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A Note from the Past President

by
Mary Beth Barth
Hamilton College

This issue of the NASILP Journal recognizes the Silver Anniversary of the National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs (NASILP) and celebrates the invaluable contribution this organization has made over the past quarter century to the study of the Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) and providing a forum for learning these languages in schools all across the nation. It is a celebration of the enthusiasm and sense of mission of program directors; the support and dedication of examiners; the conscientious assistance of tutors; and the self-motivation and perseverance of countless students.

The momentous occasion of our twenty-fifty anniversary was celebrated at the 1998 NASILP Conference in Crystal City. The highlight of the conference and celebration was the address given by the dinner speaker, NASILP Distinguished Director, Professor Eleanor Jorden. In her inimitable way, she shared some of her fondest and most memorable recollections as NASILP's most veteran examiner. In her recounting, whether impressive testimonials to the dedication and hard work of the students, comical travel misadventures, or poignant encounters, there was one underlying sentiment which permeated all the memories: the deep respect she holds for the students and the testing process. What we are all working toward in the end -- directors, tutors, students -- is the moment when the student sits down with an examiner and demonstrates his/her newly acquired language

competence. It is an important ritual and one to which we all, including the student, attach great significance.

The challenge of promoting a method by which to offer these LCTLs was met by NASILP and the results have not only stood the test of time, but proved to be forward thinking. NASILP was ahead of its time in emphasizing the importance of the verbal component of language, in its original prochievement testing, in the use of technology as instrumental—not peripheral—to the learning process, and in highlighting the responsibilities of the learner in the learning process.

We often become overly absorbed in the day-to-day responsibilities of our work. For program directors there are the endless details that require attention in order to ensure the program runs smoothly, for examiners the responsibilities of preparing and administering appropriate exams, for tutors the preparation for—and conducting of—stimulating language practice, and for students the rigorous activities involved in learning a new language. Often in the hustle and bustle, some of the subtler accomplishments are not recognized. The program director establishes a demand for the highest standards of accomplishment, communicates effectively with the examiner, gives direction and guidance to the tutors, and instills in students a sense of confidence in their own abilities and a sense of responsibility for the outcome. The examiner's expertise and support of the program are invaluable, as is the sense of commitment and seriousness of the tutors. Most remarkable of all these subtle, but essential, underlying characteristics is the attitude developed by the student. The self-instructional format gives students the opportunity to challenge themselves in a unique way. It propels them to a new level of involvement in their learning and, therefore, a heightened sense of responsibility and accomplishment. Working without the reassuring presence of the traditional instructor, taking an exam with someone they've likely never met before, being completely responsible to themselves for their progress and to others in the class for cooperative

interaction are often new experiences that involve heightened levels of maturity to which students overwhelmingly rise admirably. In the self-instructional format, in addition to actually learning and using the language they are studying, they learn much about their capabilities as learners. As director of a Critical Languages Program, I have learned never to underestimate the capabilities of the student!

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the opportunity to serve as President of NASILP these past two years. I had the good fortune to serve during NASILP's 25th anniversary and also, with the transition of the Secretariat occurring in 1997, the unique privilege and pleasure to serve with two Executive Directors. During my first year in office, I worked with Professor John Means of Temple University who retired as Executive Director of NASILP after twenty years of outstanding service, and during the second year, with his successor, our current Executive Director, Professor Alexander Dunkel of the University of Arizona. John's knowledge, devotion, and personal involvment during his long tenure gave NASILP its strong foundation on which it continues to grow under Alex's expert leadership.

My thanks to the members of the Board for their wisdom, support, and enthusiasm and to Lou Wagner, our Treasurer, and Dan Gross, our Secretary, who have contributed so significantly to the organization. And special thanks to our member institutions, which offer students the LCTLs, and to our students who find great rewards both in their quest to learn a new language and in the realization of their capacity for success.

Current LCTL Developments*

by
Alexander Dunkel, Executive Director NASILP
University of Arizona

A Collaborative Project

An intense and searching collaboration between NASILP[1] and NFLC[2] will be concluded during the Spring, 2000 semester. This collaboration is the result of a two-year NSEP[3] grant, "Infrastructure Enhancement For Critical Languages—A National Strategy," awarded to the NFLC for 1998-1999, with a continuation to the year 2000. The award came at a fortuitous time for the growth and development of both the NFLC's and NASILP's capabilities and for LCTLs in general.

The NSEP/NFLC grant involved both NASILP and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), originally, in an effort to create an exponential increase for LCTL learner access to Examiners through website and listserv. Twenty examiners for twenty two languages have

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* This article originally appeared in the ADFL Journal and is reprinted with permission of the ADFL.

1 NFLC: The National Foreign Language Center; headquartered in Washington, D.C.

2 NASILP: The National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs, headquartered at the Critical Languages Program, College of Humanities at The University of Arizona, Tucson

3 NSEP: The National Security Education Program of the National Defense University, headquartered in Rosslyn, Virginia. The following statement is a requirement of an NSEP grant: "This effort was sponsored by the National Defense University, National Security Education Program (NSEP). The content of the information does not necessarily reflect the position or the policy of the Government, and no official endorsement should be inferred."

been planned; Hindi-Urdu and Serbo-Croatian are conflated to two websites since Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be addressed to the Consulting Examiner of each site using the Latin alphabet. Of the twenty-two[4] languages, six were selected for more intensive treatment with links to graded material on the web in order to assist with sustainment: Arabic, Chinese/Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Polish, and Portuguese. At present, in order to utilize a website Consulting Examiner's time more efficiently, access has focused on availability to other Examiners, or Tutors with the permission of an Examiner and Program Coordinator/Director in the target language. The permission of a Coordinator/Director is necessary in order to maintain NASILP's long tradition of collegiality.

Another task of the NFLC grant was for the development of a NASILP consultative website for member institutions and potential members. Coincidentally, NASILP had already begun the implementation of a website both open, for institutions interested in membership, and a password one, for the present membership [http://www.nasilp.org]. The website, in operation since 1998, has essentially reduced—although not replaced—many initial telephone consultations with potential NASILP institutional members. The password sites (for Directors and/or Coordinators, Examiners, and Tutors) have become invaluable consultative tools for institutional members since they contain a plethora of NASILP documents, pedagogical and organizational. One example: all the forms and documents necessary for the initial implementation of a NASILP program at a given institution. NASILP had also planned a Board of Directors and an Institutional Members listserv; these have been operational since the Spring of 1998. In addition, it is now possible to register for the annual NASILP Conference in the Washington,

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4 Arabic, Armenian, Cantonese, Chinese (Mandarin), Czech, Hindi, Hungarian, Japanese, Kazakh, Korean, Persian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese

D.C. area, and for member institutions to submit their annual Language and Materials Inventory on line.

A brief synopsis of NASILP, its development, participation in the NSEP-NFLC grant, and its benefits to the community of Less--and *Least*--Commonly Taught Languages is instructive.

North America's First LCTL Professional Organization

NASILP is the result of a confluence of events, needs, and technical developments that arose in the mid and late 1960s. World events were creating a demand for the dissemination of an increasing number of languages (LCTLs) that were not usually offered by the then college and university (traditional) "foreign" languages departments; Russian was exotic enough, not to mention Japanese and Chinese—they were then barely blips on the statistical scale. Yet the need for the greater curricular availability of these languages—mostly African and Asian—was growing. The tape cassette and the small, light portable recorder that played it—as opposed to the heavy and cumbersome reel-to-reel recorder that was ubiquitous until that time—was the technical development that helped catalyze the concept behind NASILP. The cassette recorder greatly expanded the venues for tape-oriented language learning beyond the confines of the Language Laboratory. Thus, the need and the technical means were complemented by the next ingredient—the instructional materials--the texts, and especially the tapes that accompanied the text, would be crucial to NASILP's emphasis on contextual audio-lingual pedagogy. This crucial pedagogical ingredient was partially provided by Foreign Service Institute (FSI) texts and tapes that are, to this day, distributed on a commercial basis. The instructional and institutional catalyst that eventually brought all these ingredients together was NASILP, incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1976. However, NASILP itself, was an outgrowth of a idea by Peter Boyd Bowman of SUNY Buffalo who conceived of the Tutor-

Examiner-Coordinator/Director functional relationship. The final ingredient that gave academic validity to a NASILP Critical Languages Program (CLP) was the Final Exam for *prochievement*..

Prochievement

From its very beginnings, NASILP's approach was a practical and realizable one, an approach that relied on a native-speaker-Tutor at the CLP's institution, an Examiner with full-time teaching credentials in the target language from another institution, a Coordinator or Director to supervise the program—and a national organization, NASILP, that systematized and monitored the standards of such "Critical Languages Programs." Prochievement, was the assessment tool that was developed and promulgated by several NASILP Examiners at a 1976 conference at the ETS campus in Princeton. It was a means of evaluating a learner's achievement in terms of their successful audio-lingual contextual manipulation of the target language, based exclusively on material covered by the tapes utilized in their tutorials. In short: could the learner *speak* the language effectively at a given level determined by the Examiner? Eleanor Jorden, NASILP Distinguished Director, one of the developers of prochievement testing, describes it as, "an achievement test in a proficiency modality."

For academic verification, only Examiners were to conduct the Mid-Term (a diagnostic) and the Final Exams. Since the emphasis is on oral communication for the first two years, it is only the Final Exam grade that matters and it is that grade that is entered on the learner's record. (A more detailed description is available on the NASILP website.)

Not a "Horseless Carriage"

With the development of CD-ROMs, the proliferation of personal computers--and laptops--NASILP arrived at a new

exponential level of development for LCTL instructional courseware: courseware with instant access to any part of a CD incorporating text, audio and video that allows for *interactivity* on a more intensive and accurate basis than with the bothersome rewinding of either audio or videotape.[5] This interactivity between several different communicative modes (text, audio, video) in combination with several different exercises creates a new instrument. On one CD-ROM one can see the text, hear the text—and see it spoken by native speakers, while interacting with the material in a sequence most convenient for the learner. It is no longer "a combination of ingredients," it is a *new* ingredient altogether—it is not "a horseless carriage," it is "an automobile!"

The late Benjamin Bloom, eminent taxonomist of the University of Chicago's College of Education, felt that the way to teach physics, for example, was to find, a minimum number, say, twenty experiments, that would give learners a fundamental understanding of its basic laws. The physical manipulation of the problem—conducting the experiment—would lead to an experiential understanding allowing learners to build on personally acquired and *actively manipulatable* knowledge. Bloom's approach is one of the inspirations for the new synergistic CD-ROM lessons that are not a textbook, workbook, audiotapes and videotapes in separate units but combined into one interwoven unit that is greater than the sum of its parts.

The NSEP/CLP proposal (the "Critical Languages Series") was the result of a growing collaboration between The University of Arizona's Critical Languages Program (UA/CLP) and Computer-Aided Language Instruction (UA/CALI) Group that produced prototypes of Beginning Korean and Turkish

[5] Mari Noda, of Ohio State University, was instrumental in developing a state-of-the-art CD-ROM for the study of the Japanese language that was produced prior to the NSEP project discussed above. The development of the Japanese language CD-ROM, using professional actors in their native settings, was supported by the Annenberg Foundation.

lessons for a server, later on CD-ROMs, which became the basis for a successful project proposal to NSEP. Entitled "Courseware Development for Less Commonly Taught Languages," the project is based on NASILP's quarter-century of LCTL experience, a decade's research and development work by UA/CALI, and the UA/CLP's decade-long pedagogical experience with over twenty LCTLs.

Originally CALI's work was sponsored by a series of US government grants to create an interactive audio- and text-based series of exercises that enabled each user of the program (located on a server) to complement textbook materials. The Department of East Asian Studies used this program in conjunction with an existing textbook of Chinese-Mandarin for a period of five years. The program was dubbed "MAXAUTHOR™ by Richard Demers of the UA Linguistics Department, and one of CALI's principals. Demers was instrumental in developing templates, in collaboration with the UA/CALI Group, that would create Cloze, pronunciation, multiple-choice, audio flashcard and listening dictation exercises. The pedagogical plan was to progress from hearing a spoken dialogue or narrative to the successful mastery of a given lesson through a series of interactive audio/textual exercises that can be repeated as often as necessary (the TIRELESSTUTOR™) by the learner until mastery is achieved.

The Road Ahead

SL pedagogy and its dissemination is not so much an "ave atque vale," but rather that "there is no last number," as one of Evgeny Zamiatin's characters in his novel, *We*, stated. And so the website and the CD-ROM projects are not "horseless carriages", nor are they "last numbers," but vehicles on the continuum of an integrated interactive SL acquisition journey. Improvement will come with ever-advanced technology and research sensitive to the many different paths of SL learning. In future days, these advances in SL research

will create ever better vehicles that will take it to greater vistas on the road ahead.

Further Reading

http://www.nasilp.org

http://www.nflc.org

Acknowledgments

NASILP:

My deepest gratitude to: Eleanor Jorden, NASILP Distinguished Director, for her wisdom; to John B. Means, NASILP Director Emeritus (1977-1997), who inspired the NSEP/NFLC grant and Co-Director of the NSEP/CLP grant; to my colleagues on the NASILP Board of Directors whose sage counsel helped focus the NFLC grant; and to the Directors, Coordinators, Examiners and Tutors of nearly 120 educational institutions in the U.S. and Canada that make NASILP a viable everyday reality.

UA/CLP and UA/CALI:

My personal thanks to the Critical Languages Series (CLS) Group, a collegial melding of UA/CLP and UA/CALI: Shirley McDowell, CLP Coordinator; Phetsamone Darakham, Assistant to the NASILP Executive Director; Richard Demers, Project Co-Director; Scott Brill, Research Engineer; Anna Oldfield-Senarslan, Editor; Bryan Kohl and Onur Senarslan, Multimedia Producers; and, J Dennis Evans, Associate Dean for External Affairs.

NFLC:

I wish to thank Catherine Ingold, Associate Director of the NFLC, for her collegiality and cooperation in making an extraordinarily visionary proposal a realizable one, and Richard Brecht, NFLC Director, and initiator of the NSEP-NFLC grant.

UA Languages:

I am indeed fortunate to have my CLP appointment at The University of Arizona College of Humanities under Charles M. Tatum, Dean, who has enthusiastically supported the NSEP/CLP project from its inception. My thanks, too, to George Gutsche, Head of my home department, Russian/Slavic Languages, for his continued support.

NASILP: Twenty-five Years of a Unique Organization

by
Jean-Jacques d'Aquin
University of South Alabama

The National Association of Self-Instructional Languages Programs (NASILP), as we know it today, represents the evolution of an idea first presented by Peter Boyd-Bowman some thirty years ago. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, many undergraduate institutions became keenly aware of the need to broaden their foreign language curriculum to include some of the major languages from around the world, especially from the continents of Africa and Asia. There was, however, an acute shortage of qualified instructors in such languages. Also, the uncertain student interest in any particular language, at any particular time, made the cost of formal programs at any particular institution impossible to justify.

Dr. Boyd-Bowman prepared an instructional manual for college administrators who wished to establish self-instructional programs in languages not offered in the regular class schedules of their institutions. Developed under contract with the US Office of Education between 1963 and 1965, his program offered a way to present basic instruction "in non-Western languages potentially so inexpensive and so simple to initiate that it could be duplicated on any campus in the U.S." (Self-Instruction 1). Such a program would emphasize guided independent study with commercially available texts and tape recordings, and pronunciation drills supervised by native speakers of the target languages. Overall emphasis would be placed on listening comprehension and speaking, with secondary importance given to writing. Students would be tested at the end of each term by "Visiting Examiners,"

specialists in each language who are engaged in teaching their own classes in that subject at another institution. The idea was that "...a student should be encouraged to start critical language study, even if it were available on only a one- or two-year basis, as long as he could continue his language work in summer intensive programs or in graduate school" (Undergraduate Instruction 19).

Dr. Boyd-Bowman based the manual on his experience with the Neglected Languages Program (NLP), a five-quarter study he directed at Kalamazoo College during 1963-65, itself based on:

> Earlier successful experimentation with self-instruction in Spanish, in which qualified undergraduates mastered the NLP's Modern Spanish entirely under lab conditions, i.e. without formal instruction of any kind, encouraged this writer to undertake similar experimentation with non-Western languages traditionally considered difficult, including a tone language such as Mandarin (Experimentation 2).

Starting with Chinese, Hindi-Urdu, and Japanese in the Winter quarter of 1963-64, by the Fall Quarter of 1964-65 he had added Persian, Portuguese, and Swahili. The Spring Quarter of 1965 concluded the five quarter participation of students in the NLP. The results were very encouraging: the NLP had shown that it was:

> ...possible for institutions with limited resources to supply graduate and area centers with undergraduates qualified to pursue summer work in a neglected language at the intermediate level or higher. A modest one or two year program of self-instruction at the grass-roots level can for the first time bring the study of a seldom-taught language within the reach of thousands of highly motivated, linguistically talented students who do not happen to be attending an institution where the

> language they want to study is taught (Experimentation 23).

His conclusion: "While the full potential of this inexpensive self-instructional method is being explored further, the results to date suggest that it may soon add an entirely new dimension to the study of neglected languages in the United States" (Experimentation 25), was somewhat prophetic.

Seven years later, having moved to SUNY, Buffalo in 1965, and started the Center for Critical Languages in 1970, Boyd-Bowman wrote that: "...our basically simple program has since 1963 experienced such spectacular growth that this past semester alone 43 U.S. colleges and universities, plus 3 enterprising secondary schools, screened and enrolled for full credit in at least 30 different languages..." (National Self-Instructional 163). Dr. Eleanor Jorden was one of the first examiners to work with Dr. Boyd-Bowman at SUNY, Buffalo, where her text Beginning Japanese was the adopted text for that language.

In December of 1972, The National Association of Self-Instructional Programs was formed at the National Conference of Self-Instruction in Critical Languages held in Buffalo, NY, with Peter Boyd-Bowman as Executive Secretary. The first publication sponsored by the new association, in cooperation with the Council for Intercultural Studies and Programs and the Center for International Programs and Comparative Studies of New York State Education Department, was a 1973 handbook for faculty and students written by Dr. Boyd-Bowman based on his original manual of 1965 with updated appendices. Of the original ten-member executive board, only Eleanor Jorden at Cornell University (Emerita) remains active in the Association to this day, and was voted to the position of Distinguished Director in 1990. The first President elected, Edna A. Coffin, gave a well-received presentation on multimedia at last year's meeting. James Gair, also from Cornell, retains an interest in NASILP and occasionally serves as an examiner of Tamil and Sinhalese.

The others are deceased or have been retired from some time. Dr. Boyd-Bowman retired from SUNY several years ago, but is occasionally seen on campus.

Although not a pioneer in the sense that Dr. Boyd-Bowman and Dr. Jorden were, the late A. Ronald Walton started working with NASILP in the early '80s when the Association and Cornell University received a grant from the US Department of Education to produce a set of materials that was to render the Jorden text "Beginning Japanese" easier to use in a NASILP format. To quote Dr. John Means:

> As Deputy Director of the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) and co-director of the National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL), Ron Walton identified and defined NASILP's strategic position in the developing sub-field of the LCTLs. Although Ron had served as a NASILP examiner for Chinese, and had developed instructional materials for Chinese and (with Eleanor Jorden) for Japanese, his enduring NASILP legacy is the seminal role he played in Developing LCT language-learning frameworks, and in identifying our Association's central position in the technology-enhanced learning models currently being developed through NCOLCTL and the NFLC.

NASILP today has more than a hundred member programs from coast-to-coast and border-to-border, and a few in other countries, which offer some forty languages from Arabic to Vietnamese, including even Hmong, Irish Gaelic, and Tagalog. It is a testimony to the original Boyd-Bowman vision that the basic conceptual model is still in the use across more than thirty years and one hundred programs. It will be evolving to meet new needs in the areas of technology (multimedia development – especially digital CD, on-line services –w3 and e-mail), student guidance (training of instructor/tutors-

Exchange: Japan), and research on examiner sensitization to the NASILP testing emphasis.

In remembrance of the original promoter and the pioneers, and to all of us:

HAPPY SILVER ANNIVERSARY!

Appendix

The officers and members of the Executive Board of NASILP during that 1973 organizational year were:

Edna A. Coffin, University of Michigan (President)
Phillip Spoerry, Utah State University (Vice President)
Sonja Karsen, Skidmore College (Treasurer)
Peter Boyd-Bowman, SUNY at Buffalo (Executive Secretary)
D.D.S. Dwarikesh, Western Michigan University
James Gair, Cornell University
Eleanor H. Jorden, Cornell University
Timothy Manley, Kent State University
Martha O'Nan, SUNY at Brockport
William Pang, Chico State college, Chico, CA

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A Review Article of Mari Noda's *Japanese:The Spoken Language Interactive CD-ROM Program and User's Guide* and *Faculty Guide to Japanese: The Spoken Language Multimedia Collection*

by
Virginia Marcus
Washington University

Japanese:The Spoken Language Interactive CD-ROM Program and *User's Guide*. By Mari Noda. Yale University Press, 1998. *CD-ROM Program:* two-disk set; *User's Guide:* x, 86 pp. $60.00; *Faculty Guide to Japanese: The Spoken Language Multimedia Collection.* By Mari Noda. Yale University Press, 1998. vii, 104 pp. $15.00

With the long-awaited publication of the *Interactive CD-ROM Program* based on *Japanese: The Spoken Language (JSL), Part 1* by Eleanor Harz Jorden with Mari Noda (Yale University Press, 1987), language learning as we know it has both literally and figuratively entered a new dimension. Never before has there been a tool for learning a second language that meshes the visual and auditory dimensions of oral communication so well. Although numerous Japanese language software programs have appeared on the market over the past decade, none were designed as an integral component of a Japanese language curriculum. All that has now changed. There *is* something new under the sun and that something is a dynamic, powerful, computer-assisted tool that provides extensive opportunities for learners to practice Japanese in

culturally appropriate contexts defined by vivid, realistic illustrations, animations and digitized video segments.

Japanese: The Spoken Language Interactive CD-ROM Program consists of a set of two disks, formatted separately for either Macintosh or PC, and comes bundled with an 86-page *User's Guide.* In addition, A *Faculty Guide to Japanese: The Spoken Language Multimedia Collection* complements the program. These in turn constitute an integral part of the nine multimedia components of the *JSL* curriculum: *Interactive CD-ROM Program, User's Guide* and *Faculty Guide,* the *JSL* textbook, audiocassettes, videocassettes, *Question and Answer Supplement, Teacher's Supplement*, and culture videos from the *Pacific Century* (1992) and *Face of Japan II* (1990) series. Also available are field test editions of *Japanese: The Written Language, Parts 1 and 2 (*Cheng and Tsui Co.) by Jorden and Noda. Revised editions of these are reported to be well underway. It is important to note that each of these integrated components has a separate and distinct function within a Japanese language learning environment, enabling teachers and learners to select the components that best suit their needs and curricula. Here I will comment only on the three new components of this package—the *Interactive CD-ROM* and the two *Guides*—and I will review each of the various parts of the CD-ROM.

The *JSL: Interactive CD-ROM Program* is based on Part 1 of the *JSL* textbook and contains the filmed versions of its 125 "Core Conversations" as well as 3500 illustrations and animations and 9000 sound files. Approaching the sophistication of a motion-picture production, it required eight years of development and represents the collaborative efforts of many individuals and teams of experts. The director and producer of the entire production, Mari Noda, has infused the program with such knowledge, expertise, thoroughness, and high standards that if there were awards for materials development, she would make a clean sweep of all categories. This particular program can be said to represent the most

important technological innovation for second language learning since the tape recorder.

The *Interactive CD-ROM* is grounded in the same philosophy and pedagogy that inform the textbook—namely, that language is a system, an understanding of which underlies the ability to use the language correctly; that context determines meaning; and that learning how to interact in Japanese involves step-by-step, bottom-up mastery of skills. These principles drive every facet of the technology, distinguishing this software from many of its predecessors. The set of two disks contains all twelve lessons of *Japanese: The Spoken Language, Part 1.* The content is the same as that of the textbook, and it is presented on the CD-ROM in a similar order: Core Conversations, Structural Patterns, Drills for Sections A and B of each lesson, followed by the diagnostic and developmental Eavesdropping, Utilizations, and Structure Check components of Section C. Only the Application Exercises section of the textbook has not been included on the CD-ROM, and rightly so, since these exercises were designed to be performed in the classroom where learners must adjust their language according to the context that the instructor creates. Because the computer is not capable of duplicating the unpredictable, contingent quality of human interaction and communication, the *Interactive CD-ROM Program* is not meant to replace the instructor in the classroom. It is first and foremost an *aid* to second language learning.

For those unfamiliar with the format and objectives of *Japanese: The Spoken Language,* the accompanying *User's Guide* will be particularly valuable. The *User's Guide* not only provides instruction in the use of the lesson components on the CD-ROM, it also explains the purpose of each. In Section Six of the *Guide* (p. 42), for example, Noda describes the "Objectives" of the Core Conversations (CCs):

> The goal of learning CCs is to be able to perform them in appropriate contexts without spending time figuring out what linguistic forms should be used—that is, to participate in Japanese interactions in a culturally realistic manner. This goal requires that you study the model carefully in terms of sounds, structure, overall flow of conversation, and body language and that you memorize the CC by repeating the model many times and rehearsing it in context. By learning the CCs, you will acquire new vocabulary and structural patterns in culturally authentic contexts and learn appropriate pronunciation and intonation.

Sections Seven through Eleven explain the objectives and the procedures for the remaining components so that the learner is made aware of both the "how" and "why" of language learning. For an in-depth analysis of each part of a *JSL* lesson, the reader should refer to Charles Quinn's review article of the textbook in this journal, Volume 25, Number 2 (November 1991), pp. 224-67.

Other sections of the *User's Guide* include pertinent information on installation, getting started, and troubleshooting, and sections devoted to the Introduction and Who's Who portions of the CD-ROM. Even for technologically-challenged learners and instructors, the objectives and procedures are easy to follow and are interspersed with frequently-asked questions and answers.

In addition to the textbook-based components, the CD-ROM contains an opening sequence that requires users to register their practice session and select a persona to represent themselves throughout the session. This persona (i.e., the user) will interact with the native model speakers during the session. The opening sequence is followed by an "Introduction" that is divided into three sections. The first consists of important information on language learning presented in question-and-answer format with Eleanor Harz Jorden responding to questions posed by students of Japanese (e.g., "I've heard that Japanese is a terribly difficult language. Is that true?"). Jorden sets the tone for the first day of class, so to speak, while touching upon some of the basic tenets of the *JSL* curriculum--the primacy of the spoken language, the systematicity necessary for developing accuracy and fluency, the distinction between the spoken and the written language. The next section, "How

to Use the Program," includes a diagram and step-by-step explanations of how to navigate through each part of the program. Micro- and macro-navigation arrows, a navigation tree, and help, main menu, and quit buttons make it nearly impossible to get lost in the program. Moreover, at the bottom of every screen in the program there is a brief explanation of procedures for the relevant step in the practice session. Lastly, we come to the very useful "Introduction to Japanese," which contains information and practice on the Japanese sound system; practice in mora recognition, accent, and intonation; and video segments demonstrating appropriate contexts for and practice of "Greetings and Useful Phrases." It is with this section on pronunciation that the beginner begins the study of Japanese. Here the student is trained to perceive and produce the sounds, accent, intonation and rhythm of Japanese so that the resultant grounding in the phonological system will reinforce proper speech habits from the learner's very first exposure to the language. Worthy of mention here is the ten "Mora Check" exercises, which call on students to select from four options the number of mora they hear when listening to the Japanese model utterance. For example, in the exercise on short and long vowels, students must differentiate *kiree* from *kire*, *tori* from *toori, oki* from *ookii.* Only *after* making a selection corresponding to the number of mora they *hear* can the student check the correct answer while viewing the romanized transcription and English equivalent of each item. Thus, beginning students are introduced to the Japanese sound system primarily through aural recognition and sound discrimination exercises. The romanized transcription, accessed only *after* the selection is made, is used to provide a visual confirmation of what is heard, as is the case with the romanization in the *JSL* textbook.

It bears noting that Noda has in mind not only the beginning learner. The *Multimedia Collection* was designed for the serious student wanting to learn how to interact comfortably and effectively with Japanese people. The keyword here is "serious," since the *JSL* training regimen is not

meant for the dilettante. The *JSL* learner travels the long and challenging road to proficiency, but thanks to these new materials this road is clearly marked and easily navigable. The learner may have just embarked on her journey. She may be traveling alone or with other students, or be well on her way but in need of retracing steps before moving on. In other words, how the materials are used will depend on the individual learner's circumstance. What makes this wide applicability possible is that each component of the collection has been created *for* the learner. The *Interactive CD-ROM Program* is no exception. Every level reflects the careful consideration given to learners' needs, and every step of the production benefited from Noda's years of teaching experience and pedagogical expertise. Undoubtedly the intent of the *Interactive CD-ROM Program* was to create learners capable of managing their own language-learning careers.

Consider, for example, the Model-Record-Replay function that forms the basis of all spoken practice with the CD-ROM. Learners click on the Model button and listen to the model utterance; next, they record their own utterance based on the model. They then click "replay" to hear their own recording. To check the accuracy of their utterance in terms of accent, intonation, and pronunciation, they can alternately click on the Model and Replay buttons and compare their rendition with the model. The discerning student will then self-correct any errors and record again—perhaps three or four times—until the recorded utterance matches the model's as closely as possible. In this way, learners can train themselves to hear and produce accurate Japanese. For intermediate-level speakers who need to improve their pronunciation, this kind of practice can yield great benefits. Of course, some learners will quickly record themselves only once and be satisfied with a poor performance. As with any tool, though, there will be good users and bad users. And as with any learning endeavor, there will be those who practice diligently and those who do not. If the *Interactive CD-ROM Program* does not yield desirable

results in the form of improved oral performance, the fault lies not with the software design but with the user.

To illustrate further how learner-oriented the program is, I would like to comment on the various parts of each lesson on the CD-ROM.

Core Conversations

Before actually practicing a Core Conversation, learners can view and listen to the conversation—all or in part--as many times as they want. With the appropriate click, they can learn important background information about the setting, the language (the "Notes"), the English equivalent of the Japanese, and the romanized transcription of the dialogue. With all this information in mind, students can then practice any portion of the dialogue with a native speaker while watching the digitized video segment which may be played repeatedly and easily by using the video controller at the bottom of the screen. Working on a Core Conversation involves a chunk-by-chunk progression from vocabulary repetition practice to "build-up" (practicing meaningful segments of a longer utterance) to "role-play" in which the user assumes the part of one of the interlocutors, all in a multi-dimensional (aural, oral and visual) format. In order to discourage students from reading the romanized transcription of the dialogue and its English equivalent while practicing the dialogue, and to encourage them to watch the video as they hear the Japanese, the romanized transcription and English translation immediately disappear when the model's voice is heard. This kind of feature reflects Noda's sensitivity to the learner who may inadvertently rely on reading the romanization and the English translation to learn how to interact in Japanese. The program thwarts such misguided strategies *for the learner's sake.*

Structural Patterns

The Structural Patterns section of the CD-ROM helps learners to understand Jorden's pedagogical grammar and can be used by both learners outside of the classroom and the instructor in the classroom. The CD-ROM presents the key points of each Structural Pattern from the textbook in question-and-answer format with examples. The textbook's phonological explanations, however, are excluded. After reading the explanations in the textbook and in the *Question and Answer Supplement,* students can check their understanding of the material by formulating their own answers to the questions on the CD-ROM and then clicking the answer button to check themselves. Thus, the CD-ROM can be used to review and reinforce structural knowledge. Of course, the less conscientious student might forego thinking of a reply to the question and immediately click on the answer button to view the correct response. To discourage this practice, the instructor with access to an appropriately-equipped classroom can use this section *in* the classroom to assess students' understanding of the specific grammatical item or cultural feature of the language by showing only the question and asking individual students to answer. The instructor can then click on the correct answer and discuss any discrepancies with student responses.

Most of the items in this section are accompanied by examples with illustrations or animations that are particularly effective for elucidating difficult concepts. Take, for example, the illustrations that follow the English explanation of the difference in meaning among *Kono biru ni arimasu./Kono biru ni wa arimasu./Kono biru ni mo arimasu.* (Lesson 6A, Structural Pattern 6 [Multiple Particles], Question #3). To illustrate *kono biru ni arimasu,* a picture of a telephone moves into one building; for *kono biru ni wa arimasu*, the telephone moves into one of two buildings; and for *kono biru ni mo arimasu*, the phone moves into both buildings. The saying "a

picture is worth a thousand words" certainly applies here. With 3500 illustrations and animations in the program, the overall picture of the linguistic system is a very vivid one indeed.

Drills

Like the Core Conversations, the drills in *JSL* are in effect mini-dialogues. With the *Interactive CD-ROM Program* they can be practiced using the Model-Record-Replay function *in the context* provided by the illustrations and animations. Every drill is accompanied by a simple, visually appealing illustration. Learners can hear, practice, and self-correct their Japanese while responding to both visual and aural stimuli. No other learning tool so effectively simulates natural oral communication. When practicing drills with the audiocassette, learners are required to *imagine* themselves in a context, a very demanding task considering that at the same time they must also concentrate on the new structural patterns and vocabulary as well as the rhetorical aspects of the words and grammar. The CD-ROM provides the visual context, thus freeing the student to focus on the other demands of drillwork.

The only drawback when practicing drills with the CD-ROM is that students are not given the opportunity to practice the stimulus utterance; they are only capable of responding. As her rationale for excluding this feature on the CD-ROM, Noda states in the *User's Guide* (p. 61) that students are given many opportunities to form questions even in the responses, since the drills in *JSL* are not limited to a question-and-answer format. Indeed this is true, but had it been possible to build in a function for playing the roles of both interlocutors in a drill, the students would be able to reap even more rewards from practicing with the CD-ROM.

Eavesdropping

The Eavesdropping section is a listening-comprehension exercise featuring the same dialogues and English questions contained in the audiocassettes and the textbook. It is of course much easier to replay the dialogues on the CD-ROM than with the audiocassettes. In the CD-ROM version of Eavesdropping, students are instructed to enter an answer in English to the comprehension questions and then view the correct answer. What was once a written homework assignment that needed to be checked by a teacher can now be accomplished by the learner outside the classroom. This effectively puts the responsibility for learning and mastery of skills in the hands of the learner, thus freeing the teacher to work on creating materials for class. The instructor can motivate students to do the Eavesdropping section out-of-class by using the dialogues and questions as quiz items.

Utilizations

In addition to the Core Conversations and Drills, students can also use the CD-ROM to prepare Utilizations, which are exercises that describe a situation in English and give learners more opportunity to apply their newly-learned skills to other contexts. Since there can be more than one correct response for these, learners do need to check the appropriateness and accuracy of their version with a teacher. The CD-ROM provides a model answer as well as a "model-in-context" (a short conversational exchange), together with illustrations and animations that effectively create the context. Those who have criticized the textbook for its lack of illustrations will be particularly pleased by the quality and appropriateness of the animations and illustrations in the Structural Patterns, Drills and Utilizations on the CD-ROM.

Students are instructed in the *User's Guide* first to record their own potential answers and then listen to the model

to check their response, but those who have not sufficiently prepared the CCs and drills might choose to forego producing their own answer and opt instead for the model answer or the model-in-context. Although such students will be short-changing only themselves, they will at least have a model upon which to base a performance.

Structure Check

Like the Structural Patterns section, the Structure Check section can also be used to assess student understanding of the grammatical and sociolinguistic features of Japanese either inside or outside the classroom. Questions and answers here are given in a multiple-choice format. Unlike the Structural Patterns section, students can not avoid thinking of their own answer before accessing the correct response. They *must* make a selection before viewing an answer, making this a true "check." Students are provided with immediate feedback in the form of an explanation for each incorrect choice as well as a summary of the results that also indicates the questions requiring review. The incorrectly-answered questions can be easily accessed and reviewed at the end of the Structure Check section. In the classroom, these multiple-choice questions can be used as quiz items, as a springboard for discussion, or, as Noda suggests in the *Faculty Guide,* as pair-work exercises in the classroom. By discussing the reasons for the correct answer, and conversely, the reasons why certain choices are incorrect, many points can be addressed and reviewed.

For those teachers of Japanese—introductory to advanced—who might require a more detailed explanation of how to implement each component of the CD-ROM Program and the *JSL* textbook in the classroom, the *Faculty Guide to Japanese: The Spoken Language Multimedia Collection* will prove absolutely indispensable. Consisting of eight sections, this guide could easily serve as the core text for a teacher-training course in Japanese pedagogy. In Sections 1 and 3, Noda discusses such issues as the shared responsibilities of

the teacher, the learner and the materials; setting course and program goals; learning strategies; how culture shapes language and interaction. The bulk of the material in Sections 2, 4, and 5 is explanatory: how to prepare a CC for classroom performance, how to prepare and place props, how to correct errors, how to script an oral interview test, how to use the multimedia in the classroom for discussion or assessment. All of this information is given in step-by-step detail and is prefaced by a paragraph or two on the objectives of each activity, the assumption being that there must be a sound reason for every classroom activity. Section 6 describes how the accompanying culture videos (not reviewed here) can be made a component of a language program and how they can dovetail with the *JSL* curriculum. Teachers who do choose to use the videos will no doubt find the sample video worksheets included in this section particularly valuable.

Section 7 is especially important. It gives concrete examples of what can be covered in hourly classroom sessions starting with the very first hour of class. The last section of the Guide provides three activities for the advanced learner using the Multimedia Collection. "Advanced" seems to refer to those learners who have either completed all three parts of *JSL* or who have had considerable training in Japanese. The activities for these learners take the form of reporting, restatement, and narrative presentation based on research. The idea here is to give advanced learners a means to review, expand, and practice their repertoire in other types of discourse.

The *Faculty Guide* is a very welcome and necessary addition to the *JSL* curriculum, for in it Noda explains how three of its components—the textbook, the CD-ROM, and the culture videos—were intended to work in the classroom. These materials are indeed demanding for teachers as well as learners, and so having one of the authors describe how they were intended to be used in the classroom, with step-by-step examples of activities, should improve the delivery system and ultimately facilitate the learning process.

In my own experience, I have had two groups of students—one in a summer intensive program and another in a seven-hour per week fall semester program, approximately 70 in total—use the CD-ROM as their primary learning tool. I have also used it in classroom discussions in English about the structure of Japanese and behavioral culture. Student reaction has been uniformly positive. The negative feedback so often heard from students about tedious practice sessions with audiotapes is now a thing of the past. Students have told me that they love working with the CD-ROM! According to some students, practicing with the CD-ROM is "awesome," "cool," "very effective." More experienced learners, having observed their *koohai* working on Japanese with the CD-ROM, say they are envious and feel deprived because there is no CD-ROM for Parts 2 and 3 of the textbook. Only two of my students—both female and both very bright, hard-working and enthusiastic—have expressed minor dissatisfaction with the CD-ROM. Their comments are worth repeating. They both found that the visuals were so distracting that they could not concentrate on the correct forms, pronunciation, intonation, etc., while practicing. They therefore preferred to work with the audiocassettes as a prelude to tackling the new material with the CD-ROM. Has the *Interactive CD-ROM Program* improved students' oral communication skills? It is an important question that needs be answered, but I will refrain from answering here simply because my response would be conjectural and not empirically based. It *is* possible to gather extensive data about student use of the CD-ROM through the Record Session Information function. Teachers can, if they wish, monitor the length of a practice session or the use of certain functions and navigation buttons for research purposes. This field is sorely in need of empirical research concerning methodologies of second language teaching. The verdict on the CD-ROM will consequently need to await what one hopes will be a rigorous and controlled test of its efficacy. Suffice it to say that in my opinion, the exceptional qualities and the wisdom of the design of the *Interactive CD-ROM* will enable it

to exert a profound effect on language learning for many years to come. Were that I a young learner again!

CD-ROM Development for Elementary Dutch I

by
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It was my good fortune to attend my first NASILP conference (fall, 1997) several months after I became director of the Critical Languages Program at Kent State University. The presentations at that conference inspired me to develop project for other CLP courses. Dutch was chosen to launch technology support for self-instructional courses for the following reasons. I had personally studied Dutch in the program while on the teaching staff o the foreign language department, and we had a pool of native Dutch speakers who were eager to participate in the project. Also, we had recently changed the textbook for the elementary Dutch course to *Colloquial Dutch*, by Bruce Donaldson. *Colloquial Dutch* has a lively, conversational approach and offers anecdotal, often amusing, cultural insights in each chapter. Basic grammar and sentence structure are explained in English and, in short, the book works well for self-instruction.

Although it is increasingly difficult to raise money and interest within the university for projects that affect small numbers of students, I received a small grant for the project from the University Teaching Council. There was a commitment from the university teleproductions department to shoot video footage and out technology center agreed to do the technical work and put the program onto a CD-ROM. My goal was not to replace the textbook but only to strengthen the course offering with supplementary material. I therefore focused on the following problems/solutions:

1. Some students are unable to absorb and manipulate multiple facets of a language with only two drill sessions per week in addition to self-study time. The program would provide interactive exercises on sentence structure and basic grammar, and oral and listening practice that consistently offered feedback to the student.

2. Areas of the language that a student finds difficult or challenging might be skipped over by the student or inadequately drilled by the Conversation Partner, resulting in uneven learning patterns. The program would complement the role of the Conversation Partner by engaging the student in problem-solving tasks designed to keep him or her on target at a measured pace.

3. The lack of progress markers such as quizzes and exams can be a problem for students in a self-study program, both as an incentive and for evaluation of what aspects of the course need attention. The program would offer review and self-testing sessions, allowing the student to have a better grasp of his or her progress in the course.

4. The sounds one hears when seeing a person speak are often different from those one hears when listening only (the experience with audiotapes). By seeing the native speaker talking in the program, the student would be given greater access to the eye/ear connection that is vital to language comprehension.

5. Culture is neglected in self-instructional format that emphasizes oral and listening skills. Since culture and language are unquestionably interrelated, music, slides of Dutch-speaking countries, and video footage with settings based on cultural characteristics (such as friends encountering each other on their bikes) would be integrated into the program.

6. Students can be uncomfortable with a final grade resting entirely on a final exam, often given by an examiner they have never met. For this reason, and so that drill sessions would assume their proper importance in the eyes of students, prepared participation and attendance at drill sessions is a component of the final grade. The computer program would afford a third component to the final grade with a log/on, log/off feature to record lab time for each student. A minimum number of lab hours per week would be a course requirement.

With these problems and solutions defined, I outlined formats for the presentation of material, carefully following the instructional flow of the textbook. The Dutch conversation Partner and I wrote original dialogues with follow-up, often personalized, questions and exercises, using vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure patterns from the textbook. Our program was tightly based on the textbook, but did not repeat or copy anything from it. The publisher did, however, give us permission to record all of the longer dialogues from their audiotapes onto our CD-ROM, allowing students greater control over the audiotapes. Rather than having to play with the pause and rewind buttons on a tape player while memorizing dialogues, they have a control mechanism that allows them to move easily to any point in the dialogue.

The program evolved, much like an expanded, detailed series of lesson plans. Writing, filming, recording sound portions and consulting with technology and graphics people went smoothly. The sense of purpose of the featured native speakers as well as the obvious enjoyment they brought to their roles came across well in the video segments. The technology center was creative in implementing ideas for exercise formats. But the challenges of the editing process were far greater than anticipated. Editing video and sound tapes and sitting with technicians (who did not speak Dutch) while they digitized audiotapes from the publisher required several days work. It was the technology center's first such project, and although we

had provided their staff with the entire program on disk, they elected to type in much of it themselves. The result was spelling and grammar errors in English and numerous faulty instructional directions. Efforts to correct technology glitches and formats unacceptable to language teaching proved to be the most time consuming and frustrating aspects of the entire undertaking.

The outcome of this project is a CD-ROM, in beta-test version, that offers a variety of interactive approaches to supplementary instruction. In the Introduction, vowel and consonant sounds are presented in a video segment focused on the eye/ear connection to aural comprehension. The entire CD-ROM utilized approximately 25 minutes of video, each segment with follow-ups that include voice recording and comparison, Cloze exercises, multiple choice for listening comprehension, dictation and question responses. Required question responses increase in difficulty as the program progresses and are sometimes printed out for drill sessions. Short, original compositions based on video segments are assigned in later sessions, also to be printed out and taken to drill sessions as topics of conversation. Lyrics to the folk songs performed (all public domain) are presented so that students can learn traditional songs. Subject matter, verb tenses and grammar were considered in placing the folk songs within the program. For example, the "pancake song" is presented in a chapter that has a recipe for making pancakes, a favorite Dutch dish.

Exercises not based on video include map, family tree and telephone conversation drag and drop activities, grammar and sentence structure practice and extensive verb exercises. Verb exercises are varied and include original graphics depicting action verbs which student identify and conjugate, and infinitive and stem identification of present-tense verbs in listening exercises. By the completion of Chapter One, students have extensive practice with present-tense verb conjugations, including several irregular verbs. An introduction and eight chapters are covered (to parallel the arrangement of the

textbook) with a review section at the end of each three chapters. A self-test, graded by the computer, follows each review section. While students may not move ahead in the program without a password, they can back up, as desired, for repeated practice. Although the program does not substitute for drill with the Conversation Partner, the ability to repeat any part of the program offers a distance advantage over the drill session.

Since the CD-ROM is still in the beta-test stage, I can only speak of the results of the project in the short-term scheme. Beta-testing students are enthusiastic about the program and therefore spend considerable time working with it. Because dialogues learned in the program are connected to visual, as well as auditory memory, they tend to be remembered well. Vowel and consonant sounds have been mastered quickly and much less time than usual has been required in drill sessions to model and correct pronunciation. Student and examiner satisfaction with course results have improved overall. I can say with relative certainty that one student was pleased with the program because he applied for a scholarship to study in the Netherlands shortly before finishing the course.

It is the experience so far that students come into their drill sessions better prepared because of the additional formats they have used to study the assigned material. Most students enjoy working on the computer and they are actively engaged in language learning in their program. The ability to repeat segments for more practice gives them a better grasp of material and more facility with the language. The visual aspect lends an excitement and identification with speakers that greatly augments audio tapes and drill sessions. With templates that have been created for this program, supplements for consecutive levels of Dutch and other courses can be developed. A similar computer-based tutorial for our Korean textbook, presented in video format by native speakers. Again, we will tailor the project to what works best as a supplement to

the textbook and what our human, technological and financial resources will allow.

Perhaps it is the bane of teachers to always be thinking of new ways to present material to students, but I enjoyed creating lesson plans for the Dutch program and seeing those lesson plans executed on the CD-ROM has been quite satisfying. The grant for the creation of this project was small and the time commitment large. However, outside sources are often willing, and sometimes even eager, to contribute to the funding of such undertakings. This is particularly true now that technology is readily available and of great interest not only to students but to the general population. Indeed, technology support seems the perfect complement to self-instruction. With it, I believe we can greatly enhance the procedures that are already in place in further ensuring the academic integrity of self-instruction at the university level.

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Developing Web-Based SILPs for Heritage Language Programs at Simon Fraser University

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Abstract

In response to requests from heritage communities, businesses, and individuals, Simon Fraser University is developing a greatly expanded array of heritage language programs. These courses provide second and third generation Canadians the opportunity for formal university-level study of the language of their parents and/or grandparents, whether for academic credit or general interest. They also become the basis for special purpose language courses designed for the business community and public service sector. This paper begins with a description of the Heritage Language Program at SFU and the role of Self-Instructional Language Programs (SILPs) in making this program financially viable; the focus then shifts to the unique technological model in the development for our Greek SILP. While following the structure of a traditional print-based SILP, SFU is enhancing these language courses with additional components on the World Wide Web. An Intelligent Language Tutor, a compute program for practicing foreign language skills in an open, flexible environment forms the core of the on-line material. In addition to the Intelligent Language Tutor, students have access to reference material, audio files a conference system, and course-related information. The on-line material for the Greek courses creates a language learning environment in which students can collaborate and practice the newly acquired language components interactively.

1 Introduction

Like many American metropolitan regions, Vancouver, British Columbia has experienced major demographic changes

in recent years. The large influx of new Canadians from across Asia and to a lesser extent from Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East has transformed Greater Vancouver into a multicultural centre. In addition, NAFTA and other globalizing trends in the economy have prompted many companies and individuals to seek out cross-cultural and international language training. These trends have also created international oppor-tunities in other sectors, such as education, communications technology, resource management, and public administration, adding to the demand for intercultural literacy.

In response to these changes, as well as direct requests from local heritage language communities, Simon Fraser University undertook a major feasibility study designed to identify some of the most creative approaches to language and culture training in practice in North America. Certainly one of the major barriers to offering less commonly taught languages within the regular credit curriculum of the University has been the high cost of instruction combined with low student demand. Even with the growth in heritage language communities, traditional credit course delivery for most heritage languages remains financially out of reach. However, the discovery of the SILP method, complete with a national organization and training tapes, led us to the first of what we have come to regard as our three keys to success. Here was an established, successful method that would allow us to offer heritage language courses cost effectively to classes as small as four or five.

But we will needed to develop the courses: to review and select the best materials, to produce a detailed syllabus for students and tutors, to identify and train tutors and, most important of all, to find a language consultant to pull it all together. With minimal funding, we needed to develop the second key, namely strategic partnerships in the community for consultation, marketing, and seed funding. Starting with the 1991 Census, supplemented by provincial school board statistics (Table 1), we put together lists of the largest language groups and fastest growing language groups in Greater

Vancouver (Table 2). We then eliminated any language currently offered in a face-to-face classroom setting at SFU (this includes Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, French, Italian and German). After that it was a matter of locating community organizations and, in the face of multiple organizations, learning how they related to one another.

Table 1: Greater Vancouver Area: Mother Tongue – 1991 Census

Metropolitan Vancouver	***1,602,500**	
English	1,151,975	71.90%
Chinese	130,680	8.20%
Punjabi	38,255	2.40%
German	34,765	2.20%
French	20,585	1.30%
Italian	17,775	1.10%
Tagalog	14,025	0.88%
Spanish	11,485	0.72%
Dutch	10,740	0.67%
Japanese	10,340	0.65%
Hindi	9,445	0.59%
Polish	8,590	0.54%
Vietnamese	7,705	0.48%
Portuguese	6,750	0.42%
Ukrainian	6,745	0.42%
Korean	6,065	0.38%
Hungarian	5,815	0.36%
Persian	5,695	0.35%
Greek	4,885	0.30%

Gujarati	4,375	0.27%
Czech	3,660	0.23%
Russian	2,465	0.15%
Arabic	2,130	0.13%

Table 2: Fastest Growing Languages in British Columbia

° Chinese
° Punjabi
° Spanish
° Vietnamese
° Tagalog/Filipino
° Korean
° Persian/Farsi

Although we approached a dozen communities the first year, four were particularly keen to move quickly: Filipino, Ukrainian, Punjabi, and Greek. The latter was represented by the Chair of Hellenic Studies at SFU, a position endowed by the Greek community and responsible for reek language training as well as Hellenic Studies. Although he had sufficient funding in place for several years of face-to-face classes, the numbers were small and the SILP concept made considerable sense.

Early in the process of community outreach, as we were struck by the extraordinarily positive response to our overtures in several of the communities, a casual discussion among colleagues including the former Dean of Arts , Evan Alderson, led to an interesting internal alliance and the third key. Discussion had centered on the dearth of adequate learning materials, especially involving Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Already aware of a doctoral project in Linguistics involving the creation of an Intelligent Language Tutoring System (ILTS) and now cognizant of what appeared

to be an ideal application for it, Alderson brought together people from Linguistics (including the Natural Language Lab with Computing Science), Continuing Studies, and the Dean of Arts Office and matched them with the fundraising prowess of the Hellenic Studies Chair. Within a few months the promise of sufficient funding to cover the creation of a Greek Intelligent tutor for a model on-line SILP was enough to get the project off the ground.

2 Beneficiaries of Web-Based SILPs

In view of the range of audiences contemplated for each heritage language SILP, the Web-based features will have multiple beneficiaries. The extent to which we will be able to tailor or fine-target each course to each audience remains an open possibility. Since Continuing Studies and the Faculty of Arts are jointly offering and marketing each SILP, courses may be taken for academic credit or for non-credit professional development/personal interest. On the credit side, this gives us the following audiences:

- SFU undergraduates and graduates;
- undergraduates from other provincial universities (University of British Columbia, University of Victoria, University of Northern British Columbia, and the Technical University of BC) on a letter of permission;
- high school students who can apply the credit toward secondary school completion as well as toward university, if admitted;
- mature students wanting the language for secondary school completion only; and
- community college students wishing credit toward an associate degree and/or university transfer.

Among non-credit audiences, we anticipate:

- business professionals
- government employees
- travelers
- people with other personal/family interests

The following sections will outline the main components of the Web-based SILP.

3 From Traditional to Web-Based SILPs

Traditionally, SILP course materials consist of a textbook, a workbook, and audiotapes. The workbook provides exercises for grammatical topics introduced in the textbook. The audiotapes contain dialogues and exercises for the practice of speaking and listening skills. In addition, there are two weekly oral practice sessions where students meet with a conversation partner. These tutorials, however, are intended for oral practice only; the grammar is acquired in self-study. At the end of a course, students are assessed by an external examiner.

The Web-based material augments the print-based version of the SILP courses. It consists of reference material, a conference system for collaboration among students, and grammar explanation and practice. The goal is to create a language learning environment in which students can access authentic information about the Greek language and culture, communicate and collaborate outside regular class instruction, and practice grammar interactively while receiving error-specific feedback.

3.1 Reference Material

The reference material on the World Wide Web includes a glossary, a dictionary, and Hotlinks to Greek Web sites. In addition, the course syllabus and answer keys for exercises from the text and workbook are also displayed.

The glossary provides explanations of grammatical terms used in the grammar modules. The terms in the glossary are linked to examples illustrating the grammatical concepts.

Students can also consult a bilingual dictionary from anywhere within the Web site. Instant access to a dictionary will assist students in reading and translating Greek text as well as composing messages.

The Hotlinks cover a range of linguistic and cultural material on the Web. Students, among other activities, can listen to Greek radio stations, obtain literary information, and virtually travel to places in Greece.

3.2. Collaboration

Traditionally, students in a SILP meet for only two practice sessions per week with conversation partner. The Web-based component of the SILP courses includes a conference system for students to communicate with each other outside regular class instruction. Students can also collaborate on assignments and/or engage in discussions. Topics of discussion can be initiated by the students or provided by the conversation partner. Either the conversation partner or a student can moderate the discussion.

3.3. Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

The Web-based SILP also contains vocabulary and grammar practice. The complete grammar of Greek is divided over 4 semesters. Each semester consists of 10 modules, each module introducing a grammatical concept. Naturally, as the student progresses, there will be more than one grammatical construction contained in a module. However, the emphasis in each module is on one new grammatical item. Figure 1 [see following page] shows the typical components of a module on the World Wide Web.

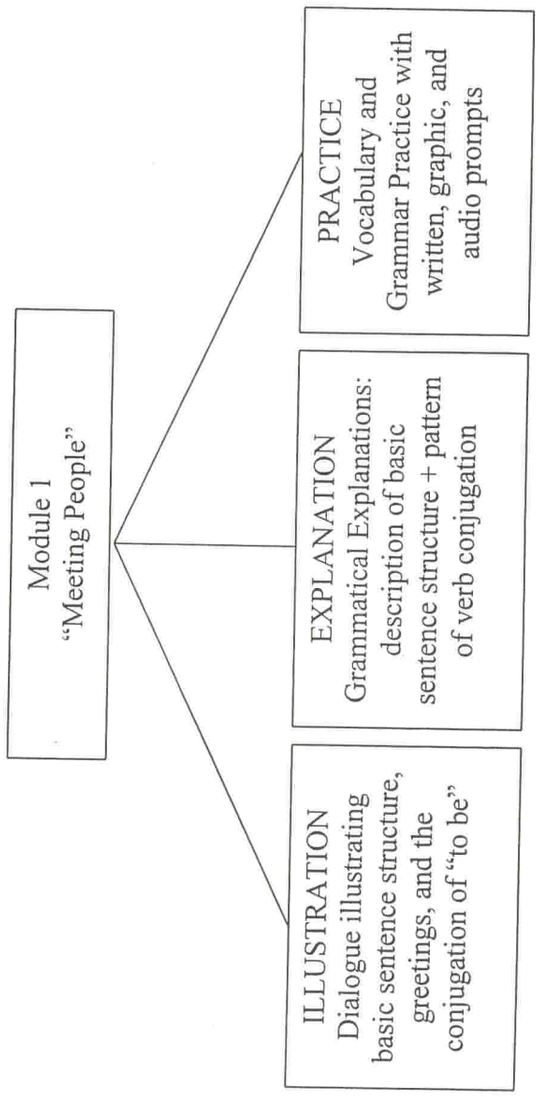

Figure 1: A Grammar and Vocabulary Module

Each grammatical construction is introduced with a text in the form of a story or a dialogue. Students can listen to a portion of the text or to the entire document. In addition, students can obtain an English translation of words, phrases, and sentences.

The next section in each module is an explanation of the grammar item to be learned. Examples other than those provided in the text are used for further illustration.

The practice part of each module consists of two main areas: vocabulary and grammar. For both, there exists a variety of exercises where students respond to written, graphic, or audio clues. These will be discussed in the following section.

Vocabulary Practice

In the vocabulary section, students practice the meaning and spelling of words. The vocabulary is built up sequentially as an exercise in one module will also contain words from previous modules. However, the overall design of the modules takes the diverse language skills of the SILP students into account. For learners who have already mastered a grammatical concept and for that reason do not take the modules in sequential order, dictionary access is provided on each Web page. In addition, the vocabulary items are cross-referenced to the module in which they were introduced.

The vocabulary section consists of a number of diverse exercises. One of the tasks incorporates the familiar game of "hangman" requiring students to guess letters of a word and find its correct spelling. In another example, students have to determine which word in a series of words does not fit. The words are represented either graphically, aurally, or as text. There are also crossword puzzles students are required to solve.

Grammar Practice

The core component of the grammar practice is an Intelligent Language Tutoring System (ILTS), a computer program for practicing foreign language skills in an open, flexible environment. The intelligent Language Tutor, designed for beginner to intermediate learners, emulates a student-teacher interaction by providing detailed corrective feedback and remedial practice through the use of various Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) techniques.[1] The goal is to provide ample opportunity for students to practice the language in a meaningful environment. The exercises go beyond multiple choice questions and feedback is error-specific. The following section will provide an overview of the Intelligent Language Tutor and its error checking mechanism.

3.3.1 An Intelligent Language Tutor

While there exists a vast number of computer programs for grammar practice, the systems differ with respect to the instructional feedback provided to the user. Most commonly, the answer checking mechanism is based on a string match whereby user input is compared with a pre-stored answer. In such instances, feedback is rather limited. Early programs prompted the student to *try again*, while later, more sophisticated programs, provided more detailed error feedback, but only if a student's response matches possible errors stored in the computer. In contrast, the Intelligent Language Tutor performs a complete sentence analysis which allows for freer student input while still providing error-specific feedback.

From a computational view, the Intelligent Language Tutor consists of 3 main components, illustrated in Figure 2: The Domain Knowledge, a storehouse of grammatical

[1] For a detailed computational analysis of the system see Heift [1998].

information and an input analysis engine, the Student Model, a record of a student's performance over time, and the Teaching Module, a pedagogically-informed interface that composes responses and guides the student through exercises and review. The domain module parses student input to determine whether or not grammatical constraints are met. The information is passed to the Student model which is then updated, recording not only errors, but also the student's successes in employing particular grammatical structures. For each student, the Student Model keeps a record for each grammatical construction, updating itself every time the student interacts with the system. The Teaching module selects instructional feedback and exercises appropriate to the learner level, either expert, intermediate, or novice according to the current state of the Student Model [Figure 2, following page].

For instance, for the Greek sentence given in example (1) the Domain Module records that subject-verb agreement in number has not been met: the student used the 2nd person verb inflection instead of 3rd. The Student Model updates the counter for subject-verb agreement, recording the error for the particular user. The Teaching Module decides on the specificity of the instructional feedback according to student expertise as provided by the Student Model.

(1) *Ολος ο κοσμος μαθαινεις Ελληνικα.
Ολος ο κοσμος μαθαινει Ελληνικα.
The whole world is learning Greek.

For the error given in example (1), a beginner student will be informed that the 2nd person verb inflection has been incorrectly used and that 3rd person is required.[2] In contrast, the expert learner will be informed only that there is a mistake in subject-verb agreement. The pedagogical principle

[2] The grammar component includes reference material which contains an on-line dictionary and HyperLinks to grammatical concepts and their terminology.

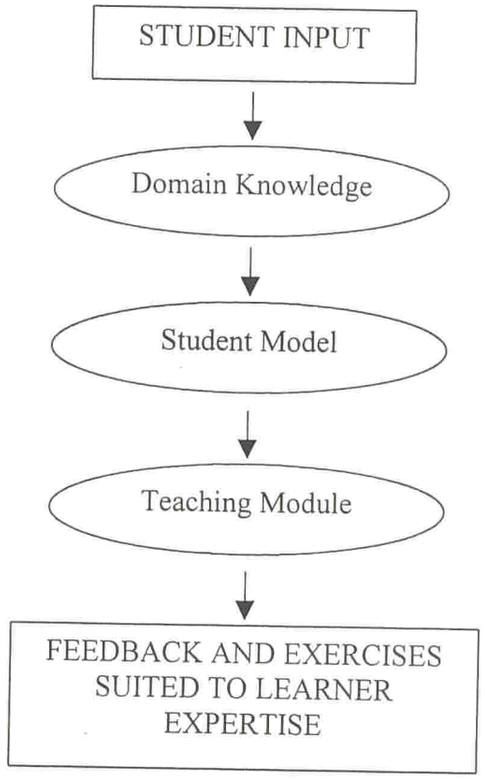

Figure 2: Basic Architecture of the Intelligent Language Tutor

employed is guided discovery learning whereby the learner is led towards the correct answer rather than supplied with it. The amount of information given depends on the learner level of the student which in turn is based on the student performance history on a given grammatical construction. The final result of the error-checking mechanism is a feedback message suited to learner expertise.

A further goal of the Student Model is to decide on remedial exercises based on students' previous performance. For example, if a student shows weaknesses with a particular grammatical construction, the Teaching Module will recommend further exercises before sending the student on to the next module.

The SILP courses, grammar is acquired in self-study. There is very little grammar explanation by the conversation partner. For this reason, ILTSs are well suited for a SILP course. Students can practice grammar in a more challenging way than with more traditional CALL programs while still receiving error-specific feedback.

The exercises in the grammar section of each module vary from "fill-in-the-blank" to translations. Some exercises focus solely on grammar practice, while others also offer practice of comprehension skills. For example, students are required to construct sentences from a list of words. The Intelligent Language Tutor checks the student input and provide error-specific feedback. Other exercises consist of sentence dictations where students listen to a recording and type out the sentence. The Intelligent Tutor will inform the students of the errors which might have occurred.

4 Conclusion

Simon Fraser's Heritage Language Program has been in operation for barely one year now, but we have learned a lot about the limitations of existing materials and of expecting students to learn all the grammar on their own. There never seem to be quite enough exercises (with answer keys); never

quite enough examples to illustrate a point of grammar. Our experience has clearly substantiated our earlier conjecture about the usefulness of interactive on-line grammar and vocabulary practice.

The Intelligent Language Tutor, which forms the core of the on-line material, is the error-checking mechanism for the grammar exercises. The system allows for a wider range of exercises than traditional CALL programs while still providing error-specific feedback. In addition to vocabulary and grammar practice, students can access authentic information about the Greek language and culture, listen to audio recordings, and communicate and collaborate outside regular class instruction.

5 References

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