ing, about cultures and societies, using the experience of learning French as a jumping-off ground for generalizing and for relating learning French to what we know about English and other languages.

These four syllabuses are mutually supporting, each contributing to the other three, and to the general school curriculum. They should not be thought of as completely separate from each other.

This syllabus would deal with general linguistic and cultural phenomena, make learners alert to the process of language learning ("learning how to learn"), and might even include discussions of a philosophical nature about the relations between language and thought, language and society, or language and reality. Other topics might be child language, language families, language varieties, questions of language and ethnic prejudice, or political and economic issues in language learning. The main teaching strategy for this syllabus is likely to be a highly cognitive one that involves students in making "crosslingual" and "crosscultural" observations and comparisons and that will encourage them to think about their own language learning. Here again we are treading on new ground - at least in the context of French for anglophones at school level.¹³

These four syllabuses jointly make up the framework for a second language curriculum. The important difference between this curriculum framework and more familiar ones lies in the fact that the language syllabus is not given automatic priority. The other three syllabuses are not treated as less important aspects. They are

considered as of equal worth, offering different but complementary approaches to the second language.

To summarize: in syllabus 1 we study the *language* itself, acquire the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing; in syllabus 2 we are concerned with the *communities* that speak the language and get to know something of their lives, but in both syllabus 1 and 2 we quite legitimately look at language and life as if they were *objects* which we examine, and become familiar with; with syllabus 3, communicative activities, we change our perspective and become *personally involved*, as human beings, in language use, and *experience* the target language and the target communities as directly as possible. In syllabus 4 we stand back from it all and relate French (or whatever other language we learn) to what we know and learn about *language, language learning, and people in general*.

These four syllabuses are mutually supporting, each contributing to the other three, and to the general school curriculum. They should not be thought of as completely separate from each other: "On Mondays, we have language, on Tuesdays, culture, and on Wednesdays, etc..." They are more in the nature of different ways of tackling a language from various angles. The success of these syllabuses would be greatest if they were completely integrated. This type of curriculum fits in well with the idea of "language across the curriculum" as well as with recent attempts to integrate French with other general school subjects.¹⁴ Through this fourfold approach, I believe, we can give the second language curriculum greater strength, more balance, and greater educational impact, and thus, we would meet one of the main criticisms of current lan-

guage curricula: triviality of content, lack of substance, lack of impact, and in addition, inadequate language proficiency.

The objectives (see Figure 1) to be reached with the help of this curriculum can be expressed in terms of four broad categories, which are loosely derived from Bloom's well-known taxonomies of educational objectives and their adaptations to language teaching by Valette:¹⁵

1. **Proficiency** in the language as well as cultural proficiency: *the proficiency objective*.
2. **Knowledge** about the language, culture and society: *the cognitive objective*. Learning a language should be an intellectually stimulating experience and should offer worthwhile new knowledge to the students.
3. **Attitudes and values** in relation to the language, the country or region and its people and culture: *the affective objective*. The students should feel good about the language and the countries or regions concerned. It is in this respect that the theme of this conference, "Take a language to heart", is particularly relevant.
4. **The ability to transfer and generalize** the experiences with French to other languages, other countries, and to a more general and multiethnic education: *the general education objective*.

These objectives, I contend, can be pursued with much greater chance of success with this kind of multidimensional curriculum than if we persisted in a narrowly unidimensional linguistic program.

It should be understood that in this scheme the different strategies only briefly referred to are not just an eclectic potpourri, but they are relevant to the different con-

tent areas and the main objectives identified.

Applications

What I have outlined does not claim to be entirely novel. In nucleus one can find something of these features in many French programs and classes. These are aspects which are more or less developed in the repertoire of many language teachers; but most curriculum developers, textbook writers, and teachers regard only the language syllabus as their *real* concern, and they tend to treat the other content areas as peripheral. The object of the present scheme is to develop these peripheral activities more systematically, and by giving them more weight language teachers would be enabled to deliver a more interesting, more varied and an educationally more substantial program which, hopefully, will also be more effective.

Because this scheme is not in itself completely new and merely gives emphasis to features of language programs which are commonly neglected, it is something that any teacher interested can introduce into his or her own teaching almost immediately, tentatively and on a small scale at first, but as one gains confidence in going beyond the conventional restrictions of the usual language programs, more boldly and in a more deliberate way.

Let me deal at this point with one objection that some teachers are likely to raise: "Where should I take the time from for these other syllabuses? I can hardly cover my regular course work." Hammering away at language practice in isolation and non-stop (even if it is made attractive with fun and games) is not enough, nor does it lead to proficiency. In the long run it merely frustrates teachers and students. Moreover, educationally, it is far less justifiable

than a multidimensional curriculum.

At the same time, I should point out that I look upon this proposal not as a foolproof recipe for instant success, but as a direction to be explored. On theoretical and educational grounds a strong case can be made for it. Nevertheless, in education we should introduce innovations through experimentation, research and development, and systematic evaluation. It is in this spirit that I offer you this suggestion for your consideration.

Hammering away at language practice in isolation and non-stop (even if it is made attractive with fun and games) is not enough, nor does it lead to proficiency. In the long run it merely frustrates teachers and students.

In this presentation I have thought primarily of *French* as a second language *at the school level*. But, in my view, this scheme is equally applicable to teaching *French at the university* as well as to the teaching of any other language at school or university. I am not saying that in all language programs and at all stages of a particular program the weight of emphasis should always be the same. Thus, the diagram illustrates only one possible interpretation of major and minor emphases. The priorities can shift from one syllabus to another, and the learner objectives, too, can vary according to the age, experience, proficiency level and other learner characteristics; they are likely to vary also in different learning settings.

What I have described is only a framework or outline. As is obvious from my account, the content areas, the different syllabuses, do not exist in their entirety in any

ready-made form. They have not been sufficiently developed. Here and there we can find useful examples of the kind of items to incorporate in a syllabus. The Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto has, for several years, produced prototype "modules" in French and English which illustrate some points on these syllabuses.¹⁶ Existing programs and new curricula, such as the Ontario Core French Guideline or the Quebec *programmes d'études* in French and English, are helpful for different aspects in curriculum development, and no doubt other provinces have useful experiences to contribute. But much remains to be done.

Here I want to anticipate a possible misunderstanding. I am not suggesting a single French curriculum for Canada, a mega-project, an "Alsands" of language teaching. What is envisaged is a pool or bank of ideas, items, and examples of techniques, practices, and materials at different levels of language instruction to which many people from across Canada would contribute and on which teachers, ministries, school boards, publishers, and even learners themselves could draw.

Towards Action

If the idea of this scheme appears to be promising, one could envisage an organization like taking it up to study it more closely. If, on further scrutiny, it holds up well, one could imagine that CASLT or some other organization would take the initiative and set up national committees, workshops, or "task forces." These committees could then be asked to make themselves responsible each for one of the content areas. Alternatively, committees might be constituted so as to take charge of all four syllabuses at a specific level of education: primary, junior, intermediate, senior, adult

or university. At all these levels and in all four curriculum areas (as well as in other languages besides French) language education could only benefit from such inter-provincial cooperation.

Their present second language program may or may not be in reasonably good shape, but my belief is that the multidimensional curriculum I have outlined is worth considering as a move in the direction towards a more valid and a more effective second language education.

These committees would of course not work in isolation. They could be expected to cooperate with one another. In addition they would enlist the help of the different provincial language associations, of the ministries of education, the Secretary of State, the Council of Ministers of Education, the Canadian publishers, of centres like the OISE Modern Language Centre, the Centre for International Research on Bilingualism at Laval, or the language centres at Ottawa and Carleton Universities, and, last but not least, one would of course count upon the help of the language departments in the universities. Similar ideas to the scheme developed here have recently been expressed also in USA; and cooperation with American language teachers, for example, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), can also be envisaged.¹⁷

Conclusion

The scheme I have outlined needs more elaboration than I can offer on this occasion. But I hope I have said enough to convince you that this is meant to be a concrete proposal which now needs thorough

discussion. Let us examine whether, from different perspectives, it makes sense in the present situation. Consider its implications for the classroom, for materials development, for the professional development of language teachers, and for research. If we come to the conclusion that this proposal has something going for it, let us do something about it.

This is what I mean when I said "Let us use our heads to win their hearts." My conviction is that with this approach to the curriculum we would not only win the hearts of our students. Our students would probably also learn a lot more French (or whatever other language we teach); and they would learn lots of other things besides. Their present second language program may or may not be in reasonably good shape, but my belief is that the multidimensional curriculum I have outlined is worth considering as a move in the direction towards a more valid and a more effective second language education. What I have proposed is of course a long-term development. Even if it is not a quick miracle cure, I am convinced that if we tried something along those lines, an important step would have been taken to lift French core programs out of the doldrums.

Notes

1. J. van Ek, *The Threshold Level in a European Unit/Credit System for Modern Language Learning by Adults* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1975); D. Coste *et al.*, *Un niveau-seuil* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1976); M. Baldeger, M. Muller, and G. Schneider, *Kontaktschwelle Deutsch as Fremdsprache* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1980); and P.J. Slagter, *Un nivel umbral* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1979). For recent discussions of the Council of Europe Project and additional references see,

- among others, articles by L.G. Alexander, W.M. Rivers and B.J. Melvin, and H.H. Stern in J.E. Alatis, H.B. Altman, and P.M. Alatis, eds., *The Second Language Classroom: Directions for the 1980's* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).
2. Also available in French under the title of *Langues vivantes 1971-1981*, both versions published by the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1981. The conclusions and recommendations of this important meeting, held in Strasbourg from Feb. 23 to 26, 1982, were published by the Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe as a separate document, dated April 20, 1982 (reference number: CC-GP4 (82) 3).
 3. SEVEC, which is set up as an independent, charitable organization, has its headquarters at 1580 Merivale Road, Suite 505, Ottawa, Ontario, K2G 4B5. Its first annual meeting and conference is due to be held in Winnipeg in October 1982.
 4. See, for example, an article by E. Sarkar, "When it comes to a national clearinghouse, Canadians are still house hunting," *CPF National Newsletter*, No. 11 (Sept. 1980), 1-2.
 5. Quebec Ministry of Education, *Programme d'étude: Primaire - Français, langue seconde* (1980); *Programme d'étude: Primaire - Anglais, langue seconde* (1980); *Programme d'étude: Secondaire - Français, langue seconde* (1981), all issued by the Quebec Ministry of Education.
- Ontario Ministry of Education, French, Core Programs 1980: *Curriculum Guideline for the Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior Divisions*. (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1980). I have recently discussed the approach of both ministries to the second language curriculum in *Issues in Early Core French: A Selective and Preliminary Review of the Literature: 1975-1981* (Toronto: Research Department of the Board of Education for the City of Toronto, 1982).
6. The need for reassessing the contribution of audiolingualism was recently pointed out by J.P.B. Allen in "The Audiolingual Method: Where did it come from and Where is it going?" mimeographed (1981).
 7. See, for example, S.D. Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981).
 8. For a recent review of studies on second language learning, see H.H. Stern and J. Cummins, "Language Teaching/Learning Research: A Canadian Perspective on Status and Directions," in J.K. Phillips, ed., *Action for the '80s: A Political, Professional, and Public Program for Foreign Language Education*. The ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series. (Skokie, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1981), pp. 195-248.
 9. The importance of increased time allowance has been strongly advocated by the Ontario Ministry of Education; see, for example, the *Report of the Ministerial Committee on the Teaching of French* (Gillin Report) (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1974), and the same Ministry's policy statement in *Teaching and Learning French as a Second Language: A New Program for Ontario Students* (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1977). Recent literature on the time issue is discussed in my report to the Toronto Board of Education, cited in note 5 above.
 10. The conceptions underlying this curriculum scheme have been developed over a number of years going back to the early 1970s. They have found concrete expression and application in the products of the French Modules Project of the OISE Modern Language Centre. In its present form this scheme is the result of prolonged cooperation with Rebecca Ullmann, OISE Research Associate and Principal Investigator of the French Modules Project. For earlier statements along similar lines, see H.H. Stern, "Mammoths or Modules," *Times Educational Supplement*, October 8, 1976 (special inset on modern language teaching, p.44); H.H. Stern, R. Ullmann et al., *Module Making: A Study in the Development and Evaluation of Learning Materials for French as a Second Language* (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1980). For more recent statements, see H.H. Stern, "Directions in Foreign Language Curriculum Development," in American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, *Proceedings of the National Conference on Professional Priorities*, November 1980 (Hastings-on-Hudson: ACTFL Materials Center), pp. 12-17; R. Ullmann, "A Broadened Curriculum Framework for Second Languages: Some Considerations," *English Language Teaching Journal*, 36, pp. 255-262. See also note No. 17.
 11. This issue of language syllabus design is discussed, among others in articles by H.G. Widdowson and C.J. Brumfit as well as in the already mentioned article by L.G. Alexander in Alatis et al., *op. cit.*
 12. For a study of student exchanges from this educational perspective see Hanna, G. et al., *Contact and Communication: An Evaluation of Bilingual Student Exchange Programs*. (Toronto: OISE Press 1980). See also H.H. Stern, "Language Learning on the Spot: Some Thoughts on the Language Aspect of Student Exchange Programs", *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 36, No. 4(May 1980), pp. 659-669.
 13. This aspect of the language curriculum has also recently been emphasized by E. Hawkins, *Modern Languages in the Curriculum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
 14. See E. Roulet, *Langue maternelle et langues secondes: vers une pédagogie intégrée*. (Paris: Hatier, 1980).
 15. See, for example, R.M. Valette "Evaluation of Learning in a

Second Language" in B. Bloom, J.T. Hastings, and G. Madaus, eds., *Handbook on Formative and Summative Evaluation of Student Learning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971) pp. 817-853.

16. See note No. 10 above or an illustration of an ESL module combining elements of aspects of the language syllabus with a communicative activity, i.e., focus on a school subject area, in this case geography, see J.P.B. Allen and J. Howard, "Subject-Related ESL: An Experiment in Communicative Language

Teaching," *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 37, No. 3 (March 1981), pp. 535-550.

17. ACTFL in a recent national priority statement on foreign language curriculum and materials endorsed the multi-dimensional curriculum conception and also proposed "a linguistic syllabus", "a cultural syllabus", "a communicative syllabus", and "a general language education syllabus". (See p. 28 of the *Proceedings*, cited in note No. 10 above.)

*Adapted version of the keynote address entitled "Let's use our heads to reach their hearts," delivered on May 7, 1982, at the Twelfth Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The theme of the conference was: "Take a second language to heart in Manitoba, the heart of the continent!"
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Editor's Note: Since David Stern's death, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers has published the following volumes dealing with National Core French Study.

R. Leblanc, *A Synthesis*, 1990, 115 pages.

R. Leblanc, *Rapport synthèse*, 1990, 118 pages.

R. Tremblay, M. Duplantie, and D. Huot, *The Communicative/Experiential Syllabus*, 1990, 102 pages.

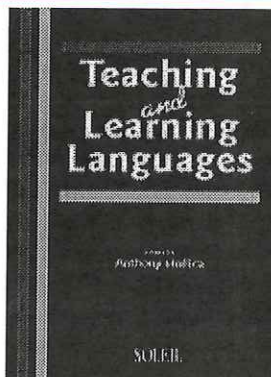
C. Le Blanc, C. Courtel, P. Trescases, *Syllabus Culture*, 1990, 119 pages.

G. Painchaud, *Syllabus Langue*, 1990, 106 pages.

Y. Hébert, *Syllabus formation langagière générale*, 1990, 101 pages.

B. Harley, A. D'Anglejean and S.M. Shapson, *The Evaluation Syllabus*, 1990, 156 pages.

These volumes are currently available. Each volume sells for \$10.00 each and all seven for a special price of \$50.00. Requests should be made to: Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers.



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Sandra J. Savignon

A Letter to My Spanish Teacher

In this letter to her teacher, the Author shares her experiences in the classroom and her reasons for studying Spanish.

To my dear Spanish teacher,

You have been such a warm and enthusiastic teacher for me that I want to thank you for letting me join your class and to let you know how much you have helped me. I am especially eager to thank you because, as a language teacher myself, I have often wondered at the end of a term just how successful I had been in helping my students toward the competence they were seeking. Did I give them enough grammar? Was I too easy-going about errors? Should I have been more conscientious in sticking to the departmental syllabus? The opportunity you gave me to get on "the other side of the desk" has helped me to remember what it is like to be a language learner. The result is a renewed sense of direction as I resume my role as a language teacher.

I came into your second semester college class, Spanish 102, because I wanted to learn Spanish. A group of teachers of English as a second language had invited me to Barcelona to talk about ways of teaching for communicative competence. Inasmuch as I had been to Barcelona for the same purpose two years earlier, I thought it would be nice if I could show my hosts that in the meantime I had made some progress in Spanish. I wanted, at least, to be able to order my own paella and to ask my own directions. I further reasoned that with a better understanding of the basic structure of the Spanish language I would find it easier, once in Spain, to interact with native speakers and profit even more from my two-week stay.

I cannot begin to describe my anxiety as I walked into your class that first day. For one thing, I was plunging into a second semester course without having had the benefit of the first semester program. I chose your class, however, because I had heard from your supervisor what a very good teacher you were and because I planned to study hard and catch up on the grammar I had missed. As I was already a fluent speaker of French and had spent a little time in Spain, I thought I could keep up. Another reason for my anxiety was that I was not only older than the other students - most of them undergraduates fulfilling the language requirement - I was a professor of French as well. You and the others might well expect me to excel in an elementary Spanish class.

I chose your class because I had heard what a very good teacher you were.

The class arrangement did not help to put me at ease. We sat around tables arranged in a semi-circle with our first names spelled out on big cards in front of us. The idea was a good one. This way we could all see each other and begin to get acquainted. But it was clear there was going to be no place to hide, no inconspicuous back row. I was going to have to speak Spanish!

What a relief it was when, as our first task, you had us introduce ourselves to our neighbor. I was sitting next to a friendly young woman who helped me to say my name, my age, and what I

was doing in life. She was patient and very encouraging, virtues I know we try to stress in teaching of all kinds but which suddenly took on a special significance for me. I had a friend on whom I could count in the weeks ahead.

I know the classroom became somewhat noisy at times with eight or so groups at work, but the noise never distracted me. It was at these times, rather, that I felt I was learning the most Spanish.

It was also nice the way you, the teacher, walked about the room as we were conversing, giving us help in Spanish whenever we asked. You did this often, dividing us into groups of two or three to work on specific assignments - writing answers to questions, writing a little story to describe a picture you had put on the overhead projector, finding out about how the others had spent the weekend. This was one of the best parts of the class. At these times we could count on each other and on you for help in completing the task. I know the classroom became somewhat noisy at times with eight or so groups at work, but the noise never distracted me. It was at these times, rather, that I felt I was learning the most Spanish. I could try things out I wanted to say, find out how to say them, and get the feeling that everyone was there to help me rather than to see how much Spanish I remembered.

When it came time to introduce my neighbor to the rest of the class on that first day, however, I was far from comfortable. I rehearsed what I was going to say over and over in my head, much as I do when speaking out in a public forum in English. When my turn came, I made my introduction more or less as I had practised it. When you corrected an error I had made, I repeated after

you as best I could, but I was really too flustered to understand what I was doing. The experience was simply too intense to allow me to focus on the form you were trying to teach me. On the other hand, I gained many insights from your corrections of the other students. Once out of the limelight, it was easier for me to rehearse forms and check them against the other's responses and your corrections.

Then came our first written test. We did not do well as a class, and you were disappointed. You became uncharacteristically angry.

What I liked best was when you spoke Spanish to us. You explained grammar, told us stories about a funny drawing, talked about class activities, shared your slides of beautiful places to visit in Spain. These were all marvelous opportunities for the listening experiences I craved, and you made the most of them. I became anxious again, though, when you pointed on the map to Andorra and asked me what it was called. I know you were being nice and giving me a chance to speak, but I did not know the answer. When I could just relax and listen while you talked, without fear of being called on, so much vocabulary and points of grammar seemed to start coming together. At these times I could feel myself learning Spanish. It was at once a powerful and exciting feeling.

Then came our first written test. It was a rather typical test as language tests go, requiring us to complete sentences, conjugate verbs and write answers to questions as they were read aloud. We did not do well as a class, and you were disappointed. You became uncharacteristically angry. I am not suggesting that your anger was unwarranted, but it definitely

changed the ambience of the class. Seven out of seventeen of us had scored lower than 70 per cent, and you lectured us on how important it is not to get behind, on how miserable we would be in the two semesters ahead of us if we did not get down to work. I was very uncomfortable wondering how the seven in question must have felt. An added irritation was the student who had turned in a perfect paper! It turned out she had studied Spanish for three years in secondary school before entering a beginning Spanish course at the university. As we talked among ourselves later, in the corridor, I learned that there were several other students who had done the same, deliberately scoring low on the placement examination so as to give themselves an advantage in subsequent coursework. They said it was the only way to get through; there was no way to get all the grammar otherwise. While this practice helps to explain why so many of our incoming students do poorly on language placement examinations, it must also create considerable resentment from those who are trying to absorb all the vocabulary items and grammar rules for the first time.

I was quite angry, however, about having lost so many points for wrong spellings and missing accents.

The Unit 15 test we took a week later went fairly well. I felt good about understanding the oral comprehension questions although the others thought that part was hard. The grammar part was hardest. I thought of all the things I had done wrong after I had handed in my paper and felt as though I had really put my ego on the line. As it turned out, I got a grade of C (73 per cent) on the test. Our scores were all rather low, and you told us how weak we

were, how much we needed to study. You were understandably frustrated because we continued to make so many errors. No doubt your syllabus said that we were to have "covered" a certain amount of material by then. The textbook, after all, included all of basic Spanish grammar in a one year course. I was quite angry, however, about having lost so many points for wrong spellings and missing accents. Where I thought I had done well because I was beginning to understand, I had missed points because of what looked to me like minor errors. I was angry with you, angry at Spanish ... and feeling rejected by those I wanted to join. For me, the tests we took did much to destroy the productive, supportive atmosphere you had created in class.

Class discussions were always fun, but I had to concentrate hard on forms. One day you went around the table asking us questions so we would learn to change sentences from interrogative to declarative. The questions were no doubt interesting as you tried to ask things that related to us individually. I did not have time to listen to the questions asked of others, however, because I was busy counting the number of people ahead of me and rehearsing the forms silently to myself so as not to be caught off guard. When my turn came you asked me, "¿Cómo se llama el presidente de Francia?" I could not for the life of me fill in the name, so intent was I on verb endings! Now I know what my own students mean when they say they prefer not to talk about anything "heavy." They are so busy concentrating on forms they do not want their intelligence to be brought into question as well.

The birthday surprise was marvelous! Enrique had a birthday, and you brought in a little cake with a candle. We sang a

song you had written on the board, and you told us about birthday celebrations in Mexico. It was a nice relief of tension after an hour of verb drills. We perhaps forget that even adults in a second-language classroom enjoy the frivolous. Songs, parties, and games which might seem unsophisticated to us in our native language are such a welcome way to relax in a second language. They also help to build the camaraderie we need in order to learn from each other.

Everyone told me I spoke with a French accent but that it sounded fine. This made me feel a part of the group.

I got bogged down in the subjunctive. We spent so much time learning the verb forms and examples of expressions requiring the subjunctive, yet there were so few things I could say in Spanish on my own that I knew I did not have use for all those forms. I was sympathetic with your view that it would help if we got these "down pat," but that would have required a sheer feat of memory. It was one, frankly, to which I just could not push myself.

My own learning strategy was to prepare lots of vocabulary cards with Spanish verb infinitives. I then added some expressions I had heard that reminded me of endings, use of subjunctive and various prepositions and other vocabulary I liked. My best sources of expressions were: 1) the things you said in class, 2) a magazine you had given me of current events in Barcelona, and 3) a book of poetry by García Lorca. The Lorca poems were so beautiful I had a friend record them so that I could listen and practice them at home. It might seem curious to you that someone interested in Spanish for travel would want to

spend time reading poetry. It certainly is not in step with the language for special purposes movement so popular now in our profession. The language was, however, beautifully simple and authentic. I could read the poems at home, silently or aloud, and feel I was in touch with something, with someone really Spanish. Many of my private vocabulary words came from these poems. I think if we had studied them as a class it might have spoiled it for me.

Everyone told me I spoke with a French accent but that it sounded fine. This made me feel a part of the group. I could speak Spanish with my own accent and be accepted. I was happy you did not insist on the finer points of pronunciation. The pronunciation of *v* as */b/* was still a major hurdle, and I was also busy attending to all kinds of lexical and syntactical matters.

You were my bridge to the Spanish-speaking world.

The nicest thing you did for me was to introduce me to a Venezuelan woman who had recently arrived in the United States. She was looking for American contacts, and I needed someone with whom to practice my Spanish. Inasmuch as I was the hostess, it was up to me to take the initiative and arrange a meeting - "a las cuatro y media, el diez y ocho de julio, aquí." I used lots of gestures, repeated myself frequently but the señora was most gracious. I found I was able to listen to her Spanish as she spoke because we were working together to solve a problem. I did not have to be concerned with how to correct any errors in my Spanish. From this first and subsequent encounters I realized I was on my way. I could have some fun in Barcelona and show others I was eager to talk

with them.

And talk I did. Once in Barcelona I even succeeded in phoning friends of yours to make a date to meet them. I spent hours in Spanish, listening mostly, but smiling and speaking up enough to let my companions know I enjoyed their company and was following the conversation. You could never have anticipated all my needs. How could you have known I would need to have a new heel put on my boot and would have to let the shoe-maker know I wanted a rubber, not synthetic, heel? As it was, I enjoyed going into the shop and waiting my turn. This gave me a marvelous opportunity to eavesdrop. From the signs posted on the walls I was able eventually to figure out what I wanted and communicate it with some degree of self-assuredness. Victory!

I never earned above a B in our class exams, and my average was probably closer to a C. Errors in spelling and grammar kept my marks down. But you were my bridge to the Spanish-speaking world. In your classroom I was able to make friends with other learners and feel that together we were working and learning. You were my model. I trusted you and was grateful for your encouragement. You see, my dear Spanish teacher, test scores do not really matter to me. An A in Spanish is not what I want. I want Spanish speakers from Puerto Rico, Spain, Cuba, and Mexico to know that I respect them and their language and that I am going to meet them half way. Thank you for your help.

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L'alphabet vivant

Madeleine Christiansen
Audrey Rainville

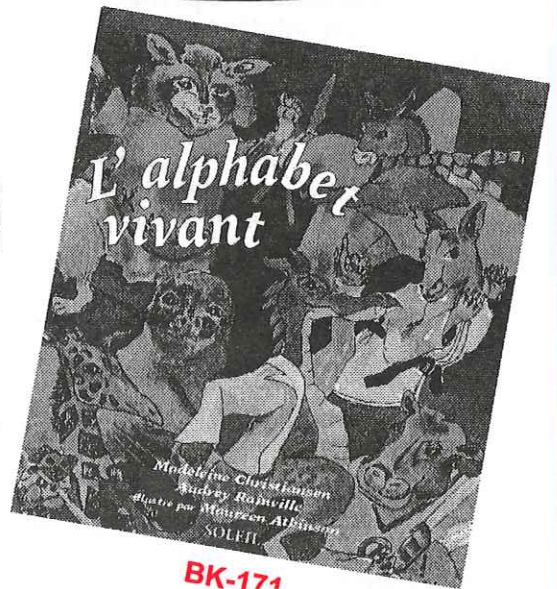
illustré par Maureen Atkinson

L'alphabet vivant présente les lettres de l'alphabet en chansons et en actions. Avec chaque lettre on associe un personnage à la chanson et à l'histoire.

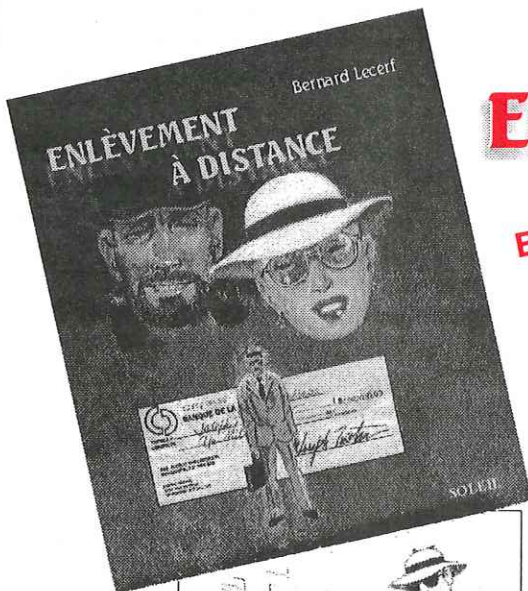


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Nouveautés!



BK-171



ENLÈVEMENT À DISTANCE Bernard Lecerf

BK-173

Joseph Tristan, un homme d'affaires très riche de Vancouver, travaille dans son bureau. Carole Miron, une jeune femme élégante et mystérieuse, veut absolument lui parler. Elle annonce que des membres de la famille de Tristan sont en très grand danger. Tony Paquette, un ancien membre de la Gendarmerie Royale du Canada, enquête...



1 Une femme inconnue

Joseph Tristan a la passion des affaires. Il est propriétaire de quelques hôtels à Vancouver, Toronto, Montréal et Los Angeles. Washington. Tristan a quarante-cinq ans. Il n'est pas très cheveu brun. Il travaille dans son bureau. Soudain, son téléphone sonne. Il décroche et entend la voix de sa secrétaire.

— Allô, Monsieur Tristan?
— Oui, Linda.
— Il y a une dame qui voudrait vous parler...
Miron... Elle veut vous proposer une affaire...
— Madame Miron? Je ne connais pas. Est-ce qu'elle a un rendez-vous?
— Non, Monsieur Tristan. Elle dit qu'elle doit absolument vous parler.
Tristan regarde son agenda:
— Linda, dites-lui de me téléphoner après deux heures cet après-midi. Je n'ai pas le temps maintenant.
— Mais elle insiste. Elle dit que c'est très important... Elle dit que c'est une affaire très urgente.

3

1 Une femme inconnue

Continue la série avec un mot du texte. Explique pourquoi le mot fait partie de la série.

Calgary, Moncton, _____
le volley-ball, le hockey, _____
un magasin, une boutique, _____
blond, roux, _____
trente-deux, cinquante-huit _____
une femme, une demoiselle, _____
avant, pendant, _____
ce matin, ce soir _____
grave, importante, _____

Trouve dans le texte des mots de la même famille que:

passionné, passionnée (un nom) _____
acheter (un nom) _____
une dame (un nom) _____
absolu (un adjectif) _____
une urgence (un adjectif) _____
une proposition (un verbe) _____

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