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## Facilitating Development of Foreign Language, Literacy, and Culture

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## ABSTRACT

Facilitating Development of  
Foreign Language, Literacy, and Culture

by

Chad Saunders: Master of Second Language Teaching

Utah State University, 2015

Major Professor: Dr. Joshua J. Thoms

Department: Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies

In this portfolio, the author describes integral components of his teaching philosophy which include how the instructor can become a supportive facilitator, how he can promote use of the target language for communication, and how motivation can reinforce language instruction and learning.

Specific topics of interest were investigated further in support of the teaching philosophy. The artifacts discuss Utah's dual language immersion program: its development, future, and expected outcomes; the acquisition of multiliteracy skills for educational achievement; as well as the use of technology in promoting target language use and intercultural communicative competence.

Finally, the author includes an annotated bibliography on topics of communicative language teaching, sociocultural perspectives on second language learning and identity formation and the effects of code switching and identity.

(160 pages)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I appreciate my classmates in the MSLT program. They have been friends and esteemed colleagues. I feel privileged to have been part of a cohort of skilled foreign language teachers.

I must also thank my wonderful family members who have supported me unconditionally in all of the endeavors I have pursued. They have cultivated in me a desire to seek out knowledge and experiences. I express my utmost gratitude to my loving wife, Susan, without whom I could not have completed this degree. I thank her for the encouragement she has given me and for believing in me.

Lastly, I thank my Heavenly Father for His guiding hand in my academic and personal life.

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## INTRODUCTION

The contents of this portfolio demonstrate many of the learning experiences I had in the Master of Second Language Teaching (MSLT) program at Utah State University. My personal teaching philosophy, developed from study and reflection in and out of the classroom, is the central component of this portfolio. I was able to apply what I learned in my coursework as I taught a first-year, college-level Spanish language course (i.e., Spanish 1010) for three semesters.

Primary aspects of my teaching philosophy include a description of the role of the instructor as a supportive facilitator, the reasoning behind encouraging student and teacher use of the target language, and the effects of motivation on language learning. The overall focus of my portfolio can be found in the title. As a teacher, my goal is to facilitate the development of students' skills and abilities to use the target language, speaking and writing, as well as helping them increase their intercultural competence. The use of technology in language and culture teaching is also addressed.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

### Apprenticeship of Observation

I have loved learning ever since I was young. I always looked forward to new classes in school as they brought new opportunities for growth. My teachers have shown genuine concern for my academic, physical, and emotional well-being. They have demonstrated passion in their teaching and support toward their students. A few of the teachers stick out in my mind as good examples. Their effort in the classroom as well as their personality traits have instilled in me a respect for and positive outlook on teaching.

My fifth grade teacher, Ms. Dickamore, is the first teacher I can remember who went above and beyond her contracted responsibilities. “Ms. D’s” class was always interesting, fun, and engaging. As a class, we read “The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe” by C.S. Lewis. We had to do a number of creative projects that went along with the story. We were given the choice of which projects we did, as long as we completed a required number of them. I remember making a diorama of the land of Narnia, pointing out where different scenes took place, and writing my opinions about character interaction and plot development. I felt more connected to the projects because of the liberty she gave us. I knew that she wanted the individual student to succeed and genuinely enjoy the learning process. During that school year, I participated in a community theater’s production of “A Christmas Carol.” Ms. D was aware of this and arranged a field trip for the entire class to come and support me in the play. I found out that she paid for the tickets for the whole class to attend out of her own pocket. I remember that I was pleasantly surprised at how deep of a relationship she established with me.



I encountered the next example of a good teacher when I decided to take a Spanish class in 7th grade. It was Mr. Porter's first year teaching. He was very creative in his teaching, which made language learning entertaining. We played games to help us remember vocabulary, verbs, and phrases. The energy and excitement in his classroom grew as we participated. My friends and I always looked forward to going to Spanish. This is when *el español* caught my attention and became a personal interest.

Mr. Turner was my Spanish teacher for the next two years. He had been teaching for a long time. He spoke only Spanish in the classroom and expected his students to do the same. I remember lots of grammar-focused drills and practices. I got to know him fairly well and enjoyed the time in class. Mr. Turner had established a tutoring program in which 9th grade Spanish students from my school would go to an elementary school in downtown Ogden, UT where most of the students were Latino. The freshmen would go into the classroom to help the younger kids, many of whom did not speak any English or used it in their work. When it was my turn to go to tutor, I was worried about whether or not I would be able to actually carry on a conversation with native Spanish speakers. I was nervous. I arrived and the younger students I helped were just as nervous as I was. We were able to set our fear and anxiety aside and review their flashcards, help them do their math homework, read a book, or practice another activity in Spanish.

As an end of year celebration, all of the 9th grade Spanish classes threw a party for the elementary school. Each freshman was assigned a child to be with and to escort about the day's activities. After about five hours of fun, the tutors lined up to give high fives and say our good-byes as the kids stepped back onto their bus. I saw that Mr. Turner had worked to establish personal relationships with the teachers at the elementary school.

It was apparent that the teachers and administrators at Dee Elementary trusted Mr. Turner, and it showed by allowing his Spanish students to participate with the elementary students in this program. He was genuinely concerned for the kids and giving them a helping hand. Looking back on this project, I had the opportunity to practice my limited Spanish in real-life situations numerous times while I was in junior high, all of that while staying in my home town.

Sophomore year came and I found myself in a new school where I continued my Spanish classes. Mr. Graves gave us a particular assignment that caught my creative interest. We had to make a movie with Spanish dialogue. Three friends and I formed our group and we began working on our screenplay. Our movie was a hit and we kept the same group to make three sequels in the following years. These short films had horrible acting and poor Spanish but they got us to use the language. I appreciate Mr. Graves's creativity in helping us find a unique scenario in which we had the opportunity to produce language.

Miss Atkinson was the video production teacher at my high school. I first met her as I worked on editing the aforementioned video assignment. I did not know at the time how much I would grow to respect and admire "Miss A," as everyone called her. I took video production classes during my junior and senior years of high school. Miss A's passion for the subject matter was contagious. I enjoyed how she would encourage us to be creative and try out new camera angles and effects. She would constantly remind us to be curious. I was fascinated by the creative outlet I had been introduced to in the class, which prompted me to stay in the production lab for hours after the school day had ended. I had worked on projects weeks in advance. Since I was the only student in the lab

a lot of the time, those hours turned into “Kit-kat breaks.” Miss A always had a stash of Kit-kat bars and she wouldn’t let me leave without one. We would talk about video, soundtracks, effects, and other topics pertaining to editing. She then began asking about me and the projects I was working on, personal and school related. The questions later turned to my personal life and endeavors I was pursuing. I learned so much from her in those conversations. Of course I learned the course content, but as I look back that is not the foremost memory that comes to mind.

I was instantly drawn to Miss A since we got along well and I could sense that she cared about me as an individual. There were many class periods and hours after school that we sat and talked in her office. She gave me a card a couple days after my birthday during my senior year in which she expressed the confidence she had in me. She also thanked me for my friendship. I still keep in touch with her today.

I understand that the type of relationship I just described is not typical of high school students and their teachers. I’m not saying that I will have this relationship in my teaching. I will strive to create the environment where it could develop. I consider myself the greater beneficiary of Miss A’s mentorship. If I can be available when a student needs me, and have even a fraction of the positive influence on them as Miss A had on me, then I will consider myself a successful educator.

I found that positive influences in my high school experience were not limited to teachers. Being involved in the extra-curricular activities provided me the opportunity to rub shoulders with the administration and support staff at the schools. I saw their administrative styles and tactics. I consider myself lucky to have had the chance to mingle with them. It was during high school that I had the first inkling that I wanted to

have a career in education. My mother told me that I have always enjoyed learning and sharing which has helped me bond with others. She thought that my positive experiences with education somehow made it a place where I was comfortable, and since I find it enjoyable, I have decided to stay in that field. Another possible factor as to deciding to work in education is that I care for and can see the potential in people and want to motivate and help them. McKay (1967) stated that

[C]haracter is the aim of true education... True education seeks to make... not only good mathematicians, proficient linguists, profound scientists, or brilliant literary lights, but also honest men [and women] with virtue, temperance, and brotherly love. It seeks to make men and women who prize truth, justice, wisdom, benevolence, and self-control as the choicest acquisitions of a successful life.

(p. 3)

I feel that my education has been based on content and virtues. This is due, in part, to the instructors I had and the example they showed me.

After graduating from high school in April 2006, I chose to serve as a religious missionary. My motivation to acquire a second language was heightened when I was assigned to labor in Madrid, Spain for two years. I now had a divine purpose which awakened in me a great desire to learn Spanish well. I was assigned to the beginner Spanish class during a three-week period in the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah. I was amazed that the language I had learned throughout junior high and high school seemed to be brought to the front of my mind during that time. Vocabulary and verb conjugations came back. The language started making sense to me. My group then flew to Madrid for the remaining six weeks of training. Our Spanish fluency was assessed and I was moved to the advanced class. My instructors were native Spaniards. They spoke only *el castellano* in the classroom. We had six weeks to learn how to teach the

doctrine in Spanish. During the nine-week training period, I participated in a blend of audio-lingual method of teaching language (ALM) and communicative language teaching (CLT). ALM's repetition was helpful to get the common phrases we were going to use during our service. CLT's "real-life" context we would create for ourselves in the classroom was centered on the religious lessons we would teach as we entered the mission field.

Throughout my service in Spain, I often read the words of Apostle Jeffrey R. Holland when he explained: "We would...hope that every missionary learning a new proselytizing language would master it in every way possible...Don't be satisfied with what we call a missionary vocabulary only. Stretch yourself in the language..." (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d. p. 128). Immersion was my best teacher. I loved being surrounded by the language I was growing to cherish. The accent, *la zeta*, the culture, the history, the people; I grew fond of everything about Spain.

Upon my return from *España*, I didn't want to lose the skills I had acquired during two years of service abroad. I decided to major in Spanish at Weber State University. I would be able to study the language, literature, and culture in order to keep my newly acquired L2. I was following the counsel I received as a missionary: "Strive to master the language throughout your mission and after you return. The Lord has invested much in you, and He may have uses for your language abilities later in your life" (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d. p. 128). I had great Spanish professors at Weber State. Six out of the seven language professors I would have over the next three years were from or had lived in Spain. I loved using the language in the classroom and gaining new knowledge and skills from the native-speaking professors. As I spoke with and got

to know them better, they helped me in my proficiency and fluency to discuss many different subjects in the target language. It was in discussion with my professors that I found out about another opportunity to practice and further develop my language skills.

I applied for and received a position as a Language and Cultural Ambassador to work in a high school in Spain for eight months. I was assigned to the Gúdar-Javalambre secondary school in Mora de Rubielos, Teruel. I worked as an assistant English teacher for the 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders. The instructors and I decided together how I would participate in the lessons each day. I was there for the students to hear me speak English and encourage them to use my native tongue. I also brought with me unique cultural aspects, which most of the students had not yet encountered. Even though their lessons were straight out of the textbook and not very engaging, I saw some students were very enthusiastic about learning and speaking English. I was impressed by the students who put forth the effort to speak the language. They were actually becoming proficient. They were excited for the opportunities that a second language afforded them. Some of the 10<sup>th</sup> graders had already spent a summer in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the majority of them were hardly motivated. Many of the less motivated students explained to me something to the effect of “I know I’m going to be working here in my hometown for the rest of my life. Why do I need to practice English?” I was disappointed with this attitude. Not that there is anything wrong with staying in their hometown but I knew that my eyes had been opened to the world as I studied a foreign language. Spanish and my time abroad led me to an interest in Iberian history and culture. The ability to speak Spanish provided me with so many opportunities. It also led me to see a path I needed to take.

I recognized that I needed to choose a career that would allow me to use the language often. I chose to pursue a career as a professor in the higher education setting. The motivation I found in pursuing a career in academia comes from the hope to witness the spark in students' eyes as they catch the vision of the value of a second language. This decision goes right along with what my mother recalled about me since my youth. She explained that I have been comfortable in front of people from the time I was small and that I have a personality and skills that help me connect with others. She mentioned that knowing Spanish has provided many opportunities to travel and see some amazing things in the world. My mom thought that whether consciously or unconsciously, my reasoning for pursuing teaching as a career could be because I see it as a way of opening other young people's eyes to the endless possibilities that come with hard work and dedication.

I have been blessed by teachers and professors given that many of them have taken a genuine interest in me/my work and have gotten to know me personally. The passion they have had for the subject(s) they taught is obvious. They have opened my eyes to the potential I have to succeed academically. I have grown immensely by being immersed in the target language and culture. I hope to combine all of these points into my teaching: 1) to get to know my students on a deeper level to know more about them other than just how they are doing in class; and 2) to demonstrate my love for culture by sharing my personal experiences with students and by providing them with opportunities to hear and learn the languages and experience the cultures of the world for themselves. I will encourage them to have immersion experiences. I will strive to empower them to see, recognize, and achieve their potential in the class and in life.

## Professional Environment

Upon return from my missionary service, I planned to teach Spanish at the high school level. As I got to know my professors at Weber State better, they asked about my future academic and career goals. I replied that I wanted to teach Spanish in a high school. When asked why I wanted to pursue that course, I realized that I lacked a response. I felt that I should have an answer readily available for when I was asked what I wanted to do for a future career. This worried me. My professors recommended that I look into the possibility of teaching at the university level. After being provided with opportunities to substitute teach a few lower division courses for different professors in the Spanish department while still an undergraduate student, I realized that I wanted to work in higher education.

I plan to teach Spanish or English at the university level. I would be able to promote the development of skills in future speakers of both languages that will help them thrive in their educational and societal endeavors. There will be many additional opportunities that I will take advantage of while immersed in the university setting.



## Personal Teaching Philosophy

### **Introduction**

As a student and teacher, I have been exposed to various ideas regarding second language acquisition (SLA) during my time in the Master of Second Language Teaching (MSLT) program at Utah State University. I had two years of language teaching experience in the classroom before beginning the MSLT program and I knew that I wanted to pursue a higher education teaching career. Being a graduate instructor in a Spanish 1010 class allowed me to gain knowledge and experience and provided me the opportunity to apply the principles I am learning in my courses to my work in the language classroom. I understand that developing my identity as a teacher is a dynamic process. With that in mind, once I establish my style of teaching, I must be willing to incorporate additional techniques and concepts as I learn about them. Filling the role of both student and instructor has taught me that I want my teaching philosophy to consist of three main points pertaining to teaching and learning: the role of the instructor, the use of the target language for communication, and the function of motivation in language instruction and learning.

### **The Roles of the Instructor**

#### *Passion and Support*

Given the variety of responsibilities expected of teachers today, they must “develop a certain love not only of others but also of the very process implied in teaching” (Freire, 2005, p. 3). One must have a love for every aspect of the job. Teaching is not only the presentation of the input, administering exams, and providing one-sided feedback characteristic of the Atlas Complex approach to teaching (Lee & VanPatten,

2003). Rather, it is also the preparation and execution of a meaningful lesson with a communicative goal for the learners to achieve (Ballman, Liskin- Gasparro & Mandell, 2001; Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Teachers must demonstrate passion for their subject and specialty as well as supporting their students throughout the learning process (Busteed, 2014). Porter (2009) urges teachers to find out the needs of individual students as well as their goals and desired outcomes after taking the class. Do teachers take the time to do this? DeVito (1986) claims that “the development of the interpersonal relationship is viewed as the means by which more effective, efficient, and satisfying teaching and learning may take place” (p. 53). This is a beneficial result for both teachers and students.

Teaching is an opportunity to care about students, including their lives outside of the classroom. If teachers can utilize proper interpersonal skills in how they deliver their coursework and counsel, they can develop mentorships with their students and promote their comfort and ease in the classroom (Fan, 2012). Throughout my years as a student, I have had many teachers who became great mentors. I knew they cared about me, not just in my course work but they were also interested in my activities outside of school. I felt like I mattered; like my goals were important to my teachers. “If [teachers] took seriously the need for kids to feel known and cared about, our discussions about the distinguishing features of a ‘good school’ [or good teacher] would sound very different” (Kohn, 2011, p. 7). A few simple examples of how to do this include: learning the students’ names early on in the semester; being mindful of those who become disheartened because of the struggle to grasp an idea; and sharing in the excitement as students capture concepts and put them into practice properly.

A teacher's influence can be a propelling force in students' education and lives. Busted (2014) referred to a Gallup Poll administered to college graduates about various aspects of mentorship, including whether or not they felt their professors supported them during college. If the students answered in the affirmative, that they were supported "by professors who cared, made them excited about learning and who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams—their odds of being engaged in work more than doubled, as did their odds of being thriving in their well-being" (para. 5). Individualized support can work wonders.

Teachers should focus on their students' needs while preparing lessons to be taught. Kohn (2011) states teachers are more concerned with teaching than with their students' learning. Therefore, teachers should constantly be evaluating their own teaching methods and choice of activities. This self-awareness provides the opportunity for teachers to evaluate their motives, performance, and development (Docan-Morgan, 2010), all for the purpose of keeping the students and their needs at the forefront of the teachers' minds. This is an essential component when reflecting upon whether the lessons and purpose of tasks are accomplishing the desired outcomes (Lee & VanPatten, 2003; Pugh & Phillips, 2011).

### *Facilitator*

The word 'facilitate' means to make something easier or possible or to become a mediator in achievement. A facilitator can become the catalyst between learners and their effort to acquire a new language. Lee and VanPatten (2003) state that "teachers often assume too much responsibility in language teaching, and students often assume too little" (p. 2). Instructors become facilitators as they empower their learners with

opportunities to take initiative and additional responsibility in the learning process (Clifton, 2006). A facilitator makes the classroom more of a forum for exchange between teacher and students as well as student-to-student interaction. Providing the students with charge of the discursive floor, in place of the so-called 'sage on the stage', allows the teacher to elicit additional output from the students. While students will still make mistakes, this can assist in the improvement in the L2 (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). Students will be more motivated to use the language acquired as a result of their efforts if the theme of the tasks or projects are of their own choosing. I have seen a couple of examples of this in my own education.

My fifth grade teacher organized a number of options that students could choose from to meet the requirements and objectives. Although she determined the criteria to be met in order for the students to receive full credit, the students were in charge of the selection and production of these projects. During the MSLT program, I learned that this approach is called a project-based curriculum, which is empowering not only to elementary students but can be effectively used when teaching adult learners as well. One of my professors at Utah State University was brave enough to change her planned curriculum to a project-based curriculum only a few weeks before the semester began. When applied, the projects are used as mediation tools (Vygotsky, 1978), "which provide a bridge to new ways for students to think about language [and culture] learning, and the new learning activities being carried out" (Beckett & Slater, 2005, p. 110). This scenario is a prime example of an instructor stepping into the facilitator role because this curriculum provides the students with an opportunity for their work to be personalized according to their own design thus allowing them to use their own strengths, while

meeting the requirement. While it is probable that language students will struggle to produce the L2 properly, instructors should view these attempts as observable evidence of the learning process (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). The students must be reminded of what is happening: they are actually learning.

### *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*

CLT strategies have shown to be effective because students are encouraged to learn language through using the TL in meaningful communication. Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001) state that the objectives of CLT are achieved as students are able to express themselves, understand others, and negotiate meaning while speaking the target language. CLT advocates that students should gain proficiency in their second language in the same manner they acquired their first. Imagine toddlers as they learn to speak; they are immersed in language from the day they are born. When they begin to speak, their words are difficult to understand yet we encourage them to keep talking. They will make errors, but as they continue to speak the language, they gain the ability to express themselves. When they enter Kindergarten, we do not suddenly change our ways and correct their speech when they make errors. By communicating, they are learning implicitly how language works (Morgan, 1997).

Although each individual's acquisition is dynamic (Lee & VanPatten, 2003), it can be a slow process. Instructors and learners must be patient during student development. Being exposed to CLT in the MSLT program has opened my eyes to the communication possible in the classroom. While I understood that students need to speak the language in order to acquire it, I had not previously considered how much of an influence designing activities that elicit production from the students has on their learning

of the language. This production should require both written and oral forms of communication.

### *Task and Activity Designer*

Instructors need to put in the necessary time to design meaningful activities in which the learners can use the target language. This design, or blueprint, lays out the specifications of the communicative task at hand (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001). The instructor becomes the architect of the curriculum and its contents (Lee & Van Patten, 2003). Just as an architect would meticulously design a building, teachers should provide the structure and allow the learners to do the building. This will provide the students with a sense of responsibility to assist in the building; the design would be incomplete without their contribution. This requires students and instructor to share the responsibility of teaching and learning (Antón, 1999; Clifton, 2006; Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Task-based activities (TBAs) seem to be effective in language acquisition.

TBAs are classroom activities that build on one another. A communicative goal is broken down into smaller, more manageable goals, each with a connected task. As each task is performed, it becomes a building block that students can use to then move on to the larger goal with confidence (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001). A task is “a language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and/or produce the target language as they perform some set of work plans” (Lee, 2000, p. 32). TBAs allow the teacher to assume a facilitator role. The teacher provides the outline of how the activity will be carried out and supplies the students with the vocabulary and grammar necessary for the task so the students feel they can complete the task. Teachers need to provide students with experiencing real-life situations in a low-risk (i.e., low-

anxiety) environment. Students will be less worried about making mistakes and more willing to communicate. As this happens, teacher can give corrective feedback that provides language learners with a linguistic scaffold that can be used to climb to the next level of expression (Lyster, Saito, & Sato, 2013). Task-based activities are building blocks of real-life communication. "It's the tasks that intrigue us, that tap our curiosity and connect to the things we care about, that we tend to keep doing—and get better at doing" (Kohn, 2011, p. 4). "The purpose of language use is to accomplish some [real world] tasks rather than to practice any particular language form" (Lee, 2000, p. 9). When employed properly, the TBAs allow the students to express themselves confidently in various situations.

As they build their knowledge base and gain experience through the development of the skills, the learners can take ownership of their work. Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001) state that it is the responsibility of each individual student "to participate fully in the activities" (p. 8). Instructors need to create context in the classroom. This means that real-life situations should be utilized as instructional context in which learners can use the L2 to communicate and acquire new information (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). As students are intrigued with these tasks and activities, and participate in them, they will become more capable in producing the target language. These activities can be designed to include technology as an additional component in an attempt to encourage the most learning possible.

#### *Use of Technology in the Classroom*

Many benefits can emerge from proper integration of technology in the classroom. Angelova and Zhao (2014) highlight a number of forms of computer-mediated

communication (CMC) that have contributed to greater understanding of the language and culture. “CMC has become a useful tool to create opportunities of exposure to foreign cultures” (Angelova & Zhao, 2014, p. 4). Forums such as online discussion boards can provide text-based exchanges to increase the cultural awareness of the participants. Video conferencing services, such as Skype, provide additional communicative clues as the participants can see and hear each other. Technology affords students with development in a variety of areas, such as increased understanding and awareness of their “own and other cultures, increased English vocabulary, improved language skills, experience using technology learning tools, experience with intercultural communication, and improved collaboration skills” (Chen & Yang, 2014, p. 67). Teachers’ effective use of technology in the classroom can, as Laurillard (2002) said, “persuade students to change the way they experience the world through an understanding of the insights of others” (p. 23). This is a goal of language and culture learning that can be supported through technology. Technology provides teachers with access to authentic materials, descriptive videos, and other resources that allow them to bring a little bit of the language and culture into the classroom to share with students.

Today’s learners are considered digital natives, individuals having grown up with technology in homes and schools. Many of them know how to use a computer from a very young age. They have inculcated the use of electronic devices into their daily lives to such an extent that it is difficult to separate the students from them (Archer, 2013; Bourquin, 2012; Friedman, 2015; Gilbert, 2012). The effectiveness of incorporating technology into curriculum depends on its designed use. Blake (2013) suggests that technology is neutral and that it can be used to enhance or detract from learning. The



emphasis must be focused on having a curriculum already in place in order for technology to be implemented. If the lesson plans and the content are not established and considered effective, the use of a computer program will not increase the effectiveness.

I include this section because of the benefits that are possible when technology and teaching are integrated and thus promoting and facilitating the same achievement. “No longer the single source of information, teachers are freed to guide students’ learning, leveraging technology to help students access knowledge, manage their work, collaborate, communicate, and create and produce various products” (Martinez & McGrath, 2014, p. 45). That description can be applied to TBAs and provide a CLT framework out of which teachers and students can produce positive outcomes. Along with diligent preparation and sound curriculum design, technology can assist teachers in their goal of becoming facilitators.

### **Use of the Target Language**

Using the target language is essential for both the teacher and the students. Human beings have been endowed with the ability to communicate through language (ACTFL Standards, 2006), and this communication is a skill “that is involved in all others, including consciousness, sociality and culture” (Ortega 2009, p. 1). In order for language to be used, it must be learned and acquired (Krashen, 1982; Lantolf, 2011; Swain, 1985) and language is acquired through its use. The development of an individual’s linguistic skill will increase through the conscious effort of language teachers in providing learners with scenarios that allow them to use the target language in all three modes of communication (i.e., interpersonal, interpretive, presentational) (ACTFL, 2006; Long, 1996, Shrum & Glisan, 2010). When diligently prepared,

communicative tasks can encourage students to utilize each mode in different stages of the activity, as suggested by Wang (2014).

First, language learners complete an interpretive task, then use the information learned in an interpersonal task, and finally summarize their learning with a presentational task. That is, learners view, listen to, and/or read authentic texts in the target language, interact with learners in the target language in oral and written form, and then present in oral and written form to audiences of listeners and readers.

(p. 388)

As a teacher, using this description as a pattern for task design can benefit learners by helping them take advantage of “the opportunities they are given to interpret, to express, and to negotiate meaning in real-life situations” (Savignon, 1997, p. xi). This effort is necessary if students are to gain experience using all three modes of communication. The ACTFL (2006) Standards that include a description of desired outcomes for second language learners. First, students engage in conversation, share information and glean more through continued discussion, and express their feelings as well as opinions with others in a comprehensible way. Second, students are able to understand and interpret written and spoken language on diverse topics. Third, students are able to present and share information on various subjects to an audience of listeners in oral form or readers in written form. For students to gain the most experience possible in communicating in these modes, teachers must prepare tasks and activities diligently that include all modes of communication. Students will not gain the skills needed to communicate effectively without practice in speaking and listening in private conversation or group presentation, reading and writing a personal letter or a widely shared newsletter. The responsibility falls upon the shoulders of the teachers who, being

the sole provider of language in the classroom, need to model the use of each mode of communication for their students to demonstrate its usefulness and benefits.

### **Comprehensible Input**

It is widely accepted that being exposed to comprehensible input is necessary for second language acquisition. As stated by Lee and VanPatten (2003, p. 16) “input is the language learners hear that is meant to convey a message.” These messages must require the students’ attention and response. However, not all input is understood by the learner. According to Krashen (1982), the acquisition of a second language occurs only when learners are exposed to an ample supply of comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current ability, yet understandable “using background knowledge, context, and other extralinguistic cues such as gestures and information” (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 15). Instructors should use the target language as close to 100% of the time as possible because they are the in-class example of what the foreign language sounds like and how it is used. Students rely on this usage “to learn how to process and produce their own. Depriving them of that vital element is in essence starving their language system” (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001, p. 63). If students are receiving an adequate (if not an optimal) amount of comprehensible input, they will make progress toward learning the TL. This does not mean that they will gain a perfect understanding, rather a sufficient understanding necessary to negotiate meaning and communicate.

### **Output**

Communication in the classroom brings to mind an image of two or more people speaking and listening to each other in the target language (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). This interpersonal mode of communication is causing language to be produced, which is

called output (Swain, 1985; Swain & Suzuki, 2008). As input and output are being exchanged, the different levels in students' oral proficiency will become apparent. "Negotiation consists of interactions during which speakers come to terms, reaching agreement, make arrangements, resolve the problem, or settling issue by conferring or discussing" (Lee, 2000, p. 9). Misunderstandings will be alleviated through the negotiation of meaning between interlocutors through asking for recasts, "repetitions, confirmations, reformulations, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, clarification requests, etc., are used both strategically, to avoid conversational trouble, and tactically to repair communication breakdowns when they occur" (Long, 1996, p. 418). Those breakdowns will occur and hopefully it will assist learners in noticing the changes that their conversation partner makes or requests.

The act of producing the target language may contribute to the learner's awareness and attention to the grammar used to convey their intended meaning (Swain & Suzuki, 2008). Negotiation of meaning does not imply that the points learners do not understand will be clarified. They will be provided with the opportunity to talk around or through that which they do not know. They will learn to use the language they do have to express their thoughts and opinions with the teacher, more proficient speakers or native speakers of the target language. The act of negotiating helps conversational content become more salient as the learner and the more capable speaker are arriving at a mutually comprehensible level.

Instructors should be assisting students in achieving this comprehension by providing them with the opportunity to negotiate meaning in the classroom on a daily basis. This could be through interacting with the teacher or during their communication

with other students as they complete communicative activities. Negotiation of meaning is not found in grammar drills or verb conjugations. It can be found when the students participate in classroom role-play depicting real-life scenarios. For example, if, after discussing school topics and activities associated with school, a teacher were to ask students about their school schedules and what they like or dislike about their classes, the students would have the theme and vocabulary they could use to answer the questions. A key feature of this exchange is that the teacher listens and asks follow up questions that allow students to talk and delve deeper.

Language learning and language use are inseparable (Kinginger, 2001; Long, 1996; Lyster, Saito, & Sato, 2013). In other words, language is learned through its use. The development of an individual's linguistic skill will be increased by the conscious effort the learner takes to speak the language. Language use is both the means to acquire the TL (i.e., is a tool that allows for more interaction, access to comprehensible input) as well the end (i.e., the object that is being acquired). That is, we learn to communicate in the TL by/through using the TL. Dörnyei states that "Language is not a collection of rules and target forms to be acquired, but rather a by-product of communicative processes" (Dörnyei, 2009a, p. 239). As language learners communicate with native speakers, they will come to know the underlying rules and norms that vary by culture group. Learners will be exposed to language as they use and interact through it. By seeking out opportunities to use the L2 with members of the target culture, students assume more responsibility for learning about language and culture (Shrum & Glisan, 2010).

As mentioned above, language learning is not composed solely of acquiring grammatical knowledge; it is also made up of knowledge about the second language

culture. Students who have the opportunity to travel abroad are immersed in both the second language and its culture. Those unable to spend time in the target language countries are relying on the instructor to create an authentic, immersive environment in the classroom. Authenticity can enhance classroom discussion. This can be achieved through using authentic materials such as newspaper or articles in the target language found online, or television commercials from the target country as additional resources in accomplishing the goal of the class session. It is not using these features for the novelty, but for a specific purpose in driving and promoting communication. The immersive factor of the classroom reiterates the need for students and teacher to use the target language. By expressing themselves in the L2, students' minds are opened to experience new ways of thinking, taking into account variables previously unconsidered. Instructors can assist in this expansion by providing "opportunities for output that [are] meaningful, purposeful, and motivational so that students can consolidate what they know about the language and discover what they need to learn" (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 22). As learners are encouraged to see the versatility of language, they may become motivated to put forth a more concerted effort to acquire the second language.

### **Motivation and its Role in Instruction and Learning**

Students must become more actively responsible for their own learning (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). That responsibility includes many aspects and decisions that are solely dependent on the learner. It can be expected that a university student taking a language course would be motivated to put forth the necessary effort. While "motivation has been identified as the most influential factor in successfully learning a new language" (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, pp. 31-32), it would not be possible for the language teacher to be

responsible for providing each of the 20-25 students in the average first-year college-level language classroom with the necessary motivation to succeed in gaining interest and desire to continue with the language. Tapping into learners' motivation is a very important way to entice them to develop their L2 skills. "Human action is caused by purpose" (Dörnyei, 2009c, p. 15). Students will put forth effort in learning the target language when they can find a purpose in doing so, whether that purpose is for personal reasons (wanting to travel, becoming more familiar with language and culture, etc.) or professional development (a new job opportunity, to work abroad, getting a raise for being bilingual, etc.).

This driving force will assist the students as they attempt speaking the language. The learners will feel more confident in their abilities as they use them. "Learners who are comfortable and have a positive attitude toward language learning have their affective filters set low, allowing unfettered access to comprehensible input" (Van Patten & Williams, 2007, p. 28). Whereas affect relates to moods, feelings, and attitudes, we can see how it can hinder or promote access to comprehensible input. Before being exposed to SLA theories, I had not considered the effect of a low affective filter (low-anxiety) on proficiency. Language learners "with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike 'deeper'" (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). I often remind my students that they must accept the fact that they are going to make mistakes as they are acquiring the L2, just as they did as children learning their L1. I encourage them to continue speaking, just as the child does. Adults give positive reinforcement as they acknowledge and praise children for their efforts. Students are

more likely to speak as they feel comfortable. However, the level of comfort is relative due to the fact that, in the opinion of the author, there is minimal growth in your comfort zone and minimal comfort in growth. Using the human body as an analogy, muscles are broken in order to grow and strengthen. Learners' self-confidence may lessen as they attempt to communicate. As they continue to struggle through the production of output, their effort will strengthen their emerging language skills.

I noticed this when I arrived in Spain for the first time. In many instances, I felt that I was unable to express myself as fluently as I had hoped. Through continued effort on my part and support as Spaniards attended to my attempts to convey a thought or idea in my limited Spanish, I slowly noticed improvement. I felt like I could share more because of the interest they showed. The sense of support I felt from them lowered my affective filter and motivated me to continue speaking and listening (i.e., interpreting input and producing output) and eventually allowed me to acquire language skills enabling me to communicate more smoothly with them.

Long (1996) suggests the multiple uses of language when he uses the phrase "language learning and learning through language" (p. 454). Language students can learn a lot about cultures, ideas, other people, and themselves. The acquisition process "has the potential to change learners' motivations and identities, by providing them with access to a broadened (or at least different) repertoire of cognitive tools" (Kinginger, 2001, p. 421) developed out of their efforts to learn a different language. This change in identity will be addressed later in the Cultural Artifact of this portfolio.



## **Conclusion**

Through personal experience, I have seen that teaching and learning a foreign language are both “dynamic process[es] of transforming knowledge into action” (Al Hasnawi, 2013, p. 1). As I employ the characteristics of effective language teaching I have described, I can better prepare the learners to acquire the target language. I agree with Gardner (2007) when he stated, “I am convinced that my activities can influence the student’s level of motivation, and it is this level of motivation that will have an effect on how much is learned” (p. 17). Motivated students will strive to learn as much as they can. They will speak the target language and negotiate meaning to gain understanding. Higher education “will never reach its full potential...unless there is human-driven emotional engagement and deep experiential learning at its core” (Busteed, 2014, para. 13). My goal as the instructor is to assume the role of a supportive facilitator.

## Teaching Observation Reflection

I consider myself a visual learner. I learn best when I see someone demonstrate an activity, then emulate the individual's techniques while knowing that the teacher of this activity is available as a resource for clarification as to the reasoning behind certain actions. Observation of other teachers provides me the opportunity to become aware of aspects of teaching that I am oblivious to when facilitating activities in my class. No teacher is perfect. However, there are some teachers who put in a greater effort in preparation and execution of lessons, which gets them closer to embodying the ideals a perfect teacher would possess than teachers who "get by" with less effort. Noting these differences has caused me to reflect on my style of teaching, how I am helping the students achieve, and how I can improve. I will highlight some of the things I know I would like to incorporate into my teaching as well as mentioning aspects of teaching that I will try to avoid. In observations, I am watching for components of communicative language teaching methodology. I have included it in my teaching philosophy because I believe that task-based activities building into a communicative activity with purpose is a worthwhile approach to language teaching. In the implementation of CLT, I have found it to be an effective way to promote language learning in the second language classroom.

The information for this reflection is based upon observations of eight different teachers at work: an elementary school Spanish teacher in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program; a Spanish teacher at a junior high; a seasoned French teacher in a high school along with his student teacher in a level 2 class; a student teacher in a high school Spanish class; a graduate instructor, an adjunct and a tenured professor teaching Spanish 1010, with the latter teaching 2010, at Utah State University.

First, it appeared that some teachers did not have a well-established communicative goal for the day's lessons, or at least it was not apparent to me as the observer. Although teachers have in mind what they want their students to achieve or gain that day, I have wondered about the reasoning behind choosing certain activities that are meant to help the learners in accomplishing the goals. In general, I think language teachers mean well in their preparation but sometimes choose activities that miss the mark and fail to achieve the intended goal. If teachers do not carry out the activity well or do not show the students how it fits into the larger picture of language acquisition, the purpose may be lost. These activities and tasks may become busy work if there is no reason for the students to use the language component they have just practiced to produce some sort of communication in the target language. Although I am sometimes guilty of not always having a well-developed goal and plan for the class session, I see the importance of a well-formulated lesson and complementary activities to facilitate the acquisition of the skills needed to accomplish the task. Some classes I attended made use of activities that did not exploit the full versatility of the materials. The teacher left the exercise prematurely, which made the activity into one of straight repetition. Other teachers drag the activities out too long. This emphasizes the need for me to have specific purposes for the materials I use in my teaching.

In some of the classes I observed, I was disappointed to sense a feeling of teachers either "getting through student teaching" or "getting through the week/semester." I understand that there will be many experiences that are not known to observers like myself but I noticed that there was more of an attitude of endurance than one of enjoyment. This makes it difficult for teachers to take interest in the lives of their students

besides their in-class performance. As I look back on my high school and college experience, I have been influenced for good by teachers who took the time to get to know my interests and hobbies, and my goals and desires. I plan to put forth the effort to convey the same level of interest to my current and future students.

As for things I would include in my classroom, first and foremost in my mind is the use of the target language. I have seen this as a positive influence in the classroom. When teachers use only the L2, they are conveying to the students the importance to put forth the effort to use the language as well. Something that I have seen other teachers do better than I am doing currently is enforcing student use of the L2. I can remind the students often that we are to speak Spanish in the classroom but they often become discouraged and revert to speaking English because of the ease with which they can speak and be understood. I believe that one aspect of a successful language class is that the students encourage each other to use the target language. I admire the dual language immersion (DLI) teachers that I have observed because of their ability to remind the children that they are to speak Spanish while they are in the Spanish classroom. I think it would be interesting to be present in the early days of the school year to see how the teachers promote the use of the target language in the classroom. This would help me develop a better plan of how to promote L2 use among my students.

I thought it was interesting to see that within the DLI classrooms I observed, the teacher spoke to the elementary students in the formal *usted* form of you, despite the norm that this is used between adults in a professional environment. More often than not, the *tú* form of you is employed when speaking with anyone younger than the speaker. This demonstrated a sense of respect toward the students and helped them know that

there is no problem being formal. Also, there is purpose behind using the formal pronoun. Being the sole provider of input in the classroom, the teacher was helping the students learn. I doubt the children realized the differentiation so early on in their development. It is a good start to be taught formality. If the learners err on the side of formality, there will not be major problems.

The elementary students in the DLI class needed a change of pace after a certain amount of time. I was impressed to see the flow and effective use of class time and the command of the classroom that the teacher had. She knew exactly how much time they had left before recess or lunch and she took advantage of every minute. She had a number of different activities for the students to do over the course of the morning and it appeared that she accomplished her goals for that day's activities. This observation caused me to reflect on my use of the 50 minutes I have three times a week. Am I using it to the full extent or am I allowing downtime, which is lost? I was motivated to assess the flow of my lessons and made adjustments to strive to utilize the limited time in the best way possible.

These are only a few examples of the classroom practices that caught my attention as I observed other teachers. I saw these teachers do things that I feel I do well in my class and think that they did much better and which I can greatly improve in my own teaching. I will become a better educator as I strive to inculcate into my methods the positive features of others. A key component of this is that I be willing to examine where I stand in my teaching abilities and then build upon them. This will be a lifelong endeavor.

### Analysis and Reflection of Teaching Video

The recording and observation of this class session occurred during my time as a graduate instructor of a first-year, Spanish language class (i.e., Spanish 1010) at Utah State University. The time allotted for the class was 50 minutes, although we had a visitor come and discuss an opportunity for the students to travel abroad for the last 10-15 minutes. The goal of the class was for students to describe the best vacation they had ever experienced. After watching my video, I realize that there were aspects of my teaching that could be improved.

I started the class by reviewing the preterit verb conjugations. Different students were asked to answer questions such as, “What time did you get up today?” or “What did you eat for breakfast this morning?,” which prompted responses in the preterit form. One student replied with the time only “a las 7:30.” I asked for a complete sentence in hopes that the students would use all of the words we were practicing. The student produced the present tense “Me levanto a las 7:30” instead of the desired “Me levanté a las 7:30.” While staying in the target language, I used circumlocution to draw attention to what was said, providing the student with an opportunity to rephrase her response. Through this exchange, she was able to produce the desired form of the verb in a complete sentence. Looking back on the video, I see that this section was more of a prescriptive approach to language teaching since I was expecting students to produce accurate responses, when in reality, their comments were understood fine. I should encourage the use of language rather than the ‘correct’ use of it. That will come with practice and exposure.

Next, I asked a student to select a verb and create a sentence in past tense, which falls into the same prescriptive ideals. While in reality, no one approaches the students on

the street asking them to conjugate a verb. I asked him to do this to give some variety to the discussion. He chose *perder* (to lose) and said that he lost his happiness. In an attempt to lighten the mood of that interaction, I asked the class to give the other student a collective sigh. They all joined and laughed as a group. In my teaching philosophy, I discuss the need to establish quality interpersonal relationships between students as well as between the teacher and students. This was one example of many over the course of the semester that we laughed and learned together.

The next activity was applying the now reviewed preterit form of verbs to describe a favorite vacation or birthday party. I modeled this by orally describing one of my favorite vacations in five or six phrases including where I went, who was there with me, what we did, and my favorite part of the vacation. I said these phrases as I showed pictures of the activities on the screen. As I described this trip, I emphasized the verbs and their forms by stating the verb I had chosen and saying “past tense” after each one. This was to draw the students’ attention to the change from the present tense forms of the verbs they knew. I also pointed out the use of *nos gustaron* when I explained that my friends and I liked the things we saw, utilizing the verb conjugated into the preterit third-person plural form. I tried to give explicit guidance when there was something that could be confusing to the learners. I thought I had designed the task-based activity well and that it would be helpful to the students as they shared their memories.

Yet, in reviewing the video, I noticed that I began the activity by saying that the students were going to describe a vacation they had been on. I seem to stutter as I saw the extra words of “or birthday party” on the slide I had prepared. I can imagine that the students were also surprised at seeing that extra option as part of the instructions. This

shows the need to review the slides and be sure that I am familiar with all aspects of the planned activity and that it is streamlined. I believe I supplied the students with comprehensible input and fairly clear instructions in the L2. I wanted to avoid describing the activity in English because that would defeat the purpose of explaining it in Spanish, which provides students with comprehensible input that they can convert to intake. This action follows what I propose in my teaching philosophy of using the target language as much as possible.

I wanted this activity to be a type of jigsaw exchange where first, Students A and B would describe their vacations to each other and Students C and D would do the same. After that exchange was completed, student A would explain student B's vacations to student C while B described A's to D. Some students took notes (some in Spanish and some in English) so they could remember their partner's answers. I was pleased with the exchanges I overheard as I walked around the classroom listening to students and their conversations. As I joined their discussion, I encouraged and praised students' effort to produce their thoughts in the target language. Many students asked me questions each class, which demonstrates to me that they felt I was approachable and that I would do my best to support them and help them understand.

I believe that a few aspects of class execution could be improved. First, I could have managed time better. When reviewing the preterit forms of the verbs, many students asked questions about irregulars and stem changers. I was happy to answer those questions but I should have moved on after answer one or two. This would have provided more time for the activity. Secondly, after watching the video, I see that I could have broken the communicative goal of the activity down into additional tasks. The jump from



reviewing verbs to describing vacations seemed to be missing a transitional point.

Thirdly, the goal of the class session should be adjusted to fit the time allotted. Due to the fact that we had a visitor during the last ten to fifteen minutes of class, I should have accounted for that loss of time better. This can go back to the first point as well.

This exercise of watching myself on video has been helpful to highlight things that I have done well as a language teacher and call attention to the points that need to be improved. I am pleased to see that I have been able to implement some aspects of my teaching philosophy in the classroom environment and now that I have reflected on the content of this video self-observation, I am optimistic to be able to improve all around.

LANGUAGE ARTIFACT

Dual Language Immersion: Past, Present, and Future

## INTRODUCTION

The basis of this artifact was written for the Dual Language Immersion class I took in Spring 2014, taught by Dr. María Luisa Spicer-Escalante. I had heard praise for the Utah Model of DLI and was curious as to the background development of this program. I learned that there are many types of immersion programs that have shown to be beneficial for students. I was impressed by the loftiness of the goals the Utah Model has set forth, namely: 9<sup>th</sup> grade language students taking the Advanced Placement (AP) Exam to receive college credit; and that, upon graduation, students would be only a few classes away from earning a college minor in the language. As I read about the vision of the program, questions came to mind about the preparedness of the FL teachers in the junior high and high schools. At the end of this artifact, I propose a research study to gather more information on the matter.

As globalization continues to affect the ways in which people around the world interact with each other, it has become and will continue to be important for us to be able to speak and interact in multiple languages (Genesee, 2008). Outside of this new, global reality, there are also many other positive reasons to learn a second or foreign language—either as an adult or as a young learner. Dual language immersion (DLI) education is an example of a unique way in which students can gain understanding of subject areas in two languages (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000). The goals of this paper are to (a) describe what DLI is, (b) highlight the social, cultural, and linguistics benefits of DLI for learners, (c) situate DLI education within the context of the state of Utah, and (d) propose a small-scale DLI research project.

### **Benefits of Using Language**

Language provides human beings with the ability to shape their community and enables them to create for themselves a place within it. Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan (2000) state that “language competence leads to personal empowerment because effective use of language for engagement in society commands respect and attention. Language competence gives voice to individual's social, political, and economic concerns” (p. 2). Humans use language as one of the primary tools to navigate through everyday life. As we develop the skill of using language, we are able to share ideas. The versatility of language can be seen in many areas. Language allows for the interaction with and shaping of our environment (Kinginger, 2001). The ability to interact in multiple languages provides greater opportunities for learning as well as for influencing the environment. That is, language is used to negotiate meaning within our surroundings, whether that is through spoken or written forms of communication. Long (1996) states

that this is environmental support in the form of comprehensible input. Humans are both receivers of input and producers of similar forms of output and, therefore, can influence the environment around them to become full of rich communication.

Acquiring two languages can result in a number of social and linguistic affordances for the learner. One aspect of the social benefits gained in a DLI classroom is that “knowing other languages can expand one's understanding of other cultural groups—their values, social customs, and ways of viewing the world” (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000, p. 4). This is often called ethno-relativism, which is defined as the promotion of intercultural relations and the acceptance of qualities or traits from other ethnic groups (Bennett, 2004). According to Cloud and colleagues (2000), one of the primary reasons that English-speaking parents send their children to DLI programs is due to the added marketability a bilingual employee has in the workforce. The parents are investing in their children's education and future. Research has also shown that bilingual students outperform their monolingual counterparts (on tasks that require divergent thinking, such as finding alternate solutions), pattern recognition, and problem solving.

### **Foundation of DLI**

Since its inception, bilingual education has promoted majority language speakers to acquire a second language during their schooling, as well as helping minority language speakers gain proficiency in English (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Key points of the Bilingual Education Act of 1994 were changed to include the preservation and continued development of the minority language that was often lost by its speakers. There were four years of what appeared to be general acceptance and even excitement at the prospect of fluency in another language. This progress came to an abrupt halt as voters in California,

Arizona, and Massachusetts eliminated nearly all of the bilingual classrooms in those states. Crawford (2003) suggests that one of the possible reasons for this decline was due to ethnocentrism, meaning that an individual considers his culture (i.e., language, customs) more valuable than others. Americans may think that their children would fall behind in school if they had a second language to battle English in their minds. This leads to another reason behind the unpopularity of bilingual education: the ignorance of its effects on the developing mind of children. “For most Americans,” says Crawford (2003), “explanations of how bilingual education works are seldom available” (p. 4). If parents would put forth the effort to educate themselves as to what is implied with bilingual education, they would be much more willing to enroll their children into these programs.

### **Types of Bilingual Education**

There are four kinds of bilingual education, all of them aimed at “treat[ing] language skills as the asset they are” (Riley, 2000, p. 5). A definition of bilingual education is “instruction in *two languages* and the use of those two languages as mediums of instruction for any part, or all, of the school curriculum” (as cited in May, 2008, p. 20, italics in original). The emphasis on bilingual education should denote an apparent use of two languages instead of one, yet somehow this is overlooked. For a program to be considered bilingual, two languages should be used to deliver instruction and feedback. In short, the day’s activities should be conducted using the two languages. This provides half of each school day in the target language as opposed to one 45-minute class period every other day in the typical junior high or high school in the United States. Bilingual education classes have been divided into four different models: transitional,

maintenance, enrichment, and heritage (May, 2008). What follows is a brief description of each model.

### *Transitional*

Transitional bilingual education came about mainly because of the increase in minority language students entering the school system. This model helps during the ‘transition’ from using the minority language to gaining proficiency in the majority language at a young age, usually in the elementary schools. Changing schools is difficult for any child, let alone when the classes are taught in a different language. It is nice that teachers and administrators recognize the need to help these transitional students along. A downside, however, is “that the (minority) L1 will eventually be replaced by a (majority) L2” (May, 2008, p. 21), thus devaluing the benefits of being bilingual and merely assimilating the minority to becoming monolingual using the majority language as the form of communication. This can be seen as disregarding the language and culture the individual brought and changing him/her to become American. Crawford (2003) states that “favoring immersion is one thing; banning native-language instruction is quite another” (p. 5). Language and identity can be lost through this kind of transitional approach.

### *Maintenance*

The bilingual education model termed maintenance “aims to maintain the minority language of the student, strengthen the student's sense of cultural and linguistic identity, and affirm their individual and collective ethnolinguistic rights” (May, 2008, p. 22). This approach therefore preserves the student’s minority language abilities and does

not blur or cut the ties to their culture. Instruction is given in both the L1 and the L2 with at least 50% of it being in the L1.

### *Enrichment*

Majority language students can be enrolled in enrichment bilingual education, meaning that acquiring a second language will enrich their studies. This is closely related to the previous model of bilingual education yet, as Hornberger (1991) argues, “the enrichment model encompasses all those bilingual education program types which aim towards not only maintenance but development and extension of the minority languages, cultural pluralism, and an integrated national society based on autonomy of cultural groups” (p. 222). Enrichment is the conglomeration of best practices in bilingual education. It provides the content instruction in two languages (the majority and minority) so as to help those minority students feel comfortable in their classes where their L1 is used while at the same time giving the majority students the opportunity to develop skills while learning in the L2 for half of the day. This is then reversed and gives the students equal opportunity.

### *Heritage*

The heritage bilingual education model is most often applied as a revitalizing energy in areas where indigenous languages are being lost. Examples of the heritage model can be found in the attempt to restore Hawaiian as a commonly spoken language instead of its gradual decline becoming a forgotten tongue (Song, 2007). Some researchers have placed heritage learning somewhere in between maintenance and enrichment models in terms of the L1/L2 status of their students (May & Hill, 2005). This demonstrates that heritage language learning entails more language instruction than the



maintenance model in the fact that it is a second language for many of its learners. It has not reached the enrichment model because instructors are rarely teaching using the heritage language as one of the two languages of instruction.

### **One-Way / Two-Way Bilingual Education**

In addition to the categorization of bilingual education programs into the groups mentioned above, the dual language instruction is often divided into two models that are referred to as *one-way* and *two-way*. One-way immersion provides schooling to *one* language group in two languages while two-way provides instruction to *two* language groups in the majority and minority language (Collier & Thomas, 2004, italics added). In many parts of the United States, school districts have a high concentration of families speaking English outside the home and their native language in the home. Both one- and two-way models support the preservation of the majority and minority languages. “Two-way bilingual classes taught by sensitive teachers can lead to a context where students from each language group learn to respect their fellow students as valued partners in the learning process with much knowledge to teach each other” (Collier & Thomas, 2004, p. 3). Respect for others despite their differences is a great skill to develop early on in life.

### **The Utah Model**

The Utah Model of DLI began in 2008. The Senate Bill 41, also entitled the International Initiatives Bill, provided funding to create 50/50 one- and two-way immersion programs in Chinese, French, and Spanish. Then Utah Governor Jon Huntsman Jr., who is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, saw the interest in developing the language abilities of Utah students, as did Senator Howard Stephenson who was the chief sponsor of the bill. The bill recognizes “(i) the importance of students acquiring skills in

foreign languages in order for them to successfully compete in a global society; and (ii) the academic, societal, and economic development benefits of the acquisition of critical languages” (Senate Bill 41, 2008). Many people may overlook the reality that we live in a world that is competing on a global scale (Riley, 2000; Roberts & Wade, 2012). To prevail in this endeavor, the future generation must be properly equipped with the necessary abilities, including the ability to be proficient in a second language. There are also other academic and societal benefits that result from studying and acquiring a foreign language, such as easing tension between culture groups in the community and increasing the number of employment opportunities for bilinguals in the globalized job market (Gomez, Freeman, & Freeman, 2005; Roberts & Wade, 2012). Today, there are 118 schools participating in the Utah DLI program offering instruction to over 25,000 students in five languages: Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish (Why Immersion?, n.d.; see Appendix A for additional information about DLI) with Russian being added in the coming year and Arabic and Japanese being projected as upcoming languages (Dual Language Immersion Bridge Project, 2013).

DLI research is now becoming more common due to the increase in the number of DLI programs in the United States. In the past, data has been difficult to gather with limited research samples. With this somewhat novel field of study, there are bound to be additional questions to investigate and strive to answer. Many benefits to students have resulted from DLI programs and they have been documented in research that has been done to date. DLI programs have resulted in socio-cultural, economic and academic benefits for the individual and the community (Bialystok, 2011; Bialystok, Craik, & Luk, 2012; Hood & Navarro, 2010; Proctor, August, Carlo, & Barr, 2010).

As previously mentioned, forthcoming generations will exist in an increasingly globalized, multilingual and multicultural world. “Multicultural education provides an alternative vision for organizing teaching and learning in contemporary schools, one that contrasts with the largely ethnocentric models that exist at present in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere” (Genesee & Gándara, 1999, p. 670). There is little room for individuals to attempt to, at least in their minds, preserve their culture and customs as higher in value than other cultures. DLI programs help to break down biased and ethnocentric views that exist in order to allow children to grow up with an appreciation for people whose linguistic, cultural, and social values are different from their own. In other words, one important result of DLI programs involves children gaining the ability to meaningfully interact with others who espouse different cultural and linguistic views of the world. That said, the ability to communicate properly with members of a target culture requires the interlocutor to be literate.

Literacy can be broken down into different meanings: the ability to read and write in the target language as well as having cultural literacy. Cultural literacy (sometimes referred to as cultural competence) involves the understanding of customs and traditions of the target culture and being able to successfully navigate interaction with members of that culture. This understanding is imperative in order for young people to take advantage of the reality ahead of them. They are living and learning in a multicultural environment at school and will undoubtedly experience this same multicultural context in their future workplace(s) (Genesee, 2008).

Some parents are worried that their child’s academic performance will suffer due to the added language into the elementary curriculum.

Students in immersion programs acquire the same proficiency in English and achieve the same levels of competence in their academic subjects (e.g., mathematics, science, and social studies) as comparable English-speaking students who attend regular all-English programs. At the same time, immersion students acquire advanced levels of functional proficiency in French. They are able to do all of their school work, communicate with their friends and teachers in school and with others outside school comfortably, effortlessly, and effectively.

(Cloud, 2000, p. 3)

DLI programs in the United States, such as those here in Cache Valley, have undergone many changes in order to become what they are today. The programs have demonstrated being an enabling force in helping minority students have the same opportunity in learning as the majority students, while providing the majority students with experiences whereby they can acquire a second language. If the results of continued and future research produce students that are proficient in an L2 and are keeping pace with their monolingual counterparts, it should be determined valuable to the individual student as well as the community.

### **Future of DLI in Utah**

In 2010, Governor Gary Herbert and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Larry Shumway issued a five-year challenge to Utah educators. The goal they set was to have one hundred DLI programs throughout Utah by 2015, which would enroll 30,000 students (Why Immersion?, n.d.). With this added push, the goal of one hundred programs was reached a year early at the start of the 2014-2015 school year. High quality staff is required in order to ensure the continued development of students. The Utah State Office of Education (USOE) requires potential DLI teachers to demonstrate high linguistic competence and proficiency as well as to obtain the proper endorsements and licensure consistent with state and district requirements.

As part of this expansion, the objective of language instruction and learning has expanded from a K-12 endeavor to a K-16 undertaking. Language students will have the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement (AP) exam to receive college credit during their freshman year of high school, as opposed to taking it at sometime during their senior year. After passing this exam, students will be able to enroll in 3000 level college courses for the remainder of their high school careers. If they follow this academic path, recording a maximum of nine upper-division credits to their college transcripts before admission. By the time they graduate from high school, students will be two three-credit classes away from earning a college minor in their second language at most universities in the state of Utah. According to the Utah State Office of Education (2013b), students in DLI classes from Kindergarten to their senior year of high school will have “an uninterrupted pathway for students...to exit university programs at the Superior level of proficiency” (p. 14) earned through taking the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). That is greater proficiency than required for teachers to earn the DLI endorsement to put on their teaching license (they must earn an advanced-mid rating, two steps lower than the superior rating).

While this is an inspiring accomplishment, it does pose some questions about the preparedness of language teachers in order to properly instruct the children who grow with the program. A suggested research project is described below that would investigate this aspect of DLI programs in the state of Utah.

### **Research Aims**

The Utah Model of DLI teaching prepares school-age children to develop language proficiency from kindergarten through completion of their bachelor’s degree.

Through conducting this study, the author hopes to gain insight to the opinions of current immersion teachers as to their sense of preparation to teach higher proficiency language students. This information will aid in determining which methodologies are helpful and should be continued through elementary DLI programs and into the students' secondary schooling.

This proposed research study consists of two major questions: 1) What do junior high and high school language teachers feel would help them become better prepared to teach highly proficient immersion students?; 2) How are school districts and state officials preparing for the increased need of well-qualified language teachers so they can continue immersion programs into junior high and high schools?

## **Research Method**

### *Design*

The research design involves the formulation of a series of surveys with sections unique to each population. The questions that will be included in these surveys will be simple response questions as well as Likert scale-based questions designed to determine the sense of preparation the teachers feel to teach the immersion students. These qualitative responses describe the current sentiment about the rising generation of language learners.

### *Subjects*

Certified DLI teachers, both male and female, will be the first contacts. Their ages will vary, as will their teaching experience and native language. We will also speak with teachers in junior high and high schools, many of whom have not dealt with students that are already proficient in a second language. We will contact and interview high school

administrators and hear their thoughts on how they can best prepare their teachers for the influx in proficient language students.

Officials from the Utah State Office of Education will serve as additional contacts and participants in this study given that they determine the way(s) which DLI programs in the state run/will work in the future. The author would like to hear their plans on how the growth of these programs will follow the outline already in place and what steps need to be taken to provide the best language instruction available.

### *Procedure*

Each population will complete their group-specific survey in addition to the general survey. Following this procedure, we will receive feedback for the DLI program in a holistic sense as well as via participants' specialized areas. In addition to the Likert scale previously mentioned, we will supply the subjects with prompt questions for an elaborated answer. Data to be gathered will include the gender and age of the teachers; where they are from; how many years each teacher has been teaching full time; grades they have taught; level achieved in the ACTFL OPI which may suggest whether they could teach effectively in the target language; a description of their educational background (degrees, majors, minors, other certifications) in order to find out if they would have underlying proficiency in teaching science, history, math, business, etc.; opinions on whether teachers feel prepared to teach content courses in the target language; and ideas of professional development opportunities that would be beneficial for administrators and policy makers to create (see Appendix A for the survey questions). This feedback will provide insight to the sense of preparation of Cache Valley and Utah DLI teachers and administrators.

### **Potential Contribution**

The study on the future of DLI will bring an awareness of the future needs of the language programs in the State of Utah. This does not mean that we will not need entry-level courses taught for those seeking to acquire their third or fourth language or those students that did not have the opportunity to participate in a DLI program in their elementary school. It does, however, demonstrate the need to prepare secondary language teachers to teach content courses in the target language rather than solely language-oriented (i.e., typically grammar-based) class. We want to share this information with current traditional language teachers and get their opinions about potential changes that may occur due to the rise in number of DLI programs. I believe that the results of this study would show the need for more advanced classes for those individuals that have the desire to continue studying the language with the intent to receive college credit and specialization.

Utah's policies related to DLI programs are gaining momentum and are increasingly expanding to include foreign language study in the middle school and high school contexts. The question remains: Are our language teachers ready and willing to change with the program? Will they be able to adapt and adjust where needed in order to contribute to the synergy needed to ensure that all educators, administrators, etc., are on the same page and moving in the same direction? This study will help understand where Utah stands in this process.



LITERACY ARTIFACT

Multiliteracies for Educational Achievement

## INTRODUCTION

This artifact was written as a component of an independent study course I took under direction of Dr. Karin deJonge-Kannan in the fall semester of 2014. I volunteered at the English Language Center (ELC) of Cache Valley, helping in three different classes (beginner and conversational English, as well as computer literacy). While writing reflections about my time in the ELC, I thought it was interesting to be helping students develop different types of literacy. After consulting some relevant literature, I discovered that the development of learners' multiliteracies is a popular topic of investigation in both FL and EFL contexts.

Many researchers agree that in today's world, the term *literacy* must go beyond the traditional definition of reading and writing. Literacy has now evolved to require fluency and the ability to interpret print texts and images through a number of different devices and mediums as well as the ability to use computers, the Web, and other technological tools. This paper will cover a brief overview of traditional literacy development in the first and second languages, explain findings about enhancing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of multiliteracy for students as well as teachers, and describe personal observations of English language learners (ELLs) in their efforts to become multiliterate. A proposed project, patterned after a study executed in Ogden, Utah, is also included at the end of this paper with the objective of finding if ELLs in Cache Valley are improving their literacy skills through reading printed books and how many are accessing and embracing the use of multiliteracy tools.

The ability to produce oral language appears to be an innate developmental characteristic of human beings. Some theorists even consider language acquisition as universal and inevitable (VanPatten & Williams, 2006). However, literacy in a first or additional language must be taught and continually practiced in order to be used well (Met, 2008). In today's world, the term literacy must convey more than just reading and writing (Kern, 2005). Multiliteracy has emerged as the broadened definition of literacy to include the "21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills" of computer use, Internet navigation, and using other forms of technology (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). When discussing foreign language teaching and learning, these two subjects have been separated. If teachers are able to reverse this view and "consider reading and writing in their social contexts—as complementary dimensions of communication, rather than as discrete skills—" (Kern & Schultz, 2005, p. 382) they can more easily see how they apply to one another in the use of language which is involved in each person's daily life.

### **Language Development**

Our environment is full of language. The typical child will be surrounded by conversation from the time of his birth. Although he cannot participate in the discussion at his current stage of development, the child can observe that language is used as a tool of interaction: a "conductor of human influence on the object of activity" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 55). To be considered a tool, language must somehow alter the effort pursued in order to achieve a goal. Before they can use language as a tool, children use bodily gestures as tools to mediate their activity. If a child wants a bottle of milk that is in view but out of reach, they may gesture with an open hand in the direction of the bottle. When the mother sees the child reaching, she may infer that the child is hungry and gives him

the bottle. The child solved the perceived problem of hunger by gesturing toward the object of his activity, the bottle. His mother recognized the activity and gave the child his desire. This is an example of what Vygotsky (1978) calls object regulation. In other words, some other person helped to regulate the child's activity (i.e., in this case, his desire to have the bottle) in his environment. Over time, this kind of regulation eventually develops into self-regulation; where the child can eventually regulate his own mental (and physical) activity and carry out his desires on his own. Similarly, as the child develops the ability to use a more diverse array of language/linguistic forms, he will essentially use language as a symbolic tool that will regulate his cognitive and social activity with himself and with others. This, in turn, will allow him to interact more fully with his environment and the people in it.

Linguistic stimuli help human beings to make sense of the world in which we live. In addition, language is encoded with cultural meaning. What is said in one cultural context may take on a new significance in another since "each culture has its own set of psychological tools and situations in which these tools are appropriated" (Kozulin, 2003, p. 16). Language affords human beings with a new mode of interaction including the use of "metaphor, metonymy, and other tropes" as well "as tense, aspect, mood, voice, and anaphora" (Lantolf, 2011, p. 32). These linguistic features provide a variety of options for an individual to choose from in deciding which to utilize in different situations.

"Vygotsky believed that the internalization of culturally produced sign systems brings about behavioral transformations and forms the bridge between early and later forms of individual development" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 7). Once that bridge is established, past experience can be evaluated through the cultural lens and behavior can be changed to

better resemble the proper usage of the sign system, especially language. This demonstrates the potential development that can occur as language, in its multiple forms, is used to communicate.

### **Developing Traditional Literacy**

In contrast to spoken language, the acquisition of which appears to be inevitable, the abilities to read and write are gained through practice and continual effort on behalf of the learner. Vygotsky (1978) describes a pre-literate child writing something down on a piece of paper. The child has seen adults do this and is now patterning his own behavior after what has been modeled. Although the page contains only scribbled lines that have no meaning, the child “reproduces phrases [which] seems as though he is reading them” (p. 114). This action suggests that the child has made the connection that written language is language nonetheless, just in a different form. Children learn how to hold a pencil in their hand and maneuver it to write or draw in order to get the ideas they have in their heads down onto paper. These actions can be seen as refined uses of a complicated motor skill; dexterity with a writing utensil. Children can develop “the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, and think critically about ideas” (Cummins, 2007, p. 2). These ideas can be described and elaborated as children continue to develop these skills.

Written language can serve as a form of comprehensible input (Lee & VanPatten, 2003) which, when read, can lead to the acquisition of new vocabulary and making new connections as to their meanings (Lee & VanPatten, 2003; Willis Allen & Paesani, 2010). Reading is an exercise in negotiating meaning since readers are “making sense out of text, or constructing meaning” (Armbruster, 2010, p. 46). Reading and writing can

augment learners' linguistic abilities. Whereas "literacy is a primary vehicle for language development beyond childhood," (Met, 2008, p. 50) and "the bulk of [children]'s vocabulary growth occurs through language exposure rather than direct teaching" (Sparks, Patton, Ganschow, & Humbach, 2012, p. 477), it is essential for them to be exposed to both spoken conversation and written texts outside of school. Learners expand their lexical arsenals as they read. At the same time, they are promoting the development of their speaking ability and can enhance their budding writing skills (Castro, Dickinson, & Frede, 2011). These skills and past experiences are applicable and, in some cases, transferrable to other areas.

### **English Language Center (ELC) of Cache Valley**

The ELC teaches individuals of diverse nationalities to speak, read, and write English as well as helping them acquire other skills necessary to becoming active members of society. In 2010, the ELC had nearly 30 licensed teachers, along with over 250 community volunteers, assisted at least 1,224 students from 90 different countries (DuHadway, 2011). Founder and co-director Katie Jensen said that she could not imagine a better cause than giving education to others. She emphasizes the importance of education to empower and lift individuals (Fry, 2013).

Demographics of the male and female students I have worked with in the classes ranged age-wise from 18-69, originating from Mexico, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. I found the variety of student backgrounds at the ELC to be surprising; I had not imagined that there was such a wide diversity of culture here in Cache Valley. Personal observations made while volunteering at the ELC will be included in the remainder of this paper.

## **Second Language Literacy and Observations at the ELC**

Studies have shown that high school students who scored higher when tested on oral and written skills in their first language have exhibited stronger L2 aptitude and L2 proficiency and achievement (Sparks, Patton, Ganschow, & Humbach, 2012). These results are an impressive demonstration of the power of words. When learning a second language, oral, reading, and writing skills from both the L1 and L2 interact and support each other. Castro, Dickinson, and Frede (2011) give this example of how that support occurs: “reading is important for developing oral vocabulary, which in turn promotes speaking and can enhance writing” (p. 16). These abilities are necessary, according to Genesee (2008), if people are to thrive and take full advantage of today’s global realities of living and learning in a multicultural environment. “The value of knowing other languages is intimately linked to the ability to read and write, be it related to business, personal or cultural reasons and be it related to Internet or interpersonal communication” (p. 24). When we examine the relationship between reading and writing as ways to interact and communicate instead of separate skills, we can see how they support various forms of communication (Kern & Schultz, 2005). The ELC provides this support to students through organizing classes in which licensed teachers and helpful volunteers who facilitate this learning.

Many students who attend these English classes did not have the opportunity to go to school when they were younger. Some of them enter the ELC “pre-literate — meaning absolutely no reading or writing skills even in their native language,” (Nielsen, 2014, para. 12), while others are more educated. The ELC Co-director “stated that the classes help students ‘go from pre-literate to pre-university’” (Nielsen, 2014, para. 13)

and that, no matter what skills they demonstrate, there is a class for everyone to learn English. For example, the beginning English classes consist of about an hour of students working in their activity book and an hour of conversation. The activities include printed questions that the students would answer in written format. In addition, they would also answer questions about pictures (people, emotions, prepositions, professions, etc.). Students are given a supplemental booklet to the activities that contains pictures and drawings of these words and their meanings. Students use that in conjunction with the written directions to complete the activities.

The second half of the class was routine each time I attended. The students would ask questions and answer them about the day, month, year, and weather (for example, “What is the day?” “It’s Monday.” and so on). The teacher then used a textbook to guide the students’ conversation. There once was a cartoon picture of a shopping mall with many different shops, clerks, customers, and other items. The goal was to make a shopping list and discuss where the students would need to go. The students identified what they saw in the picture with a partner or volunteer. This provided them with a review of (or introduction to) the vocabulary they would need to complete the activity. Through asking questions about what the students needed to buy and where they would go, the volunteers were able to help the students perform well, even if it was in short responses. This was the entry level of proficiency in the ELC.

The Conversational English class is held once a week. Students that attend are between the ages of 25 and 60 years old. Many countries are represented in this cohort. The students gather at the beginning to familiarize themselves with potentially new vocabulary. The class is then divided into smaller groups of one or two volunteers with



three to four students. The teacher provides each person with a sheet of words to practice pronunciation. After that exercise, the volunteers facilitate discussion on the topic of the week. Around Thanksgiving, the topic was gratitude and thankfulness. During another class session, we discussed heroes. These conversations were beneficial for the students because they were able to share their thoughts and ideas on topics that they may not have encountered in everyday conversation using their second language. Conversation is more than a form of linguistic practice; it is the act of being exposed to and producing language that can encourage language development (Arnold & Ducate, 2011). “Practice means that you try to improve by noticing what you are doing wrong and formulating strategies to do better. Practice also requires feedback, usually from someone more skilled than you are” (Rotherham & Willingham, 2010, p. 19). With the guidance of teachers and volunteers, ELLs can learn to interact with each other in English while negotiating meaning and developing comprehension. They can also be exposed to new types of communication that have come into existence through the evolution of technology.

### **Multiliteracies**

Some theorists and popular pedagogies used in schools suggest that these cognitive abilities and various forms of knowledge, such as reading and writing, develop in a manner “strictly *sequential* (i.e., print-based alphabetic literacy precedes other forms of cognitive and multimodal engagement) and *segmented* (i.e., particular modes of literacy and associated skills/resources develop independent of one another)” (Tan & McWilliams, 2009, p. 223). If this is the order of growth and learning, it leaves little time for teachers to assist in the development of digital skills in their students. The sequence of

literacy development should include, and can be enhanced by, multiliteracies, the desired outcomes of formal learning in the twenty-first century (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009).

Technology's influence has made it necessary to consider broadening the range of skills included when using the term "literacy" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Giampapa, 2010; Kalantzis & Cope, 2008; Tan & McWilliam, 2009; Wolfe & Flewitt, 2010), even to the extent of literacy being "defined by the technology" (Pinkard, 2013, para. 1). Kern (2000) states that "literacy is dynamic—not static—and variable across and within discourse communities and cultures. It draws on a wide range of cognitive abilities, on knowledge of written and spoken language, on knowledge of genres, and on cultural knowledge" (p. 16). Technology has changed the manner in which individuals access information. Collier (2007) states that there is a fallacy if teachers believe that school age children are not reading and writing anymore. They are, just in ways that are different than teachers are used to (Collier, 2007; Williams, 2008). Individuals contribute to the creation and consumption of information on the Internet on a daily basis, giving billions of people "access to billions of pages of raw information" (Freidman, 2007, p. 211) which appear in many forms on mobile and smart phones as well as in web browsers. Webpages are "multi-modal, that is, they combine visual, audio, linguistic, gestural, and spatial modes to convey meaning in a richer way" (Mills, 2008, p. 110),

...but the logic of their reading is more like the syntax of the visual than that of the written language. Reading the screen requires considerable navigational effort. Today's screens are designed for many viewing paths, allowing for diverse interests and subjectivities amongst viewers, and the reading path they choose will reflect the considerable design effort the viewer has put into their reading.

(Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 181)

As the resources available to students and adults via technology continue to increase exponentially, the need for formal instruction on how to develop and utilize multiple new literacies becomes increasingly crucial (Baron, 2009; Elmborg, 2006; Johnson, Levine, & Smith, McAuliffe, & Rippard, 2014).

A multiliterate person, as classified by Bull and Anstey (2007), is “someone flexible and strategic in their literacy: able to understand and use...a range of texts and technologies, in socially responsible ways, within a socially, culturally and linguistically diverse world” (para. 9). Communication has not changed; it is still an interactive process. The way in which people interact is what has transformed (Collier, 2007). Allowing for such diverse discussion leads some authors to posit that the Internet is a prime location for individuals to interact due to its popularity and possibilities (Matsuda, Canagarajah, Harklau, Hyland, & Warschauer, 2003). A multiliteracy pedagogy urges students to “enter into a new realm of collaborative enquiry and construction of knowledge, viewing their expanding repertoire of identities and communication strategies as resources in the process” (Kern, Ware, & Warschauer, 2004, p. 21). There is a wealth of knowledge that becomes available to those individuals who can access them. In order for students to be active participants in this world, they must be able “to sift through documents [and other forms of media], assess the quality and credibility of information, and make decisions about intellectual property” (Alexander, 2008, p. 157) and then know how to use it. “New technologies increase the speed of information flow and the diversity of formats in which we receive information” (Elmborg, 2006, p. 195). No matter the media used to present information, the end goal of consuming that information is exchanging ideas, negotiating meaning, and ultimately, comprehension (Armbruster,

2010). This is evidence that 'literate' students not only can read and write, but they have evolved into becoming informed consumers and able producers of communication, in whatever form, not limiting the extent of technological possibilities.

Although the world is immersed in wireless and social networks which are full of information in text, photographic, and video formats,

it is argued that merely being exposed to visual media does not necessarily lead to the acquisition of visual decoding skills nor does it improve abilities to creatively construct visual texts. Learners must have the opportunity to work with and create visual texts in a variety of media.

(Cooper, Lockyer, & Brown, 2013, p. 94)

That is the purpose behind the Computer Literacy class at the ELC, which is held twice a week. Students come to learn about how to use computer tools that may be considered essential, including: email, Internet navigation (to find information, jobs, flights, shopping, etc.), social media, Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Learning how to use these tools and applications will be beneficial to the students as they continue familiarizing themselves with how to use a personal computer.

It was apparent to me that the students were late adopters of technology, due to a lack of exposure to and use of it. Although for many of us digital and electronic devices seem to surround us and be involved in all aspects of our lives (Kuiper, Volman, & Terwel, 2009), we cannot assume that all students have had the same exposure and experience using technology (Borsheim, Merritt, & Reed, 2008). Many students who come to the ELC are prime examples of being digital newcomers, even volunteers need some technology training before assisting in class.

On one occasion, we had a second volunteer in class, a gentleman in his mid-50s. He expressed that he probably would be of little help in the class since he did not know much about computers. I explained the schedule the classes followed, specifically that the students had about 20-30 minutes of typing practice using an online program before the evening's task would be explained and carried out. He reminisced about learning to type on a manual typewriter. He wanted to try typing so I explained how he could log on the computer and open a Word document. After getting the computer started, he asked me how to get to the program. I told him to click on the icon and he pressed all three buttons on the mouse, which did nothing. I showed him how to click and he was able to open the application and practice typing before class. I highlight this anecdote to illustrate the fact that digital literacy is not determined by citizenship in a certain country. It is influenced by access, exposure, and ultimately use of the technology. It is through that experience that new uses will emerge.

Lewin and Luckin (2010) discuss how technology can be used to support parental involvement in schools and their children's learning in the United Kingdom. Computers and Internet access were provided to a number of residents "in areas of socio-economic deprivation" (p. 749), the utilization of which "correlates with students staying in school, earning better grades and graduating from high school" (Bessire, 2014, p. 4). In addition to these positive outcomes, if technology could strengthen the link between home and school, 1) the role and status of homework could be transformed while extending opportunities for learning; 2) school work could be transferred between home and school, as well as granting access to school intranets and learning platforms to parents and students anywhere as long as they have an Internet connection; 3) improved

communication between school and home would give parents greater access to information about school events, student deadlines, and other news; and 4) it could lead to increased parental engagement (Lewin & Luckin, 2010).

Parental involvement has shown to be a crucial variable in determining whether home computer use has overall positive or negative results in their children's academic performance as well as improved behavior (Bessire, 2014). Therefore, it is imperative that parents are able to navigate a computer interface in order to assist their children in homework and other learning activities. Parents and teachers may expect their students "to be active and motivated knowledge seekers as a matter of course" (Kuiper, Volman, & Terwel, 2009, p. 679). However, they often underestimate "the significance of their own contribution to the students' inquiry activities, and their role in modeling an inquisitive attitude" (Kuiper, et al., 2009, p. 679). Parents should model proper technology and media usage and curiosity for learning, thus becoming positive influences on their children by providing them with the tools and opportunities necessary to succeed. Teachers can also assist in this success if they know what resources students have access to at home and how to utilize it to a fuller extent. Although each region or city will be different, methods followed in a study in Ogden, Utah may be replicated elsewhere to find out the educational needs of students in order to build upon their existing (multi)literacy skills.

### **Ogden United Promise Neighborhood (OUPN)**

In an effort to find out if these electronic resources (computers and Internet access at home) are available, and if not, how they could be made available to households in Ogden, Utah, the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL) at Weber State

University assisted in conducting a research project in which residents living within a five-mile area of downtown were surveyed and asked about the status of city resources and how they could be improved to help ‘from cradle to college to community: preparing our kids for bright futures.’ When the survey data is submitted and reviewed, since surveys are still being administered to residents living in the target neighborhoods, Ogden could receive up to \$35 million in federal funds to aid in this transformation (Francis, 2013), which may include placing computers and Internet access in the hands of many residents or making both more readily available in community centers or schools.

Referring to data released to the media and by Weber State, volunteers administered surveys to parents and guardians in the selected area, which included over 12,000 households and approximately 8,000 school-age children (Francis, 2013). The survey administered consisted of many questions about reading habits, health and wellness, and the access parents and children have to digital resources. Logan City School District had nearly 6,000 K-12 students enrolled as of October 2014 (Utah State Office of Education, n.d.), making this a group of comparable size to survey and with which to compare results.

The data collected provided interesting results regarding the use of technology in residents’ homes. Weber State’s research on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Technology (prepared by Bessire, 2014) reported that an estimated 35% of residents in the project radius have no access to the Internet through a home computer and another 15% have access with a dial-up or slower speed connection. Those percentages of residents include over 4,200 and 1,800 households respectively. Given the fact that “digital technologies in education systems can lead to new and powerful forms of activity” (Lewin & Luckin, 2010, p. 750),

some potential improvements have been recommended, such as establishing partnerships with Internet services to provide low-cost high-speed Internet, as well as discounted prices on computer equipment. I have seen posters and pamphlets at the ELC advertising opportunities for students to get Internet at home at a discounted monthly rate. This is just one measure that can be taken to expand the accessibility to the resources found online. “If *all children* are to achieve their full capabilities as members of a society... then *all children* need opportunities to become proficient or ‘literate’ in their uses of new media” (Wolfe & Flewitt, 2010, p. 397). Results of the OUPN study will help pinpoint what recourses should and can be taken to strive for this equality of opportunity to reach all people in Ogden, Logan, and, as the scope extends, in all societies and communities.

### **Proposed Project**

The data collected from the OUPN project could also be gathered from students at the ELC of Cache Valley that would provide insightful information as to their literacy (multiliteracy) practices and Internet access. I chose to pattern this project after the OUPN because of a comparable population sample size. According to the US Census Bureau’s 2013 estimates (<http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>), 22.6% of Weber County’s population is made up of immigrants compared to Cache County’s 15.2%. In order to focus on multiliteracies and technology, I have altered from memory some of the survey questions I administered as an OUPN volunteer. I have also added additional questions to fit my research questions, which are: 1) Do immigrants and their children (if applicable) have access to authentic materials in English? If so, in what form(s)? 2) Do they have access and opportunity to use computers and other electronic devices for personal and



educational purposes?; 3) What is the primary source of information for ELC students and their children (if applicable)?

To gather this initial information, I would administer the survey found in Appendix B to a small sample of approximately 20 students following the Conversational English class and the technology literacy class.

### **Conclusion**

My time at the ELC has given me a vision of the enabling force that comes with learning English and computer literacy. Swaffar and Arens (2005) explain that “literacy describes what empowers individuals to enter societies; to derive, generate, communicate, and validate knowledge and experience” (p. 2). Expanding the definition of literacy would still consist of various forms of communication requiring the negotiation of meaning, augmented by additional tools and possibilities provided by technology. Pinkard (2013) shares her belief that behind all great users of technology and digital media is a parent, teacher, class, or program that inspired them to explore and create. The motivating influence children can have on their parents to learn these tools should also be included in that list. Through proper training and personal exploration in how to use them, computers with an Internet connection can provide students and parents with valuable computer literacy skills that can improve employment opportunities and make community resources more readily available (Bessire, 2014).

If the goal of education is to assist learners in becoming engaged members of society, a social situation where “knowledge and communication are highly prized commodities” (Wolfe & Flewitt, 2010, p. 397), then school and community-based education programs should seek to increase proficiency in the utilization of technology.

Providing ELLs with opportunities to become literate in these aspects can instill in them the communication possibilities as they acclimate themselves to their host country.

CULTURE ARTIFACT

Creating Space for Intercultural Competence through Technology

## INTRODUCTION

This paper was written for the Technology for Language Teaching course taught by Dr. Joshua Thoms. Attending class and investigating the topic proved to be enjoyable. I learned about the possibilities in teaching and learning that are available through the use of technology and the Internet. I worked with a partner in the class, Micah Merkley, and furthered our initial research and continued writing in preparation for incorporation of this paper in my portfolio. I wanted to learn more about intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and the theoretical idea of a cultural ‘third space’ whose function is to accommodate the displacement of a learner’s primary/native culture when he/she encounters the target culture. Technology makes new opportunities readily available to teachers and, if implemented properly, it can provide learners with unique and rich cultural experiences that might not otherwise happen via traditional teaching materials (e.g., textbooks, literary readings) or approaches (e.g., lectures). I thought it would be beneficial to learn more about these ideas since the digital tools and their application to language and culture learning will continue to increase in number.

National borders are vanishing due to the development of mobile devices, personal computers, and the Internet. As technology has evolved, the globalized world has seen an increase in the use of computers to assist in everything from communications, manufacturing, entertainment, and a myriad of other purposes. From GPS mapping to social media and global communication, our horizons are broadening further by the nanosecond. It is truly incredible to see what miracles can be wrought with technology today. In this paper, I will provide an overview of how some of the new technologies can be used in second language learning and teaching contexts to facilitate the development of students' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (Byram, 1997).

The technological resources available today have drastically changed the way we think, act, and interact with the world around us. For many, going a day without using technology, mobile phones, tablets, and other portable devices, is almost impossible (Archer, 2013; Friedman, 2015; Gilbert, 2012; Guzman, 2013; Vitelli, 2015). Walsh, a cartoonist for *The New Yorker*, illustrated his ideas of the techno-addicted culture in which we live by drawing a man in a bar with a dog cone around his neck so as to keep him from looking at his phone. Another cartoon shows people looking at their mobile devices while using canes normally used by blind people to navigate a busy city street (both cartoons can be seen in Gregoire, 2013). Pew Research surveyed 2,188 people on their smartphone usage. 46% of them say that they “couldn’t live without” their phone (Pew Research Center, 2015a). In another Pew survey, 92% of teens ages 13-17 reported going online on a daily basis with nearly one in every four of the 1,060 teens being online “almost constantly” (Pew Research Center, 2015b, para. 2). The thought of digital disconnection makes some technology users uncomfortable, even to the point of causing

anxiety and a sense of culture shock (Friedman, 2015; Guzman, 2013). The tools to which so many individuals appear to be addicted, assist users in connecting to the seemingly inexhaustible source of information found on the Internet 24 hours a day.

Despite this increased availability of information and resources, many in the world remain “enclosed in one cultural possibility... preordained to live in the linguistic and cultural cage into which [they were] born” (Jones, 2012, para. 9). There is no reason to live oblivious to cultural perspectives that are different than our own, particularly in light of the omnipresence of technology in students’ academic and social lives (Thoms, 2011).

The implementation of mobile and web-based applications designed for language learning, has caught the eye of second language acquisition researchers. This is a promising field to be further researched, particularly where the learning of intercultural competence is concerned. Whereas “language and culture are inextricably linked” (McCarty, Watahomigie, Dien, Perez, & Torres-Guzman, 2004, p. 88), language teaching should be associated with the teaching of culture. In evidence of this, one of the ‘Five C’s’ of language learning from the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (SFL) is *Culture* (ACTFL 2012). The SFL state that students, “cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs” (ACTFL, 2012, p. 2). Along with using technology to teach language, my interest increased in how teachers can find ways to teach culture using the same resources. Two studies (Herron, Corrie, Cole, & Dubreil, 1999; Herron, Dubreil, Cole, & Corrie, 2000) reported that there are two kinds of culture being learned: little ‘c’ which are patterns of

daily behavior of members of the target group and big ‘C’ which include the achievements of the civilization such as production of arts, architecture, literature, etc.

With the assistance of technology, language teachers can expose learners to both big and little ‘c’s. This encourages the students to examine “alternative global perspectives, and challenge[s] cultural assumptions and stereotypes. Fluency in another language takes us beyond mere tolerance of ‘otherness’ and requires us to engage with alternative world views” (Jones, 2012, para. 7). Considering this ‘otherness’ can cause questions to arise, such as: how have teachers implemented technology into the teaching of ICC and does the digital realm create the potential for greater understanding of the target language (TL) and its culture? If so, how?

### **Background**

In the digital information age, technology has brought learning to our fingertips. If a question arises, a quick search of the term on the Internet produces tens of thousands of results in less than a second. Language teaching has also been affected by the ubiquity of technology and research in the area of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has only recently increased. Some of the primary uses of technology have been discovered via the Internet in the form of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (e.g., emails, chat rooms, blogs, social media, etc.). These means can be applied to various curricular objectives and be used to promote and enhance language learning and teaching (Blake, 2013).

Web 2.0 tools, or technologies that allow not only for the presentation of information but the production of it as well, fill the Internet with programs and applications that can motivate learners. Some Web 2.0 tools focus on specific aspects of

the TL, such as phonetics and phonology. However, Web 2.0 tools also provide a variety of technologies that require teachers to rethink how they teach and how their students learn. Teachers can use these tools as sources of cultural information and create forums in which students can share information, experiences, and collaborate on tasks with members of the target culture (Dubreil, Herron, & Cole, 2013). As a result, language “learners collaborate and become collaborators, they participate and become participants, they contribute and become contributors, and they create and become creators. In short, the social web changes both how and why content is created” (Lomicka & Lord, 2009, p. 8). Collaborating with other students can open learners’ minds to new ideas. T.S. Eliot (1949) wrote “Men require of their neighbours something sufficiently akin to be understood, something sufficiently different to provoke attention, and something great enough to command admiration” (p. 39). Teachers should provide students with the opportunity to reflect on, compare and contrast cultural similarities and differences. This can aid in broadening their understanding of the target culture as well as their own (Al-Hasnawi, 2013). The goal of teaching ICC is summarized by Stickler and Emke (2011) when they state that “the aim of intercultural maturity is not a change in personality or a radical change in lifestyle but an integration of new perspectives into the everyday life of the mature intercultural learner” (p. 158). Developing ICC allows learners to inculcate into their lives new ideas or aspects of other cultures.

### **Intercultural Communicative Competence**

ICC has been defined by Byram (1997) as the “ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (p. 53). In other words, learners should be able to look at



their own culture's ideals, routines, art, and other products (in whatever form) and see what those could mean in a worldwide context while being open to the same from other cultures. Successful ICC requires these abilities so that understanding of the appropriate patterns of social interaction and encoding of meaning can occur (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). Language use in an everyday setting can be less effective if the social norms are not taught and practiced in the classroom. Responsibility for the preparation to participate in this interaction, or the lack thereof, should be shared between both the teacher and the student.

Byram's (1997) model of ICC learning objectives can be categorized into the following themes: 1) knowledge; 2) skills of interpreting and relating; 3) skills of discovery and interaction; 4) attitudes; and 5) cultural awareness/political education. Each of these categories has a number of different outcomes to help monitor the development of ICC, a few of which will be highlighted here.

Under the category of knowledge, learners develop ICC when they get to know the products and practices of both their home nation and that of the target culture. This means that learners have become familiar with many of the customs and creations of the target region. The familiarity provides them with discussion material that helps with the skills of interpreting and relating. L2 learners must develop the ability to interpret stories and scenarios told by a native L2 speaker in the TL as well as being able to properly relate experiences they had that occurred in the L1 culture. Culturally competent language learners also seek and acquire new knowledge of culture. This includes the ability to use new knowledge and skills while preserving real-time communication to

mediate between speakers of their own and the target culture (Byram, 1997; Shrum & Glisan, 2010).

By striving to accomplish the aforementioned suggestions, learners can break down their own “linguistic and cultural ethnocentrism through challenging the perspectives that we view as normal, helping us ‘doubt the superiority of our own cultural values’” (Jones, 2012, para. 6). It is in the comparison of cultural aspects and the consideration of them that can help learners better understand members of the other group and where these differences come from. Kinginger (2001) states that “competence is in a very real sense owned by individuals. It is at times viewed as a commodity or as a form of cultural capital” (p. 420). This form of capital is seen as valuable in more and more locations throughout the world. ICC “places value on the ability to operate between languages. Students are educated to function as informed and capable interlocutors with educated native speakers in the target language” (MLA, 2007, pp. 3-4). If ICC is seen as a commodity, the concept of supply and demand applies here. Language learners will be able to meet the demand if they take ownership of their ICC development and build a rich supply of experiences and form an ethnorelative view of other cultures. However, if learners are not willing to engage fully or immerse themselves in the target culture, they will not deepen their overall understanding of why the members of the foreign culture are the way they are or why they do the things they do. The learners may continue believing that the cultural practices of the other country are strange or foreign when in reality they are merely different, while still having value.

As L2 students strive to do these things, the developing ICC can be used “to change one’s own values and attitudes as a function of contact with the world” (Blake,

2013, p. 99). Although these skills cannot easily be quantified (Lundgren, 2009), it can be made apparent, however, whether or not language learners can fend for themselves in socializing according to customs, common practices, and social norms. This goes to show that “being able to communicate require[s] more than mastering linguistic structure, due to the fact that language [is] fundamentally social” (Larsen-Freemen & Anderson, 2011, p. 115). One must be able to learn about the pragmatics of the target culture and its members while preserving their own identity.

It has been considered that in order for a language learner to develop ICC, one must take on “an exclusively assimilationist model in which the price of acceptance into a host culture is the loss of one's identity, or at the least the adoption of dual identities” (Ricento, 2005, p. 897). Arnett (2002) agreed when he said that “most people in the world now develop a *bicultural identity*, in which part of their identity is rooted in their local culture while another part stems from an awareness of their relation to the global culture” (p. 777). Although educators cannot force students to gain an intellectual understanding and develop a tolerance of other cultures, is it possible, and if so to what extent, “for people to become cognitively like members of other cultures; that is, can adults learn to construct and see the world through culturally different eyes” (Lantolf, 1999, p. 29)? Some researchers have theorized the need to create a ‘third space’ within the individual so as to preserve one’s own native culture (C1) while inculcating aspects of the target culture (C2) into a newly created third culture.

### **Third Space**

In many instances, learners may be torn between the norms of their C1 and those of the C2. Which side should they choose? Must they forsake the old and embrace the

new? Are there aspects they can preserve while selectively incorporating practices they find appealing? These questions become “relevant to our topic when we ask to what extent L2 learners must accommodate to the target culture, and to what extent they can carve out for themselves a third culture of their own” (Kramersch, 2009, p. 243). This accommodation can be seen as adaptation. If L2 learners adapt to the new ideas and experiences they encounter, it does not mean that they are completely different people. They are modifying and carving out a third culture of their own design.

This third space is a metaphorical space between the native L1 culture and identity and those of the L2. It is essential that the learners create for themselves that third culture (Blake, 2013; Kramersch, 2009). By persevering through the struggle and tension of this sculpting of a cultural third space, language learners will gradually increase in the awareness of themselves/their C1 and how they relate to those who are from foreign cultures. Oliver Wendell Holmes is quoted as having said, "Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions" (Brown, 1989, p. 65). As these ideas take root in their newly cultivated minds, they will create for themselves a new culture, a hybrid, that they can call their own.

In Liaw's (2006, 2007) view, 'third space' takes on a different meaning. This concept refers to the online meeting space that was designed for the teaching of ICC. In this space, students read articles about their culture in their TL; following this, they engage in discussion with a native speaker of their TL. The two exchange what they have learned about their own culture in their respective TLs. It is interesting that both senses of 'third space' come into play here in both the virtual third space that was created for the students to use as well as the intermediary culture created by the adoption of aspects of

the TL into the students' own individual culture. If teachers include students in deciding how the use of technology should be incorporated into the L2 classroom and how to utilize electronic devices for the specific purpose of creating this 'third space' for language learning, it can "become a vehicle for empowerment...and give students flexibility and opportunity to create, communicate, and innovate" (Glikzman, 2014, para. 13). This potent combination of technology and teaching opens the door for others to adopt its principles and carry out similar cultural exchanges.

### **Teaching with technology**

With new technology comes learning curves, some steeper than others. Reinders (2009) and Blake (2013) each state in different words, that teachers need three types of skills to best implement any type of technology in the classroom. First, a teacher must have the technical skills necessary to use the technology and produce materials; they need to know how to use the tool of choice. Second, they must have pedagogical skills to apply the technology in a meaningful way; they need to recognize what the tool is good for. And finally, they must have the support skills to help students to make meaningful use of the technology in their learning; teachers must understand "how these tools will help transform the learning environment" (Blake, 2013, p. xv), because "the environment is the most—indeed, perhaps the only—important factor in learning" (VanPatten & Williams, 2006, p. 19). These skills used in concert will create the optimal environment for effective teaching using technology. As Reinders (2009) puts it, "learners need to know how to make the best use of a tool to derive the greatest benefit from it" (p. 16). Students are ideally completing these activities on their own time. Therefore, instructors need to

establish clear instructions, goals, and learning objectives if the tasks are going to succeed (Blake, 2013).

Gliksman (2014) argues that despite the fact that technology is “widely viewed as a panacea...the dominant trend maintains the status quo and patches technology use onto existing pedagogical models” (para. 4). By using this cut and paste model, teachers and schools fail to build new educational visions that can tap into the unharnessed power of technology for language learning. There have been, however, a number of successful implementations of programs, mobile applications, and websites that can facilitate the interaction necessary to teach ICC. Examples can be found in the *Literalia* and *Cultura* projects.

In *Literalia*, an intercultural exchange was set up between five different adult educational institutions (Stickler & Emke, 2011). The interactions took place using an online, open source platform called Moodle and were carried out in English, German, Italian, and Polish, depending on which of the languages the students were learning. This program offered students a variety of mediums through which they could interact such as forums, email, wikis, etc., to work together on topics of shared interest. Cummins and Sayers (1997) support these interactions as collaborative critical inquiry in the foreign language classroom because they “promote pride in students’ cultural identities and respect for other cultural realities” (p. 109). Cultural identities will not be changed unless learners encounter cultural realities different from their own which challenge underlying beliefs and common behaviors (Byram, 1997).

Stickler and Emke (2011) found that the degree of openness of the participants played an important role in the quality of the interactions. This relates to the participants’

willingness to participate enthusiastically in the program and take every opportunity to interact with the other participants. The authors found that the participants developed trust with one another during the course of their interactions. The students had to rely on their native speaker partner as a "trusted source of information, the scaffold for intercultural exploration, and sometimes the partner in a discovery of different online tools" (Stickler & Emke, 2011, p. 158). Due to the fact that computer-mediated communication (CMC) helps create a versatile environment for interaction, L2 learners are provided with more and more opportunities to further their linguistic and social development (Darhower, 2014).

The *Cultura* Project (Furstenberg, 2010; Furstenberg & Levet, 2010; Hampson et al., 2012) utilized computers and the communication possibilities thereof to have language learners from two countries share their opinions about various aspects of their own culture noting similarities and differences to that of the other group. This was accomplished by having students complete online questionnaires that included word associations, sentence completions, reactions to situations and other topics such as work, leisure, family, education, government, politeness, etc. (Blake, 2013). Students from both groups completed the questionnaire in their first language so as to express themselves fully. After the responses were collected, the teachers would lead the students in comparing the two lists to find similarities and differences. After the groups compare the lists, they engage in online exchanges to ask questions, request clarification and seek to learn more about the topic at hand. Blake (2013) states that this exchange requires both sets of students "to step back and reflect on their own cultural values and those of others. So begins the dynamic and never-ending process of students' finding their own third

place” (p. 101). After the activity, the students would present what they had found to be interesting with their class in the TL, followed by reporting their observations in essay format to the teacher, providing students the opportunity to express themselves orally and through written text.

Blake (2013) stated that technology can be used to facilitate this collaborative critical inquiry if teachers are aware of the project’s desired outcomes. While the effective use of technology can greatly benefit a language teacher, the improper planning of how the technology will be implemented and used in the classroom can appear to be an insurmountable obstacle.

### **Difficulties**

In 2013, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) launched an iPad initiative with the goal of providing all students in the nation's second-largest school system with an Apple iPad to be used as a learning resource/tool as part of a \$1-billion-plus effort (Blume, 2014). After a year of difficulties, the contract was suspended between LAUSD, Apple, and Pearson, the publishing company hired to deliver the curriculum on the devices. The reasoning behind this cancellation was due to major problems with the process and the implementation of the endeavor. This initiative was launched despite the opinions of the district technology committee reporting “that the initial rules for winning the contract appeared to be tailored to the products of the eventual winners — Apple and Pearson — rather than to demonstrated district needs” (Blume, para. 9). This example illustrates that curricula should not be exclusively tailored to electronic devices or to a certain textbook. Rather, they should be built around student needs. Gliksman (2014, para. 6) asks the question, “Has anything of substance changed



when the objective is to deliver Pearson course materials on iPads? Digital content delivery is still content delivery.” The superintendent resigned a few weeks after the cancellation of the contract. It appears that LAUSD tried to use technology for the novelty of it without having established a well thought out curriculum using the iPads as a tool instead of the teacher. Gliksman also stated that these difficulties “are not the ingredients of an educational revolution” (para. 6). Ideally, teachers and policy makers would consider the needs of the students and strive to meet those needs starting with the curriculum design.

### **Reactions to the use of technology to facilitate ICC**

It is not the technology that assists students from both cultural groups to develop a greater sense of ICC. It is how the tools are used in harmony with sound lesson plans and curricular goals (Blake, 2013). Al-Hasawi (2013) expressed the opinion that ICC will not improve solely due to participation in a teletandem or another online, technology-based activity. Other factors determining the success of these interactions include the preparation: having teachers that are well trained and familiar with the desired outcomes of the activities; choosing the right topic for the group of participants to discuss; and having a vision of what can be accomplished by utilizing a specific tool.

O’Dowd (2007) stated that telecollaborative activities with members of the target culture “have the potential to support the development of students’ ICC in a way that traditional culture learning materials would not be able to achieve,” (p. 146) and that is because the online exchanges brought with them knowledge and insights not found in textbooks or other traditional resources on the topic. Language and culture learners would have access to additional understanding when conversing with people who have been

raised in a different country and that are familiar with the way of daily life. They would be able to give their opinions as to what T.S. Eliot (1949) described as culture: “that which makes life worth living” (p. 9). Although it is best if students are able to live in and experience the target culture’s way of life for themselves, it could also be experienced virtually by maintaining contact and having discussions with members of the target culture to compare and contrast the aspects of daily life. The reason to use computers in language and culture learning “no longer lies in the hard or software processes but rather [in being] connected to the increasing number of users of different languages and cultural backgrounds” (Al-Hasnawi, 2013, p. 2). Proficiency in language development and cultural awareness comes from the exchange, the give and take, the back and forth, between interlocutors of different cultures. The emphasis should remain on the meaningful interaction and reflection on these exchanges.

O’Dowd (2011) highlights three of the beneficial outcomes of different types of telecollaborative projects that were carried out by various researchers. Online exchange activities have shown that students of both cultures and languages receive subjective and personalized information rather than objective information, such as facts and figures, taught in books. ICC development can be promoted as students receive the information from native informants who have lived in the culture throughout their lives. As both students prepare to describe their regional or national lifestyle explicitly via e-mail, online message boards, or via video-conference, they will often be drawn to reflect on and become more aware of deeper aspects of their own culture. Throughout these exchanges, learners can be exposed to a wide range of possibilities in L2 discourse that,

in turn, provides them with the opportunity to broaden their vocabulary or their understanding of pragmatics in the TL.

### **Proposed Project**

Foreign language teachers should encourage their students to break out of this cultural cage and become citizens of the world, especially due the fact that “findings suggest that international immersion through brief study abroad provides transformative learning opportunities” (Smith, McAuliffe, & Rippard, 2014, p. 306). Remind them that they are not abandoning their native culture; that is an important part of who they are. Students should see study abroad experiences as opportunities to strengthen their “ability to avoid misunderstandings in intercultural interactions” (Tokunaga, 2009, p. 134), an essential component of ICC.

In discussing potential, realistic projects of how to promote ICC development among learners studying a second language, an existing study abroad program was determined to be a good opportunity to teach L2 learners about the target culture. Each summer, Utah State University organizes a study abroad program in Logroño, Spain. This region in Spain has a rich heritage. There are many opportunities for American students participating in a study abroad program in this region to see things they have never seen before and to have new cultural experiences while abroad. In any given year, approximately twenty undergraduate students from USU spend a month immersed in Spanish culture while living and studying in Logroño. The University of La Rioja *Fundación* arranges for families in the community to be hosts to the U.S. students, with one student living with one host family. This provides the students with optimal

opportunity to practice their Spanish in a native environment and ask questions about the Spaniard way of life.

Although this trip may sound enticing to students, it may cause them anxiety. They may experience culture shock upon arrival. While culture shock is expected by many while studying abroad (Kinginger, 2011; Lee, 2012; Marx & Moss, 2011; Wielkiewicz & Turkowski, 2010), this may be alleviated if the American students had the opportunity to establish relationships with other college-age students from the host site and learn about the local culture before actually arriving in Spain.

The proposed project consists of a five-week pre-departure online intercultural exchange between students from USU and the *Fundación*. The number of participating students would need to be the same for equal contribution to the online group. USU has had approximately twenty students travel to Spain over the years and that number will be used to outline this project proposal.

From each university, students would be organized into five groups consisting of four students. Ideally, once groups are assigned and paired, they will begin by participating in a video conference call via Skype or Google Hangouts to meet their group for that week. Students from USU will speak in Spanish and those from the *Fundación* will speak in English to practice the TL. During the remainder of the week, group members will discuss topics and questions provided by the director of the study abroad program and the host site. Using the Internet as a server, these communications will take place in an online forum such as a Canvas discussion board, Facebook Chat, Wiki, email or a similar application where students can type their questions and responses, thus creating a 'third space' as discussed previously.

Students may be presented with a variety of questions on topics including socioeconomic problems and proposed resolutions, conflicts, advocacy, privilege, oppression, and social justice (Smith, McAuliffe, & Rippard, 2014). A few sample questions, including possible answers students may produce, will be highlighted in this paper. The questions given throughout the pre-study abroad exchanges will become more complex and/or in depth as the departure date approaches for the USU to travel to Spain (see Appendix C for a list of possible questions).

Overall, the “essential questions in cultural studies revolve around the representation of culture—how to distinguish between national, group, artistic, political, and social cultures and their mores” (DeMont, 2010, p. 16). Due to the fact that these characteristics vary by group and individual, much information can be shared through these exchanges with the discussion groups changing periodically. Tokunaga (2009) shares that these technological tools can “promote the development and maintenance of connections” between the participating group members (p. 134). The goal of choosing the right activities is of utmost importance. Teachers should avail their students to a variety of technological resources that surround us in order to accomplish this objective. Students can use social media to share photos, videos, and other forms of multimedia that might be interesting and helpful to their partners in preparation for the visit. These tools can aid in learning about the target culture and their way of life, discovering new ways of thinking, practicing the L2, and getting to know one another. If interpersonal connections are made before the USU students arrive in Spain, they will have a foundation to build upon in order to find or continue developing their individual ‘third space’ and ICC, which involves raising the learner’s awareness of their own culture as well as raising awareness of the culture of the language being learned. Learners

are often asked to reflect on aspects related to their own culture and the target culture as they look at differences and similarities and explore areas that are often taken for granted. This will ultimately help to clarify what is deepest and most relevant to their identity. Students gradually develop an awareness of themselves and how they relate to those who are from the other culture, the “other.” With the right choice of activities, the foreign language classroom can help learners turn their attention back to their lives and discover certain aspects in which they can take pride.

(Kourova & Modianos, 2013, p. 62)

Therefore, as the exchanges begin, the five group pairings will rotate every week so the members of the groups have the opportunity to consider the opinions of each of their counterparts. The rotation of the groups would be beneficial in the fact that the participants would be exposed to a variety of ideas and opinions and not be limited to those of one group. Other benefits include that each student is able to meet and interact with the other group of students and be able to begin to establish relationships with them. This will also make it easier for the Spanish students to welcome the USU students when they arrive. This pre-established relationship will give students a group of friends reducing the feeling of being alone in a strange land.

To have students produce the desired outcomes, maximizing interaction matters. Students may see these activities as another homework assignment they must do. Others may be enthusiastic about it and fully engage in the discussion. One goal of this project is to encourage students to consistently re-situate themselves and their cultural identity somewhere between their L1 identity and the L2 (Blake, 2013). As students are able to discover this new space for themselves, they will be better equipped for the upcoming cultural experience.

## Conclusion

As the far reaches of the globe have now entered our homes, and given the communication possibilities afforded by technology, it is not surprising that research in the area of CALL and ICC have increased. The opportunities to learn language through the use of computer technology have evolved. Yet techno-“transformation requires deep-rooted reevaluations of objectives, processes, and expectations” (Gliksman, 2014, para. 6). The addition of technology into the classroom cannot be done without forethought of the desired outcomes. Therefore, technology, “if cleverly designed and properly incorporated into the curriculum, has a vital role to play in augmenting the opportunities for L2 learners to receive target-language input” (Blake, 2013, p. 22) as well as exchanging perspectives with members of the target culture. The end goal of using technology to develop ICC should be that exchanges take place online and that the online arena becomes the place for socializing between students, teachers and guests, question and answer forums regarding the target language as well as for intercultural and multicultural discoveries through using authentic materials, whether from printed or electronic materials or in genuine conversation with speakers of the target language (Stickler & Emke, 2011).

There is, however, a philosophical concern that emerges in this area. While it is beyond the scope of this artifact, it will be mentioned here. The question is: are we, as a culture, attempting to personify technology? Is human contact conveyed and preserved through computer-mediated communication as the use of technology increases? Earlier in this portfolio, I describe my goal to treat each of my students as an individual—a human being—as opposed to a name on the attendance sheet or being known by their student

number. I submit that there is a fine line between using technology as a tool designed to fulfill a specific pedagogical purpose and letting it overpower the sense of human interaction between teachers and students, or students and their cultural counterparts in the previously described study. Duckworth (1964) emphasizes goals of education that have passed the test of time and are still applicable.

The principle goal of education is to create men [and women] who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done—[individuals] who are creators, inventors, and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and do not accept everything they are offered.

(p. 175)

Technological innovations require that today's students do things that have never been done before. There are tools available that can facilitate creation and discovery. However, technology alone cannot mold minds to think critically. Schweitzer (1975) wrote that "the most important thing in education is to make young people think for themselves" (p. 12); not telling them what to think, but rather how to think. This is an important role for teachers to assume. Many authors of information found on the Internet attempt to sway opinions or dictate what people should think of a certain topic, product or activity. Teachers, not technology, can assist in and facilitate student learning by demonstrating critical consumption of information.

The Internet and technology will continue to narrow the distance between countries and provide individuals with the opportunity to look deeply into a country's history, language, and culture. As FL students learn to glean this information from the worldwide web and engage in CMC with members of the target language/culture, linguistic pragmatics and cultural customs can become more apparent. They will then be



equipped with the tools necessary to continue forming their unique place in the global community.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

## COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

In my personal experience, the primary response I have received when asking individuals why they want to learn a second language (L2) is not that they have a profound love for grammar, phonetics, or syntax. It is that they want to be able to communicate with native speakers of that language. It is through communication that people are able to share and exchange ideas with others. If that is the most common goal, why are instructors not fully utilizing communicative activities in their classroom to offer the learner a more engaging form of language study?

The goal of research in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) is to find how to effectively facilitate learning within and beyond the classroom (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). As I have studied SLA more in-depth, I have come to know that there is an inherent need to teach communicatively; learners need to speak in order to acquire an L2. As a graduate instructor, one source of great knowledge I have used is **Shrum and Glisan's (2010) *Teacher's Handbook***. As traditional methods of language teaching and learning have been assessed, new ideas have emerged and been put into practice. The handbook provides a context of the teaching environment, sharing pedagogies that have been used as well as up and coming ideas. It also contains examples of activities that could be used that encourage student participation in the class.

Communicative language teaching (CLT) has gained popularity as it has taken the stage in many, but certainly not all, classrooms. This increase in popularity is due to the fact that teachers as facilitators have been able to provide their students with context for the production of language that empowers them to learn language through using the target language in meaningful communication. In order for this to happen,

communication must have a purpose such as an opportunity to answer a question, or exchange information in order to understand something better. Negotiation of meaning occurs when two speakers are expressing themselves and interpreting what their conversation partner is trying to convey. They will give and take making adjustments for each other in order to reach the optimum level of understanding. Through these exchanges, learners can also acquire new devices and tactics useable to further describe their thoughts (Long, 1996). **Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001)** claim that the objectives of CLT are achieved as students “express themselves, understand others, and...request clarification or express lack of comprehension to others—all in [the target language]” (p. 62). The teacher must therefore model the use of the target language as often as possible during the class session. Although this may appear difficult at the beginning, I came to realize the great worth of putting forth the effort to do so. As the learner uses the language, in and out of the classroom, students will increase in proficiency and fluency in their communication. Ballman et al. (2001) describe the communicative classroom, positive aspects of its practice as well as grammar implementation as a support to communication and not the driving factor. The authors also give the reader steps to follow for creating activities that achieve a communicative goal.

**Lyster, Saito, and Sato's (2013)** research supports the previous authors in showing that “learners remember information better when they take an active part in producing it” (p. 11). As learners create output in the L2, they will be more inclined to acquire the skills they are using to produce language. Student production can assist teachers in providing them with corrective feedback, which allows for greater repair and

accuracy. In certain studies highlighted by Lyster et al (2013) show that English language learners (ELLs) with opportunities to use the target language are more focused on the communication than grammar, whereas learners without the opportunity to use the target language tend to be more focused on the grammatical aspects. **Lee and VanPatten (2003)** argue that engaging a learner in meaningful communication will encourage the development of one's language abilities. Many skills are involved in the exchanges between interlocutors that cannot be learned outside of the actual conversation. , Individuals will thus be provided with “practice that leads learners from effortful to more automatic L2 use” (Lyster et al., 2013, p. 9). This process will make the target language production less forced.

CLT approach uses task-based activities (TBAs) to promote communication and learning. According to Ballman Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001), TBAs are comprised of three components: 1) the tasks must be learner-centered, meaning that the students will pool their efforts in order to complete the task; 2) throughout the task, the students are expected to use the L2 as a medium to share information that is regularly applicable to life in our global society; 3) learners will then use the information they have gleaned from their partner or members of their group in order to complete the original task. **Spicer-Escalante and deJonge-Kannan (2014)** explain that in order for CLT classrooms to be engaging, the TBAs must be carried out “with carefully incorporated teacher-directed instruction” (p. 2438). They also explain that teachers using CLT provide their students with the opportunity to express themselves freely in conversation they could encounter outside of their class. **Bartels (2005)** thus describes the need for teachers to create meaningful, real-life scenarios as part of their lesson plans. If activities

are not seemingly useful in class, they will not appear that way out of class. Therefore, they must resemble the actual task or exchange as closely as possible. Potential activities may include the students ordering food at a restaurant, planning a trip through a travel agent, talking with their landlord about a problem in their apartment, etc. If planned carefully and carried out effectively, students will have the vocabulary necessary to initiate these conversations with others.

**Long (1996)** shows how versatile a tool language can be. Students learn language and learn through using language. It is not only grammar that they are learning to use at a later date; they are gaining knowledge about the social environment and the cultural surroundings. "[L]anguage learning evolves *out of* learning how to carry on conversations" (Long, 1996, p. 445). Through participation, more proficient speakers can become effective facilitators of language production for their lower-level conversation partners

To convey a message to the learner, the instructor must prepare, to the extent possible, other contributing variables to promote the acquisition. The student must be motivated to put forth the necessary effort. The fact that the students matriculated themselves in the language course shows at least a minimal level of interest in pursuing second language learning. **Dörnyei (2002)** reminds instructors to be mindful of the dynamic nature of motivation and how the variables that factor into the demonstration and execution of any given task. The dynamic nature implies that student motivation may change after certain encounters. The students may enjoy the classroom interaction and environment and decide to continue in their language learning. They could have started out a bit apprehensively and then changed their perspective. Others may choose to

withdraw from the class and pursue another course. This motivation will influence their communication in the target language. I have seen the effect that the classroom environment has on learners. If they do not feel that their contribution to the class is appreciated, they will not participate. If they are unsure of their own language skill, whether warranted or not, they will struggle when it comes time to produce the L2.

**MacIntyre (2007)** gave me a new perspective. He proposes that an individual's willingness to communicate (WTC) has an impact on the presence or lack of everyday conversation between non-native speakers and native speakers. This research is interesting to me because of the many factors that are involved in determining whether someone is willing to communicate. WTC represents the sense of psychological preparedness an L2 learner has when presented with an opportunity to use the aforementioned L2. If learners have had a positive experience in the classroom and in the practical use of the language, they will most likely be more willing to communicate outside the classroom. The observable initiation of speaking the in target language has been linked to a positive outlook on the learner's linguistic performance. Through my readings, I have learned that factors contributing toward that "positive experience" include the instructor being mindful of the levels of proficiency of his or her students and their self-confidence in using their language skills, the perceived level of anxiety of each individual, and the classroom environment. In the classroom, Spicer-Escalante and deJonge-Kannan (2014) describe that when TBAs are assigned, it is necessary that students participate more fully, meaning an increased possibility of risk-taking by students. This could heighten the amount of anxiety students experience. These factors also play a role in **Krashen's (1982)** affective filter hypothesis. Whereas "affect" relates

to moods, feelings, and attitudes, we can see how it can hinder or promote acquisition. Before being exposed to SLA theories, I had not consciously thought of the effect a low affective filter (i.e., low-anxiety) on proficiency. “Those [language learners] with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike ‘deeper’” (p. 31). I find it interesting that research has been done to investigate the effects of affect on language learning. I will be using some of the findings from this body of research to better facilitate the affective aspect of my classroom.

CLT has shown to be a powerful asset to teachers in foreign language classrooms. Instructors have the ability to facilitate learning and acquisition through promoting real-world application and use of the target language. As students participate in these activities and interact with each other, they will be more fully equipped to carry out tasks in the L2 and gain proficiency therein. Instructors and students need to take into account the external variables that may impede the course content from being understood and applied and make the necessary adjustments in order to reduce the severity of that influence.



## SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING AND IDENTITY FORMATION

During my time in the MSLT program, my knowledge of sociocultural theory (SCT) has increased dramatically. I took the course from Jim Rogers who facilitated discussion concerning how people learn and develop from the sociocultural perspective. One aspect of development that is important to consider is that of identity.

Identity is the essence of an individual. **Bamberg (2011)** gives definitions of identity as a sense of self formed by individual characteristics, psychological in nature, that are unique to one person or by a membership or interpersonal affiliations such as race or ethnicity. These definitions suggest that some identity-forming experiences occur and others are more difficult to change. Through researching this topic, I have gained insight into the ways in which identity formation can promote growth and development in different circumstances, including the L2 environment.

Identity can be an individual's self-perception or the image that we present to other people and their interpretation of what they see in us. "The attempts to define self and identity rely on self-representations, i.e., mental constructions about us as persons in terms of what we are identifying with and how we are identified (usually by others)" (Bamberg, 2011, p. 4). This definition implies that identity can change according to what we are drawn to and the type of people with whom we associate. A general definition provides us with information regarding identity as "the state or fact of remaining the same one or ones, as under varying aspects or conditions / the condition of being oneself or itself, and not another" (Dictionary.com). The phrase that strikes me is "remaining the same varying aspects and conditions." **White and Beaudry (2009)** state that identity is

malleable, and can be reaffirmed or abandoned, fluid, or fixed. The choice of employing the word malleable shows that in order to shape and give form to the developing identity, individuals must brace for impact of the hammering experiences that the learner can either allow to change them or reject and not include in their identity. **Bucholtz and Hall (2005)** gave the following definition: “Identity is the social positioning of self and other” (p. 586). This emphasizes the social aspect of identity and allows room for enduring characteristics while accommodating for change.

Bamberg (2011) asks the questions: “What are identities made of and where (or better: when) do identities start? Do identities and sense of self encompass whole lives—all experiences ever made? Or do they consist of memories—and maybe only memories that are considered relevant enough to feed into one’s life story?” (p. 3). He states that our sense of self might seem like another person if we were asked to tell our life story beginning in 1993. This leads me to believe that we remember the most recent situations in which our identity was altered. We see only these as key moments in our existence; life-changing experiences. **Morgan (1997)** would suggest that identity is more of “a guide with which [language learners] negotiate their place in a new social order and, if need be, challenge it through the meaning-making activities they participate in” (p. 431). The formation of identity in SCT emphasizes the importance of the activity in which individuals are engaged. In other words, “socio-cultural constructivism also recognizes identity as being closely dependent on the context and as the outcome of a building process. The building processes of learning and identity are not separate but have great significance for each other” (Ligorio, 2010, p. 94). The context influences the outcomes and the outcomes lead to new contexts in which additional outcomes can be achieved.

**Ligorio (2010)** suggests that learning is not limited to a “cognitive and social experience, but also an identity experience. Who we are, what we are able to do, and what we will be, based on what we learn, are constantly challenged when we attend learning situations” (p. 97). These situations have their own cues and requirements that must be followed for acceptance. When immersed in a new situation, learners can be seen as “social negotiators” who are always trying to make sense of their surroundings. “This is a social process through which they ‘acquire a framework for interpreting experience, and learn how to negotiate meaning in a manner congruent with the requirements of the culture’” (Ligorio, 2010, p. 99). It is this process of seeking out and making meaning of the surroundings that allow learners to use their agency in deciding what value experiences have for them. Participation is essential in order to draw meaning from what learners experience. **Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998)** state that the formation of identity comes from being “lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice” (p. 5). It is through these social interactions that identity can be transformed. Individuals must use their agency to accept or reject the prospect of adopting new ideas or concepts they gain from interaction with others into their identity. Since agency can be “viewed as the accomplishment of social action” and “identity is one kind of social action that agency can accomplish” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 606), it is up to the learner to take action in many different forms. **van Lier (2008)** claimed that the use of agency necessitates the learner to put forth a physical, mental, and emotional effort to support the discourse they produce in the target language. “In many ways, L2 development is the development of agency through the L2 (or the enactment of an L2 identity)” (p. 178).

Vygotsky (1978) stated that “every function in the [individual]’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the [individual] (intrapsychological)” (p. 57). If development first occurs interpersonally, then it can be internalized and available for use to help mediate the individual’s actions and behavior. If we think that our actions only affect the individuals toward whom the action is directed and nothing is being reciprocated, Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) would contest the previous statement that actions are only external by saying that “people coexist...there is no human action which is singularly expressive” (p. 169). The responsibility does fall to the individual in the fact that they can exercise their agency to either accept and adapt a certain concept into who they are or they can disregard a potential growth opportunity by not digging deeper into the experience they just had. The latter will not alter, but rather reinforce that unchanged portion of their identity.

van Lier (2008) states that “Learning an L2 and becoming engaged in a new culture thus involves adjusting one’s sense of self and creating new identities to connect the known to the new” (p. 177). van Lier’s statement suggests that learners need to use their current knowledge in order to acclimate to the target culture and the new experiences they will encounter there. These opportunities often arise as individuals learn a second language. Identity becomes apparent through discourse and does not precede it. Identity is a social and cultural phenomenon achieved through interpersonal activity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Identity is solidified through interaction and conversation, no matter the language or environment.

Acquiring an L2 in a traditional classroom involves reviewing and memorizing a number of grammar principles such as learning new vocabulary, verb conjugations and verb tenses, just to name a few. From an SCT perspective, in addition to the conceptual grammar teaching, there are also cultural competencies that must be internalized in order to achieve optimum communication that is both grammatically and culturally accurate. Depending on the previous exposure to language and culture, van Lier (2008) describes that language acquisition and identity formation can be a process of ongoing struggle and reconciliation. Learners may have very different perceptions of their new surroundings. This shows that the resistance to and exclusion of certain aspects of a culture as well as the acceptance and incorporation of cultural characteristics to identity is selective and based upon an individual's agency and choice.

Many language learners are particular in which attributes they embrace from the target language culture and include in their identity. L2 instruction should take into account ways to best facilitate the learners' formation of their individualized identity in the target language. The L2 identity may bring mannerisms, speech patterns, and accents from the L1 culture and apply them to the new environment. Learners who are holding onto their L1 identity in an attempt to be accepted into the L2 culture may struggle gaining full inclusion. Ligorio (2010) describes learning "as a process of 'acculturation', of progressive inclusion into a community by sharing norms, roles, and ways of talking" (p. 95). The lack of acculturation will hinder learners' ability to identify with the target culture. Others may abandon these traits and opt for those typical in the target language. Some learners will be able to immerse themselves in their new L2 identity while

preserving their own voice, referring “to infusing one’s words with one’s own feelings, thoughts and identity” (van Lier, 2008, p. 178).

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998), as well as van Lier (2008), state that the learner gains “ownership” of the words spoken only when they use it to fulfill their personal intentions, using their own accent, through appropriating the words, and adapting it to their own purposes and not because an instructor asked them to repeat or reproduce the phrase. During my time developing my L2 identity while living in Spain, I was more dedicated in my effort to learn the language in order to properly interact in the target culture (van Lier, 2008). According to **Norton (2000)**, “if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital” (p. 10). The earliest definition of cultural capital available was that of **Bourdieu and Passeron (1977)** which “refers to the ‘knowledge and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups in relation to specific sets of social forms’” (cited in Norton, p. 10). In other words, cultural capital can be seen as the understanding of social situations and their meaning. These situations will change depending on the group and environment.

While abroad, some of my friends I lived with chose not to use the “Spanish zeta,” the ‘th-’ sound on the c’s and z’s. Despite the fact that this is widely used throughout Spain, these friends did not want to sound like they had a lisp while speaking in the target language or they wanted to develop a more common world-wide Spanish accent. These were also the individuals who changed the tone of their voices completely when they switched from English to Spanish. This alteration of their regular speaking

voice was often caused by their desire to create a new persona or identity. Once again reverting to agency, the decision whether these cultural characteristics are adopted by an individual or not is a made by and for the learner.

**Vågan (2011)** includes extracts from his study of professional identity formations amongst novice medical students. Students described the evolution of their understanding from the first year of communication skills training in primary care physicians' offices to their second year of clinical training in hospitals. Learning in a very specified environment with certain goals that give the training purpose will give the students applicable experience. In reflecting upon the experiences they had in the first year, medical student Laura explained that she had no idea what to say or what questions to ask. She continued by saying that she, along with other students, now know what questions they can ask in order to dig deeper and gain insight to what could be ailing the patient.

Another student, Kathy, reflected and stated, "in our first year we didn't have a clue. Now it's a completely different thing. Now we know things" (Vågan, 2011, p. 54). Kathy describes the process of evaluating a patient and admits that in the early stages of her schooling, she was 'just talking' about the situation. As she more fully participated in the diagnosis, she would use more specific language when discussing with the physician the potential cause of pain or the reason for the symptoms shown by the patient. This is not merely a higher level of professionalism in the doctor's office but a demonstration of Kathy being immersed in the medical culture as she strives to develop her abilities and emerging professional identity. "She increasingly develops a sense of herself as a medical *persona*" (Vågan, p. 54, emphasis in original). Kathy's developing identity as a medical

professional is mediated by how the supervising physician reacts to her proficiency then-current performance. As she feels more comfortable and capable in the target culture (the medical field), Kathy's motivation will likely increase and her increased familiarity with the social language demonstrates that she is becoming clinically competent. In a similar sense, as language learners are first immersed in an L2 situation, whether that is while traveling abroad or in their local community, they may be overwhelmed at how much they lack in fluency and comprehension when it comes to real-life conversation and interaction. However, if learners put forth the effort to communicate with and learn from native or more proficient speakers, they will come to realize that, just like Kathy, they are becoming more competent in the language and culture.

Identity is dynamic; it changes and is adaptable. **Ricento (2005)** claims that a person's "linguistic competence in a new culture reflects a process of transformation rather than one of replacement" (p. 904). This means that as people acquire a second language or immerse themselves in a new culture or situation, they are not erasing past experiences that have helped form their identity. Their past experience affords them novel ways in which they can interact with people and their surroundings in this environment. It is possible for them to gain new aspects to include in their identity or be compelled to leave a portion of their identity and assume another. **Bamberg (2010)** stated that one of the dilemmas faced when talking about identity is the understanding that people's agency has an effect on the world and the world's (i.e., other people's) agency also affects them. With this understanding, it is clear that development of one's identity arrives at a point of completion. As students move from one activity to another "in educational practice as in other facets of social life," states **Duff and Uchida (1997)**,



identities and beliefs are co-constructed, negotiated, and transformed on an ongoing basis by means of language” (p. 452). Throughout life there will be this alteration and exchange of portions of identity. Vygotsky emphasized the human ability to use mediating devices, especially language, “to modify their own mental environment and so direct their own behavior” (p. 175). This is a demonstration of the versatility of language and its influence on identity formation.

When students learn and internalize a new language and its new culture, they are not replacing their past. **Kourova and Modianos (2013)** says that “their beliefs, values, and assumptions shape their understanding of themselves and their understanding of others” (p. 61). The act of immersing one’s self in another culture provides an opportunity to reflect on the home culture. The local culture gives learners a baseline against which their experiences can be gauged. Students’ local culture is their starting point and what students learn in the process of learning a foreign language goes back to the students’ own culture.

An example given in Ligorio (2010) is that of a religious identity amongst 9 year-old fourth graders. The researcher posed the question “Can you change religion?,” to which students responded by sharing their thoughts. One student said that he wanted to change religion (or abandon it) because there was not sufficient evidence to demonstrate the existence of God. Another student said that if his classmates were to change religion, there would be a lot of adjustment which may be difficult. This was interesting to read seeing as the first student “sees religion as a flexible and dynamic trait of his identity, as a positioning that can be changed. On the other side, Student5 perceives religion as a stable part of his identity that cannot easily be changed” (Ligorio, p. 100). Religion is often a

sensitive subject. By their discussion, these young people were able to share their thoughts and reasoning of why religion is or is not a major part of their identity.

In the classroom, the teacher is often seen as the source of knowledge for the students. **Magnan (2008)** states that “agency and expertise should be no longer attributed to an isolated individual (the teacher) but must be socially distributed across learners. Teaching and learning become more reciprocal” (p. 354-355). Especially in the age of technology, many students know how to maneuver electronic devices and computer software better than their adult teachers. In Ligorio’s (2010) study about interaction in virtual worlds, she stated that “students had something to teach the teachers...with no risk for the teachers of a loss of status” (p. 103). The students were excited to teach the teacher something by sharing what they had already learned. They understand that the teacher is still the authority figure in the classroom but it shows that the students can assume that role occasionally and contribute to the environment of learning. This motivated the students to continue with the project with enthusiasm.

Identity formation is a complex topic. As individuals encounter new environments and situations, they are constantly being bombarded by influences from others. The individuals will need to front these influences and at that moment, the decision must be made whether the influence should be accepted and become part of them or if it should be rejected and solidify their pre-existing identity. This is an everyday occurrence. Norton (2000) states that individuals are “constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world” (p. 11). It is through these changes that human beings are able to use previous experiences to confront the new. As new scenarios are met, they elicit the re-negotiation, re-construction and reconceptualization of a

person's status in and relationship with the world. Using the words of **Van Compernelle and Williams (2012)** as a summary, "identity mediates between self and the world" (p. 237). Although identity is an enduring pattern of being, it also allows for the use of agency in the form of adaptation to one's environmental circumstances.

## SPANISH / ENGLISH CODE SWITCHING AND IDENTITY

Many changes can occur when individuals enter the realm of foreign language learning. Language influences culture and environment influences language. A direct example of this phenomenon can be found in the increased use of “Spanglish”. Rather than being its own language, Spanglish is classified as a linguistic phenomenon that is considered to be an example of code switching. In this paper, I discuss evolutions in language, describe bilingualism and code switching, an ability only found in bilinguals, and review the influence Spanish / English code switching has had on certain cultural groups and their identities.

### **Evolutions in language**

Languages evolve through contact between people speaking other languages. Words from over 350 languages have been incorporated into the ever-globalizing English language. Many of these words, which may have once sounded strange to English speakers, have been used by them for centuries causing them to lose their foreign-ness (Crystal, 2007). This is a gradual process where lexical items are taken from a donor-language and adopted by a recipient-language. As more speakers of the recipient-language use the word, it is diffused, or spread among those speakers as what **Poplack and Dion (2013, p. 285)** call “a lexical innovation” until it becomes fully integrated and common in the recipient-language or its popularity dies out.

Languages are in contact with each other around the world. As of early 2015, *Ethnologue World Languages (n.d.)* reports that there are 7,102 world languages being spoken in 193 countries throughout the world. If divided equally, each country would speak nearly 37 languages. This would result in many languages being exposed to each

other on a daily basis. For the purposes of this paper, the two languages in contact with one another will be English and Spanish.

The confrontation between/mixing of the English and Spanish languages has occurred for many years, especially since the mid-19th century. **Hualde, Olarrea, Escobar, and Travis (2010)** review the fact that in 1848, Antonio López de Santa Ana sold more than half of Mexican territory to the United States by signing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The United States gained land that was later separated into the present-day states of California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. At the signing of the treaty, all of the Mexican citizens living in those areas became, as **Betti (2009)** stated, strangers in their own land. As English-speaking U.S. citizens relocated to these areas, they likely encountered new neighbors with whom they could not communicate. Spanish and English have continued to interact due to an ever-increasing population of both groups. According to the **United States Census Bureau (n.d.)**, there were approximately 54 million people who identified themselves Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino in 2013 making up 17% of the U.S. population. This number is projected to increase exponentially in the coming years with the number of Hispanics expected to reach nearly 129 million (31% of the total population) by the year 2060 (US Census Bureau, n.d.). As the number of Spanish speakers increases, the need for average Americans to become bilingual—which is more the global norm than not—also increases.

### **Bilingualism and code-switching**

Spanish is the unofficial second language of the United States (Montes-Alcalá, 2009), suggesting that there are many speakers of the dominant and secondary languages. When dominant and secondary languages are competing it is considered diglossia, “

gsituation in which two languages are used under different conditions within a community, often by the same speakers” (The new Oxford American dictionary, 2005). Diglossia can also describe a devaluation of the everyday use of the secondary language in areas where the dominant language is spoken (Hualde, Olarrea, Escobar, & Travis, 2010).

Among these languages, there are various levels of proficiency, which leads to a wide spectrum of definitions and described characteristics of bilingualism. From one end, **Edwards (1994)** generously claims that “[e]veryone is bilingual” (p. 55)—since nearly everyone has been exposed to other languages at some point in their lives and therefore has at least a basic level of knowledge of another language. On the other end, some (e.g., **Madrigal, 2010**) offer a more narrow definition by classifying a bilingual person as being someone who is able to use both languages with native-like proficiency without any noticed interaction between the L1 and the L2. However, a logical question remains: where would the typical L2 learner be placed on the bilingual continuum based on Madrigal’s (2010) definition? **Hamers and Blanc (2000)** take the middle ground with their definition of bilingualism as an environment in which two linguistic codes can be used in the same exchange of information. A bilingual person therefore would be someone who has access to use more than one linguistic code in order to communicate, where a ‘code’ is defined as a language. When speakers utilize two or more languages in the same conversation or sentence, it is a phenomenon called code-switching.

**Bullock and Toribio (2009, p. 1)** define code switching as “the ability on the part of bilinguals to alternate effortlessly between their two languages.” **Grote, Oliver, and Rochecouste (2014)** claim that code-switching plays a role in a number of different

spheres including psychological, anthropological, social, and educational. Some people see code-switching as evidence of an individual's "lack of knowledge of one (or both) of the languages, or some form of mental laziness" (Dumitrescu, 2012, p. xi). **Blackledge and Creese (2010)** state that student code switching has previously been seen as "embarrassing", 'wrong', 'dilemma-filled', 'bad practice', 'feelings of guilt', 'squandering our bilingual resources' as the two languages 'contaminate' each other" (cited in Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012, p. 649). Others, such as **Toribio (2004)** and **Martinez (2010)**, believe that it is "now well-established among researchers in linguistics that intra-sentential code-switching is not a random mixture of two flawed systems; rather, it is rule-governed and systematic, demonstrating the operation of underlying grammatical restrictions" (Turibio, 2004, p. 137) and that it "reflects, at the very least, the same level of grammatical competence as that reflected in the speech of monolinguals" (Martinez, 2010, p. 126). Results from over 100 studies were used by **Bhatt and Bolonyai (2011)** in their search of potential switch triggers in bilingual conversations. They found 130 distinctive functions or reasons justifying the use of both languages, suggesting that code-switching is "an important component of the communicative competence of proficient bilinguals" as claimed by **Gort (2012, p. 46)**. If, according to this claim, proficient bilinguals code-switch, it cannot be considered laziness in making conversation. It is a demonstration of mental and linguistic acuity being able to make "the decision to [code switch]...at the moment the other-language item is accessed" (Poplack & Dion, 2013, p. 279). Martinez (2010) claims that code-switching students use the tools available to them in both languages skillfully and creatively in order to give context to their social interaction(s).

**Ardila (2005)** reviews many of aspects of code-switching (see also Martinez, 2010), one of them is called ‘borrowing.’ This is a phenomenon in which individual words are ‘borrowed’ from another language and used in every day speech. Borrowing may occur for a number of reasons, such as: 1) there may not be a word that exists that gets the intended idea across in the first language (*driveway*); 2) “In Spanish, there are several potentially correct words, but none has the exact meaning (e.g., the word ratio corresponds in Spanish to *relación, proporción, or razón*) (p. 68); 3) the word in English may be simpler than the Spanish counterpart (such as *pin vs alfiler*); 4) using technical terms such as *hardware* or *click* when talking about computers; 5) if the speaker learns a word in English first, the conveyed meaning is “more directly accessible in English than in Spanish” (p. 69). Whatever the reason behind code-switching or borrowing, **Grosjean (2008)** states that “the co-existence and constant interaction of the two languages in the bilingual has produced a different but complete language system” (p. 13). For these reasons and more, code-switching is a manifestation of a bilingual in action (Betti, 2009).

Another term that has emerged is “translanguaging” (**Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012; Velasco & García, 2014**). The term was coined by a Welsh educator named Cen Williams in the 1980s, to describe “the planned and systematic use of two languages for teaching and learning inside the same lesson” (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012, p. 643). This is done in order for one language to strengthen the other. The mutual reinforcement between languages increases understanding and ability in both, says **Hornberger (2005)**. This allows for maximized learning as students draw from existing language skills uninhibited by required use of the target language alone.



It appears that when both languages are used, whether through translanguaging or code switching, they are utilized with the purpose of developing “academic language skills in both languages leading to a fuller bilingualism and biliteracy” according to **Baker (2011, p. 290)**. Creese and Blackledge (2010) that teachers who use both languages assist their students by making links between various areas of their lives, including community, culture, social, linguistic and others.

### **Spanglish or Code Switching?**

The emergence and continued use of ‘Spanglish,’ a term first used by Puerto Rican journalist Salvador Tió in 1948 (Betti, 2009), causes the question to be asked if it is “an interlanguage, a Spanish dialect, a Creole language, or a pidgin language” (Ardila, 2005, p. 65). Interlanguage is spoken at borders, both linguistic and national. On the western Iberian Peninsula, for example, Portuguese and Spanish may be used to exchange information with a better probability of understanding by both parties (Portuges/Español = Portuñol). A pidgin language is a developing form of communication when two groups do not share the same language but have specific reasons that they need to talk to each other. A pidgin evolves into a creole language when it is adopted as a native language of a certain group. Dialects are typically regional variations of any given language. However it is classified, **Dewaele and Wei (2014)** state that the term Spanglish has carried negative connotations in the past due to linguistic purists wanting one language to be used at a time instead of the mixing of Spanish and English.

Spanglish could be categorized into nearly any of these descriptions having characteristics of each. Spawning from the initial communication difficulty between citizens of the United States and Mexico, Spanglish seems to have become the vehicle of

discussion along the border and in the southwestern United States and a popular topic of linguistic study for the past 30 years (Poplack & Dion, 2013). **Villa (2010)** states that Spanglish is “an important linguistic asset [heritage language learners] have inherited from those communities” (p. 122). It is not a lesser form of Spanish or a broken form of English. For this to ring true to students, they must understand that one language or dialect is no better than another. Spanish is no better than English and vice versa. There is not a pure form of any language due to the fact that language is dynamic; a living thing that changes through use by its speakers (Betti, 2009).

[F]or a people who are neither Spanish nor live in a country in which Spanish is the first language; for a people who live in a country in which English is the reigning tongue but who are not Anglo; for a people who cannot entirely identify with either standard (formal, Castilian) Spanish nor standard English, what recourse is left to them but to create their own language? A language which they can connect their identity to, one capable of communicating the realities and values true to themselves—a language with terms that are neither español ni inglés, but both.

(Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 177)

**Dumitrescu (2012)** says that “...we are not witnessing the birth of a new language, and ...what most people call Spanglish is actually code switching, a well-known communicative strategy among bilinguals fluent in both languages, who alternate them for a variety of purposes” (p. x-xi) including being able to participate in the mainstream society (Grote, Oliver, & Rochecouste, 2014) while preserving their native tongue. **Valdés-Fallis (1988)** provides the imagery of code switchers as guitarists. Rather than having to stop playing to switch between two six-string guitars (representing the two independent languages), they could combine them into a 12-string instrument instead. Being able to use both codes simultaneously is the linguistic legacy left by their ancestors. “[W]hen we consider the way English is spreading around the world, and

coming into increasing contact with other languages,” and how Spanish and English are interacting more than ever before in the United States, **Crystal (2007)** declares “one thing is certain: we ain’t seen nothin’ yet” (p. 63).

The effects of language interaction transcend the field of linguistics and influence society and identity. Some people may be scared of borrowed words or the mixing of codes because they fear that if they utilize words of other languages, their identity as a member of a certain cultural group will be lost (Crystal, 2007). **Kramsch (2009)** declares that this does not have to be the case. She posits that aspects of each culture can be incorporated into a third culture, creating a whole new identity.

### **Identity Formation**

Acculturation is the process “of progressive inclusion into a community by sharing norms, roles, and ways of talking” (Ligorio, 2010, p. 95). This adjustment occurs when individuals are immersed in the dominant culture’s way of life and spend their time interacting with members of that culture. This is not one-sided acculturation, although the extent to which Spanish influences English may not be as deeply rooted. Language is the force behind these exchanges. Dewaele and Wei (2014) note that individuals are often judged as to their social status, group affiliation, intelligence, and competence by the way they use language. That is because language becomes one of the key ways in which we are able to communicate our identities... We are defined by how we identify ourselves through our language use” (Madrigal, 2010, p. 5). Some Spanish-speaking individuals prefer the term ‘Hispanic’ when referring to race or culture, while others may argue that they have nothing to do with Hispania, the Latin name given to the Iberian Peninsula, and would therefore choose to use ‘Latino’ or ‘Latin American’ to describe themselves.

There are still others who would classify themselves as Chicano/a and take pride in their heritage. **Sánchez-Muñoz (2013)** states that by choosing the Chicano/a identity, individuals are “claiming a unique culture not just a ‘mixture’ of two colonial pasts but rather something unique with its own history, aesthetics, music, and also with its unique linguistic expression” (p. 440).

**Arnett (2002)** states that the majority of people in today’s world choose to develop a bicultural identity, where their identity is rooted in their local culture and family heritage while another part is nurtured by awareness of their relation to the broader culture. Spanish-speaking individuals in the United States could look around their town or county and see their relation to the local culture and encounter a wide diversity from which additional characteristics of identity can be developed. “Identity is able to transform and adapt to the challenges of increasing cultural multiplicities” (Bamberg, 2011, p. 8). It is through that adaptation that identity becomes transferrable to new generations and link the two distinct cultures to create a third space while preserving the influences from both, which I gathered from reading **Blake (2013)** and Kramsch (2009). If this transformation is to occur, it must be initiated and carried out by the learner. The decision to change, adapt, and inculcate into their lives the customs and practices of the mainstream society is one that must be made by the self-motivated individual (Gote, Oliver, & Rochecouste, 2014). **Morales (2002)** claims that

To become Spanglish is to fuse the North American with the Latin American in a way that approaches the former with a healthy skepticism and takes care not to obliterate the essence of the latter. It is a sometimes violent, sometimes delicate rethreading of two parallel story lines, of long-separated siblings and hated enemies. Becoming Spanglish is inextricably linked with history and issues of race and class [...].

(p. 32)

The fusion of two cultures into a third allows individuals to live in two cultural realities at the same time, which is a beautiful thing. Spanglish is not only a form of expression; it is “a way of life, marked by hybridization, identity, multiculturalism, that is represented perfectly in the United States” and in the way many Latinos are living (Betti, 2009, p. 110). Those who classify themselves as Spanglish embrace characteristics of both societies. As an organization, the **Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española (n.d)** aims to develop the ability for all Latinos living in the United States to learn and use English while also preserving the use of Spanish in their homes, in the street, and at their places of work (see also Betti, 2009). This will require an increased effort by the speaker but, as has been described, there are a number of benefits of doing so.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, code switching “constitutes an active and creative style of bilingual communication that often functions to establish social identity and reaffirm ties with one's community” (Martinez, 2010, p. 126). Individuals who code switch, therefore, are associated with two languages, cultures, societies and identities because, as Morales (2002) claims, it is “who we Latinos are, and how we act, and how we perceive the world” (p. 3), which is from a dual perspective. The next time Spanish and English are heard in the same sentence or conversation, thoughts that come to mind should be of a vibrant society that has developed out of the crucible of cultures and whose members are living in and seeking opportunities afforded them in both cultures.

## Looking Forward

Many goals come to mind as I think of life after graduating from the MSLT program at Utah State. I had originally planned to continue on to earn a doctorate degree to become a university professor. I may still pursue a Ph.D. at a later point. For now, I would like to seek employment at an institution of higher education teaching either Spanish or ESL. I am fascinated by culture and have an interest in learning more about it and discussing differences between the students' cultures. Whether this occurs in Spanish or English, there are opportunities to learn more about how people from other cultural backgrounds live. I will seek out opportunities to further develop my language skills, even work toward acquiring another language (French and Italian are both appealing to me).

Wherever I work, I want to find ways to work with non-profit organizations. I have volunteered with a youth leadership seminar for the past decade and have thoroughly enjoyed my time serving with that organization. During my time as an undergraduate student at Weber State University, I took a course entitled "Spanish Community Service Practicum." About half of the grade in that class came from the hours of service rendered at various community partners that needed bilingual volunteers. We were required to record our service hours with the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL). This was the first time I was exposed to the world of service learning. A year or two later, I applied for a job in and was hired by the CCEL. Working there provided me with a more in-depth understanding of what the center wanted to accomplish.

Overall, through teaching and community engagement, I would like to make a positive impact in the community. One faculty member stated that “[c]ollege is more than just academics” (Prentice & Robinson, 2010, p. 11). I will strive to assist students in their endeavor to acquire a foreign language, learn about different cultures, and encourage them to serve in their local community. If these components are included in their studies, students can earn for themselves a well-rounded education.

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APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## Utah Dual Language Immersion Survey Questions

1. Please provide the following demographic information
  - a. Gender: Male / Female
  - b. Age
  - c. Country of Origin
2. Please describe your educational background
  - a. Include degrees/majors/minors/certifications/other trainings
3. What languages do you speak?
4. What level did you earn in the Oral Proficiency Interview(s) (OPI)?
5. Please describe your experiences in countries that speak the target language.
6. Please describe your teaching experience
  - a. What grade level(s) have you taught?
  - b. What courses have you taught?
  - c. How prepared do you feel to teach various topics such as culture, business, medical, etc. in the target language?
    - i. 1 – 5 (Not prepared – Very prepared)
  - d. Do you have university teaching experience?
    - i. How would you rate your knowledge of the requirements for a college major/minor in the target language?
      1. 1 – 5 (Not familiar– Very familiar)
7. How would you rate your familiarity with the Utah DLI and Bridge programs?
  - a. 1 – 5 (Not familiar– Very familiar)
8. How clear do you feel your institution or school district's expectations are regarding your role as a DLI teacher?
  - a. 1 – 5 (Not clear– Very clear)
9. What do you see as potential problems facing DLI teachers?
10. What types of professional development activities would you consider beneficial in preparing to teach higher proficiency students?

For administrators:

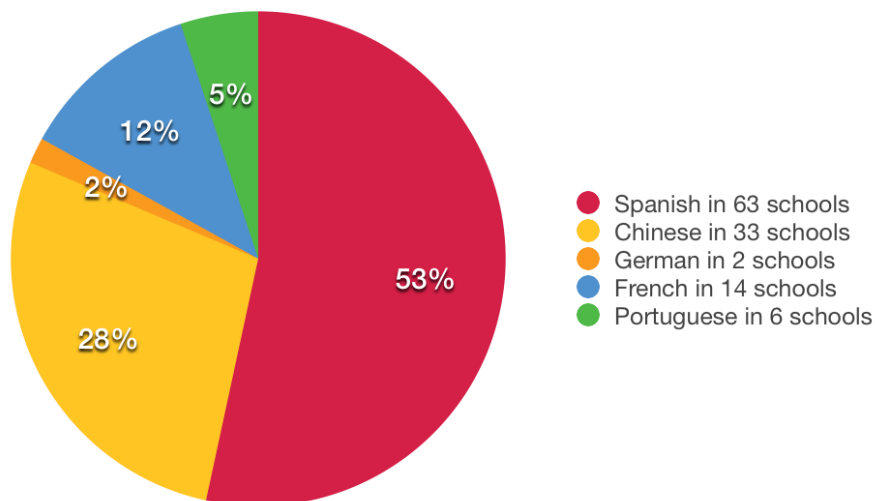
1. Please provide the following demographic information
  - a. Gender: Male / Female
  - b. Age
  - c. Country of Origin
2. Please describe your educational background
  - a. Include degrees/majors/minors/certifications/other trainings
3. What languages do you speak?
4. Please describe your teaching experience
  - a. What grade level(s) have you taught?

What courses have you taught?

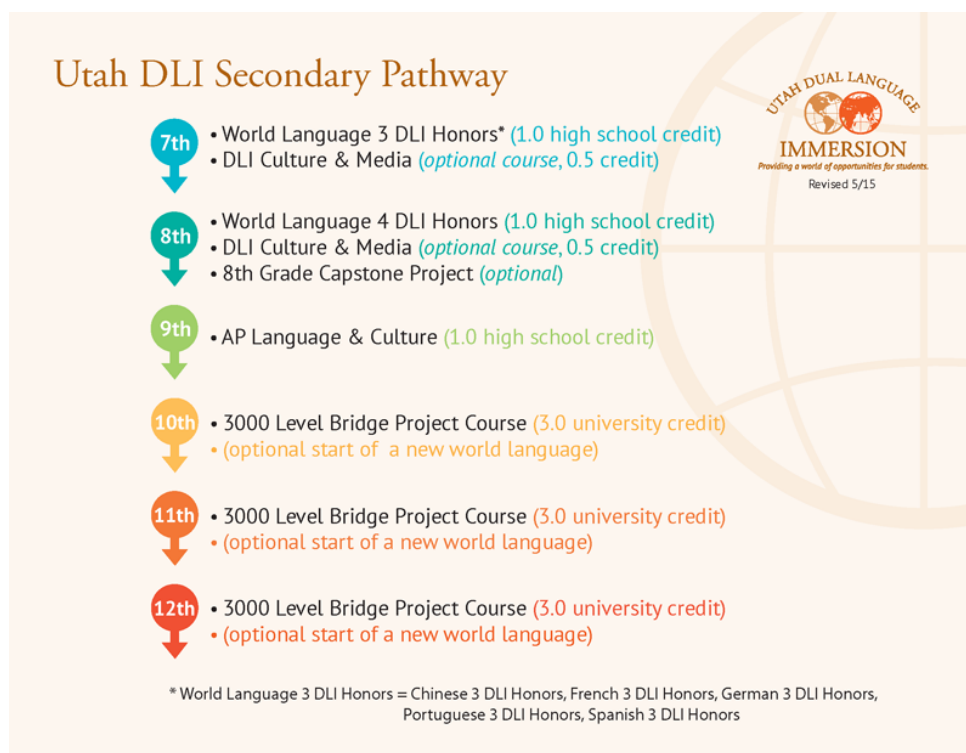
5. What expectations do you have for DLI teachers that you may not have for non-DLI teachers?
6. How would you rate your familiarity with the Utah DLI and Bridge programs?
  - a. 1 – 5 (Not familiar– Very familiar)
7. How clear do you feel your institution or school district's expectations are regarding the role of your DLI teachers?
  - a. 1 – 5 (Not clear– Very clear)
8. In an ideal world, what types of professional development activities would you consider beneficial for your DLI teachers in preparing them to teach higher proficiency students?
9. What kind of training do you provide for your DLI teachers?
10. What do you foresee as an obstacle for the DLI program in Utah? Please explain.
11. How have you seen parental support or involvement in DLI programs?
12. How do you think parental support or involvement could be increased?
13. As an administrator, would you say that the language proficiency of DLI teachers is more important than their other educational training in content areas? Please explain.

## APPENDIX B

## Supplementary DLI Information

Utah Dual Language Immersion  
118 Programs Statewide 2014-2015

The above data was adapted from Utah State Office of Education (2013). The graphic below was found on the Utah DLI Instructional Model (2015) webpage.



## APPENDIX C

## Multiliteracy Survey Questions for ELC Students

1. How many books do you have in your home? (ask for an approximate number)
2. How often do your children read on their own?
  1. Daily / 4-5 times a week / 1-2 times a week
3. How long do they read? (in minutes)
  1. In your first language
  2. In English
4. How often do you read to your children?
  1. Daily / 4-5 times a week / 1-2 times a week
5. How long do you read together? (in minutes)
  1. In your first language
  2. In English
6. How often do you read on your own?
  1. Daily / 4-5 times a week / 1-2 times a week
7. How long do you read?
  1. In your first language
  2. In English
8. How many wireless / mobile data-enabled devices\* does your family (all members) own? (\*These include smart phones, iPod Touches, iPads, tablet computers and the like.)
  1. 0 / 1-2 / 3+
9. How many computers does your family (all members) own? (Laptops or desktops).
  1. 0 / 1-2 / 3+
10. My family has Internet access at home.
  1. Yes / No
11. My family has Internet access at school or work.
  1. Yes / No
12. My family has no access to Internet.

1. Yes / No
13. What is your primary source of news and information?
  1. Television / Printed newspaper / Internet
14. Do you feel that your children's school offers learning support (after school programs, reading incentives, etc.)?
  1. Yes / No
15. Do you feel that you have easy access to information about your child's school schedules, announcements, and how to contact teachers, etc.?
  1. Yes / No
16. What would you change about how you receive this information?
  1. Open ended
17. Is your child is on track to graduate from high school?
  1. Yes / No
18. Do you think your child will go to college?
  1. Yes / No
19. Do you think your child will be equipped with the necessary tools and skills to earn a college degree?
  1. Yes / No
20. What tools do you think would help them further prepare?
  1. Open ended

## Appendix D

## Pre-Study Abroad Online Exchange Questions

Q 1) When people from other countries think about your culture, what do they usually think of?

A 1) For the Spaniards answering this question, they might mention landmarks or notable cities such as the Statue of Liberty, New York City, the Golden Gate Bridge, Disneyland, Hollywood, etc. They may also bring up icons, being movie stars, athletes, the current President, etc. The USU students may be interested in fashion, Spanish food, art, history, stereotypical street cafes and vendors, bullfights, famous landmarks and cities seen only in the movies, etc.

Q 2) What is a typical dish that would be served in your country?

A 2) For the American students, this may be hamburgers and hot dogs, boxed foods such as mac & cheese, etc. For the Spaniards, this could be seafood paella, a Spanish *tortilla*, or a variety of *tapas*.

Q 3) What don't you like about your culture?

A 3) The Spanish students may discuss the lack of unity throughout their country. Conflicting ideas between Madrid (representing the nation), Catalonia and the Basque Country have caused unrest and have increased the autonomous communities' desire for independence. Students from Utah State might mention how wasteful Americans can be with the large amounts of food they discard.

Other questions that could be included in the exchanges are:

Q 4) What are student opinions on gaining higher education?

Q 5) What is the job market like for college-age students in each country?

Q 6) What role does religion play in your culture's everyday behavior?