NECTFL

Review

A Journal for K – 16+ Foreign Language Educators

The Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages serves educators in all languages (including classical, less commonly taught, and ESL), at all levels from kindergarten through university, in both public and private settings. In existence since the late 1940s, NECTFL is the largest of five regional associations of its kind in the United States, representing educators from Maine to Virginia but exercising leadership nation-wide.
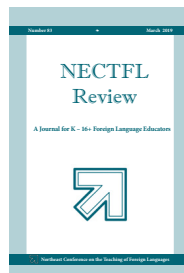
NECTFL has expanded its outreach, professional development and advocacy efforts through publications, workshops, research projects and other initiatives. Its prestige has been reflected in its singular ability to bring together the profession's most prestigious leaders for world-class and ground-breaking programs while sustaining an organizational culture that is interactive, welcoming, and responsive.

Through representation on its Board of Directors, through its Advisory Council, through conference offerings and refereed journal articles, NECTFL maintains a commitment to the individual foreign language teacher, to collaborative endeavors, to innovation and to inclusionary politics and policies.

What We Do:

We serve world language teachers by

- **listening to them**
- **representing their diverse views**
- **bringing them together**
- **nurturing their growth as newcomers and veterans treating them as caring friends and respected professionals**

**Go to
Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

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The *NECTFL Review* is proud to present its Editorial Board.

Our sincere gratitude to the following individuals who have agreed to serve as reviewers of manuscripts submitted for publication in the *NECTFL Review.* We cannot fulfill our mission without them!

From the 2020 Conference Chair

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The NECTFL Board of Directors is pleased to present the 84th issue of the *NECTFL Review*, an academic journal for PK-16+ world languages educators, researchers, and administrators. We are confident that the articles selected and approved by a committee of experts will spur your thinking and impact your professional growth. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Terry, the editor of the *NECTFL Review*, for his steadfast efforts in ensuring the consistent quality of the publication and its relevance to the field of world language teaching and learning.

With a new school year upon us, we return to our classrooms and colleagues after a summer of relaxing, reviving, reflecting, or perhaps working in a different manner. Each new year presents us with new opportunities, whether it be new curriculum, new initiatives, and definitely new students. Each of these new things has the potential for really interesting possibilities, but the challenges of putting us outside of our comfort zones. To address these challenges, I invite you to attend the 67th annual Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. We're offering three days of workshops, sessions, networking opportunities, and interactions with leaders in the field of world language education. The 2020 theme, "Languages for All: Envisioning Language Learning Opportunities for Every Learner," explores the nature of having a diverse group of learners in your classroom.

Rather than seeing these diverse students as outliers that somehow distract from the larger group's progression toward proficiency, I instead challenge you to see these learners as an essential part of the fabric of our classes. Some suggest that we embrace our learners' differences because it is the right thing to do, that we are being inclusive. But the truth of the matter is that everyone wins when we work within diverse teams. We develop empathy for those not like us. We gain perspective from seeing the world through another's eyes.

At #NECTFL20, we'll have a variety of featured sessions and workshops that seek to address all the ways a learner may be different from the majority - but the enriching ways in which they add great benefit to everyone's learning. Our keynote speaker, Dr. José Medina, will kick off the conference with a rousing call to action to understand and honor every single learner. We'll have the usual wide array of workshops and sessions being presented by

our region's leaders. Furthermore, we will continue to offer the ever popular TechLab and Research Roundtable sessions where individuals present their research findings and first-hand experiences with new technology tools. At #NECTFL20, each session slot will have one featured session to highlight outstanding contributions to this year's theme.

The world always seems to be at a crossroads. This summer has been no exception as it has presented us with challenges and uncertainties. The return of the fall returns us to our educational communities and the routines and relationships that accompany them. We have much to discuss and consider. I certainly hope choosing to attend the Northeast Conference will help you address the national discourse in both your approach to teaching and your interactions with peers and students.

I look forward to seeing you at the 2019 NECTFL Conference, February 13–15, 2020!

Regards,

Nathan Lutz
Conference Chair
NECTFL 202

LANGUAGES FOR ALL

66th Annual Conference

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Nathan Lutz
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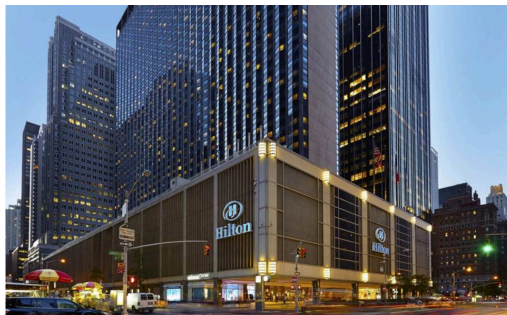
Keynote Speech—NECTFL 2019

Authentic Language, Authentic Learning

Laura Terrill

The word *authentic* is interesting. If you combine the word with resources, we have a working definition accepted by most "text created by native speakers for native speakers," but combining it with language and learning makes the concept far more complex. If we begin with the concept of "authentic" and consider synonyms, we might think of authentic as real, original, genuine, right, true or honest. However, these words really do not help us to implement authentic language in our classrooms.

Today, I would like to explore the connection between authentic language and authentic learning and will suggest that the link between the two is authentic literacy as presented by (Schmoker, 2018).

Let's look first at authentic language which is a complex topic. If you have children or grandchildren, you realize that authentic language also depends on age and context. Think of young readers in elementary school. They use language in different ways, for different purposes. All of the language they use and access is authentic. When they read independently and for pleasure, we know that they need books where they understand 85 - 90% of the words. That's why elementary teachers use Lexile scores and create the A-Z bins of books. They send home forms asking if those books selected for independent reading are too hard, too easy or about right. For independent reading children select books that are of high interest and are helped to select titles that they can read independently. They may choose to read fiction or non-fiction or those that combine both like The Magic School Bus series where Ms. Frizzle takes the children on an adventure that embeds facts throughout the narrative. Yet, independent reading is not enough. To become a better reader and to learn more about the world in which

they live, children are also read to at school and at home. As a result of this type of reading where comprehension is scaffolded by the teacher or the person doing the reading, children become better readers. They build background knowledge and encounter unfamiliar words in context. Comprehension increases because the text is supported with visuals, because the more experienced reader circumlocutes the meaning of a new word and because the child interrupts and asks questions when the message is not understood.

We should also consider authentic language in the context of communication. ACTFL defines communication as "knowing how when and why to say what to whom". In very few words, this definition gives us the overarching enduring understanding related to world language study. These 10 words encompass the linguistic and social knowledge needed for communication.

There must always be a meaningful purpose for communication that involves the expression, interpretation and negotiation and of meaning (VanPatten, 2017). Both of these definitions make it clear that authentic language serves a purpose. It allows a message to be conveyed or understood.

But for busy educators making quick decisions about what to teach it might be helpful to keep our focus on the purpose of communication. Ask yourself "Will my learners do this or encounter this on the streets of (city)?" and then fill in the name of a city where the target culture is spoken — Paris, Barcelona, Rome, Beijing. This simple question ensures that what is addressed is meaningful, purposeful and appropriate for the age of the learner.

With meaning and purpose in mind, we need to consider the learner of today and do all we can to make learning relevant. To make language learning relevant, we are going to have to consider what we know about how the brain learns. If we take a moment to look at any image that depicts a significant event, that image is likely to provoke emotion. It that image is one that is unfamiliar to us, it is also likely to provoke our curiosity. Both emotion and curiosity play a key role in learning.

Livsey and Palmer (1999) remind us that intellect works in concert with feeling and that if we want students to learn we must engage their emotions as well. The amygdala in the brain encodes every experience with emotion. We learn better when emotions are engaged. Emotion invites curiosity, causing learners to question, listen and reflect. Curiosity is often considered to be as important as the other 21st Century Skills and many suggest adding it as a fifth C to the current four — Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity.

Curiosity engages the hippocampus which is the region of the brain is involved in the creation of memories. The hippocampus is also the part of the brain that is related to reward and pleasure. As curiosity is activated neurons release dopamine allowing us to experience the same satisfaction, we get from eating something we love like ice cream. Essentially, curiosity functions like any feel-good substance or action.

If we keep the concept of authentic language, the purpose of communication, the role of emotion and curiosity in mind, we are better prepared to make key decisions about what should be part of the curriculum.

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Curriculum is both a mirror allowing us to get to know ourselves better and a window to the world. We choose what we teach, but as we design our curriculum, we design for both and we must do this at all levels of proficiency and with learners of all ages.

When writing *Keys to Planning for Learning: Effective Curriculum, Unit and Lesson Design*, Donna Clementi and I worked to produce an image that would capture a mindset for effective curriculum.

The image is meant to suggest that an effective thematic unit must allow learners to learn more about themselves, their communities and the world in which they live. They do this by working within the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational. The content of the unit is framed by the World-Readiness Standards. The lower case "*i*" represents the concept of interculturality as learners investigate content and interact with others within the framework of the unit. Each thematic unit must also be communicatively purposeful, relevant to the age of the learner, intrinsically interesting and cognitively engaging.

Effective unit goals incorporate the World-Readiness Standards, invite curiosity and have the potential to provoke emotion. They allow for investigation and interaction allowing learners to develop intercultural communicative competence. Most importantly the content of the unit should be designed to capture the interest of the learner. Donna says it best when she states clearly "If you lead with culture, language will follow." Let's apply this mindset to a unit on education called Schooling Around the World. Working with an essential question "What role does school play in our lives?" This unit requires learners to

- explain their feelings about school, commenting on likes and dislikes with regard to school;
- comment on what they need to learn and what they do to learn;
- make comparisons between their school life and school life in the target culture;
- comment on how children go to school and make comparisons to their lives;
- comment on the importance of school and who goes to school;
- share information about their school with others.

The first instructional challenge will be to engage learners as they begin to explore the essential question. Authentic images and video invite the learner to engage by sharing what they see, think and wonder allowing them to activate prior knowledge and to ask questions to engage their curiosity.

The unit structure creates the context for using authentic language and the goals make clear what learners will be able to do. Now, we must consider how we

will engage learners as they work toward these goals. Authentic literacy provides a framework for how to do this. Authentic literacy is more than reading, writing, speaking and listening. It involves those skills, but it also addresses purpose. It forces us to consider why we are reading, writing. listening and speaking. recognizing that we use these skills to communicate effectively and to make sense of the world. Schmoker pushes our thinking further saying that purposeful, reading, writing and discussion are key to learning content and thinking skills. The good news for busy educators is that the concept is fairly easy to apply. Authentic literacy simply requires a text, a task and talk. Let's look at a simple example of text, task, talk. The UNICEF video *Cartoons for Child Rights—Education India* addresses the essential question of the unit *"What role does education play in our lives?"* by considering children who don't go to school. It's a 30-second video without a narrative so that everyone can easily process the message. The video focuses on a child who is working on the side of the road when a school but passes filled with happy, energetic children on their way to school.

If this is the text that we have decided to use, the next step is to determine the task. Bill VanPatten reminds us that a successful task must involve the expression and interpretation of meaning and have a purpose that is not language practice. The task is summarized here as a "*I can*" statement that is written as a learning target for a lesson or series of lessons.

> Learners can compare the lives of children considering the advantages and disadvantages of each lifestyle.

With the text and task in mind, we are ready to determine how learners will talk or process the text. Schmoker explains that this "talk" must go beyond recall or the retelling of a story or event. It must capture the purpose for working with the text. Here we choose what students will discuss and how they will share their thinking. Learners move from the interpretive mode to the interpersonal and/or presentational modes.

Learners might, for example, be asked to

- Compare the lives of the children with regard to advantages and disadvantages related to education.
- Discuss the advantages they have or don't have.
- Explain what the creator of this video wanted the viewer to know or understand.

Clearly, we would have to design a variety of scaffolded activities to prepare learners to be successful at the novice level. The tasks outlined above are doable within the walls of the classroom. Revington(2016) would say that this type of task allows for vicarious learning reminding us that there is one more step that must be taken to move our learners from authentic literacy to authentic learning. Authentic learning requires that our learners engage deeply in the fifth C of Community. They must either go out into the community or engage with the community in the classroom in order to solve a problem or create a product that has community betterment as a goal. Authentic learning tasks require learners to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world challenges.

Authentic learning Is real world learning activated in a real-world context. Various initiatives like the ACTFL Global Education Initiative or the AP College

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Board We initiative provide examples of how authentic learning tasks can be part of what our learners do. Here, again in the context of the Schooling Around the World unit, learners are asked to complete an authentic learning tasks by working in groups to design a plan for continued collaboration with a school in the target culture. The design of that plan would involve working with another school to consider the purpose for the collaboration and the process that would be followed. The groups then share their plan with other groups in the class before coming together to decide which plan to pursue. The class would then work collaboratively to implement the plan and would continue to collaborate with another school.

My hope would be that this article summarizing the keynote has created a bit of curiosity and perhaps even some emotion around the journey from authentic language to authentic literacy and finally to authentic learning. If yes, then I invite you to complete a personal authentic learning task.

Consider your thinking while reading this article. Discuss your thinking with your colleagues. Determine and implement your next step in the continuum from authentic language to authentic learning.

If collectively we all take our next steps, we will move our profession further toward the purpose of language learning expressed by Sandra Savignon who shared that…

Learning to speak another's language means taking one's place in the human community. It means reaching out to others across cultural and linguistic boundaries. Language is far more than a system to be explained. It is our most important link to the world around us. Language is culture in motion. It is people interacting with people.

Thank you for all you are doing to give today's learners the linguistic and cultural skills that they will need to thrive in this multilingual and multicultural world.

The presentation slides for Authentic Language, Authentic Learning can be found at **https://qrgo.page.link/cYJri** or accessed via the QR Code shown here.

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Re-examining teacher candidate performance on world language edTPA as a consequential assessment

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Pete Swanson, *Georgia State University / United States Air Force Academy*

Abstract

Used by over 800 educator preparation programs in more than 40 states and the District of Columbia, edTPA seeks to measure content-specific outcomes of beginning teachers as a high-stakes assessment. Many states also use edTPA to inform teacher licensure or certification decisions, making the assessment consequential for individual teacher candidates. The present study focuses on teacher candidates' performance on the World Language edTPA, targeting two world language teacher education programs since the assessment became consequential for licensure in their respective states. It then compares findings to those of a previous study of the same programs' World Language edTPA performance (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014) from before the assessment became consequential for teacher licensure decisions in 2015 in Illinois and Georgia. Programmatic changes were implemented after initial inspection of the data, and results from such curricular changes are discussed in terms of local impact. Additionally, national trends are identified and discussed. Findings demonstrate

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Pete Swanson (Ph.D., University of Wyoming) is Professor of Foreign Language Education at Georgia State University where he serves as Coordinator of the world language teacher education program. Currently, Dr. Swanson is serving as Distinguished Visiting Professor of Spanish at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado. His research focuses on teacher effectiveness and the identification, recruitment, and retention of world language teachers.

serious issues regarding this assessment of beginning teacher effectiveness as related to World Language teaching and learning. This research has implications for teacher preparation programs and other educational stakeholders alike.

At the time of writing, 834 Educator Preparation Programs in 41 states and the District of Columbia (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, AACTE, 2018a) are participating in edTPA, a high-stakes performance assessment of new teacher readiness. Its widespread use for graduation and licensure decisions has prompted concerns among teacher educators and teacher candidates alike. In general, teacher educators worry that their programs will be evaluated by their teacher candidates' edTPA scores and that their teacher candidates may not be able to pass edTPA. Teacher candidates worry about the assessment's cost and that their score may be insufficient for graduation and licensure.

> ... edTPA, a high-stakes performance assessment of new teacher readiness. Its widespread use for graduation and licensure decisions has prompted concerns among teacher educators and teacher candidates alike.

Over the last several years, edTPA has become an integral part of the student teaching experience for tens of thousands of student teachers. Many states have set minimum cut scores that teacher candidates must meet to earn licensure or certification in the state, with necessary pass scores ranging from 29 (of 65 points possible) in Oregon to 37 in Illinois beginning September 2019 (AACTE, 2018b). Other states, like Minnesota, use edTPA scores to evaluate teacher preparation programs (AACTE, 2018b), while some universities require that teacher candidates pass edTPA for graduation from a teacher education program. Scores are frequently used to gather data that can promote curricular changes to teacher education programs and content modifications for methods courses that prepare teacher candidates. As opposed to other frequently used multiple-choice assessments of teacher knowledge (e.g., state content exams, Praxis II World Language Pedagogy test), edTPA requires teacher candidates to actively demonstrate their pedagogical knowledge by submitting artifacts from a series of lessons taught to actual students in the form of a lengthy portfolio.

The widespread use of edTPA across the country prompted the current exploration of edTPA scores in two teacher education programs in order to compare early results (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014) to those after September 1, 2015, when edTPA became required for licensure in Illinois and Georgia. The programs' scores will also be compared to national World Language (WL) edTPA averages.

Literature Review

In this literature review, the researchers explore previous studies of WL edTPA candidate performance and national trends, criticisms of edTPA, and the conceptual framework of interventions undertaken by the two target WL teacher education programs after an initial pilot study.

Re-examining teacher candidate performance on world language edTPA

WL edTPA and national trends. This study serves as a follow-up to the original exploratory investigation of edTPA prior to its consequential use in Illinois and Georgia (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014). That study compared teacher candidates' composite scores with known edTPA cut scores in the early-adopting states of Washington and New York, finding that all participants would have passed edTPA in Washington, with its cut score of 30, and 90% would have passed with New York's cut score of 35. In that study, the researchers also reported that the programs' teacher candidates performed best on the Planning task, second best on the Instruction task, and most poorly on the Assessment task. Behney (2018) confirmed the same pattern across six WL teacher preparation programs throughout the United States.

Other studies of WL edTPA have focused on the rhetorical demands of lengthy commentaries submitted by teacher candidates. As explained in Troyan and Kaplan's (2015) case study of one Spanish teacher candidate's evolution as a writer, the exigencies of the critical academic reflection genre required by edTPA commentaries necessitate candidates to "describe and analyze artifacts of practice" (p. 374). That description and analysis, provided by the commentaries for each task, explains the pedagogical decisions made by each candidate during the Planning, Instruction, and Assessment tasks. To alleviate the writing demands placed on candidates, Troyan and Kaplan (2015) called for explicit instruction during coursework to help move candidates' writing from personal private reflection to critical academic reflection.

These rhetorical challenges for native speakers of English may be exacerbated for non-native speakers of English. Russell and Davidson Devall (2016) found that, among their seven participants (of whom one was a native speaker and another was a heritage speaker of Spanish), a misalignment occurred between edTPA scores and other assessments, like evaluations from the university supervisor and cooperating teacher, content knowledge tests, and proficiency in the target language, as measured by the Oral Proficiency Interview. This misalignment was particularly profound for non-native English speakers, given the writing demands of the three edTPA commentaries. Supporting those findings, Jourdain (2018) reported that native and heritage speakers of Spanish submitted their portfolios for evaluation in smaller numbers than their native English-speaking classmates and that those non-native English speakers' WL edTPA scores were lower than those of their native English-speaking peers.

Mentor and university supervisors' familiarity, or lack thereof, with edTPA can also influence candidates' performance on the WL edTPA. Behney (2016) explored the critical role that cooperating teachers have on candidates' performance, finding that more experienced teachers play an integral role in teacher candidates' edTPA success. Russell and Davidson Devall (2016) also found that mentors' support levels may be hampered by a lack of knowledge of edTPA and how it fits in the larger teacher candidate evaluation landscape. In turn, that information deficit may influence teacher candidate edTPA performance.

> Mentor and university supervisors' familiarity, or lack thereof, with edTPA can also influence candidates' performance on the WL edTPA.

National edTPA data trends show that from 2014 to 2016 (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity, SCALE, 2015, 2016a, 2017a), as the number of teacher candidates who took the WL edTPA increased from 416 to 655, the total mean scores declined a little over 10%, or 4.1 points. That is, total mean scores dropped from 40.0 in 2014 to 35.9 in 2016, with the means for all tasks decreasing. Of particular interest is the drop on Rubric 8 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy) in the Instruction task, which dropped from 2.4 to 1.9 over the course of those three years (SCALE, 2015, 2016a, 2017a). No rationale for lower scores over the course of the three administrations was given in the administrative reports.

Criticisms of edTPA. Various criticisms have been levied against edTPA in general and the WL edTPA in particular, although it is an improvement over many previously existing assessments of teacher readiness (Au, 2013). Some accuse edTPA of deprofessionalizing teaching and teacher education through the encroachment of corporations like Pearson into educational decision-making (Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015; Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013). Others argue that edTPA depersonalizes teaching and teacher education as it diminishes local control of teacher preparation (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013) and teacher candidates' attention to diversity as they prepare their edTPA lessons (Au, 2013). edTPA's $300 price tag is also a concern, as over 40,000 teacher candidates' portfolios were expected for official scoring in 2017, creating a revenue stream of $12 million (SCALE, 2016b). This cost contributes to the already high fees associated with graduating from teacher education programs and earning licensure in a state (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014, 2016).

WL edTPA has its own set of challenges living up to the professional expectations of the WL teaching profession (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016). Although it focuses on student second language proficiency development in a meaningful cultural context, stipulating a *meaningful* cultural context seems to ignore the fact that all human interactions occur within cultural contexts. What makes a cultural context meaningful? As for student proficiency development, none of the WL edTPA's 13 rubrics focus on teacher use of the target language, which is an integral source of students' comprehensible input. In the video recordings of the Instruction task, teacher candidate use of target language is not evaluated, despite the large amount of attention devoted to that skill in WL teacher education programs (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, ACTFL, 2013), ACTFL's (2010) suggestion of 90% or more target language use, and the field's general focus on students' language proficiency development. Further, despite WL edTPA rubrics' emphasis on function over form, Swanson and Hildebrandt (2017) reported that the portfolios of their teacher candidates with the highest Assessment task subscores contained a large number of objectives that focused on form instead of function.

> Although it focuses on student second language proficiency development in a meaningful cultural context, stipulating a *meaningful* cultural context seems to ignore the fact that all human interactions occur within cultural contexts.

Re-examining teacher candidate performance on world language edTPA

Promoted as a content-specific assessment of teacher performance, edTPA portfolios are evaluated by scorers with "content-specific expertise" who are external to the teacher candidate's home institution (Pearson Technology, 2018, para. 3). While the qualifications of those scorers focus on classroom teaching and supervisory experiences (Pearson Technology, 2018), without addressing teaching philosophies and whether scorers engage in up-to-date teaching practices those qualifications are vague (Swanson & Hildebrandt, 2017). That is, scorers who practice outdated pedagogy may be hired to evaluate edTPA portfolios based on their experiences teaching and supervising. The lack of transparency related to scorer qualifications challenge the WL teacher education community and teacher candidates who were taught in their methods classes to teach language in communicative ways that may not be rewarded in the evaluation of their portfolios. Further, the dearth of model WL edTPA portfolios for teacher educator and teacher candidate reference further disadvantage stakeholders by keeping secret the criteria that make an outstanding portfolio. Sample WL edTPA portfolios are scant in the field, so local training may be performed using portfolios from other content areas. Having WL faculty members and teacher candidates examine portfolios from other content areas is not as helpful as having them explore WL portfolios that can support an understanding of the real exigencies of the content-specific assessment.

Conceptual Framework of Interventions. Developing content-specific teacher knowledge extends across collegiate departmental lines (e.g., Department of Languages and Literatures, Department of Secondary Education). Coursework at the postsecondary level generally develops content knowledge in language classes housed in a language department, general pedagogical knowledge in a College of Education, and pedagogical content knowledge in WL pedagogy classes offered either in the College of Education or a language department, depending on the university context (Hildebrandt, Hlas, & Conroy, 2013). The WL pedagogy classes, often called methods, are critical to teacher candidate success on edTPA because of the content-specific nature of the assessment.

edTPA requires teacher candidates to enact teaching approaches that move beyond grammar-based methods. To succeed on the assessment, teacher candidates must apply communicative language teaching approaches to the creation of portfolios that demonstrate efforts to develop students' communicative proficiency in meaningful cultural context(s) and to determine if students can, in fact, meet objectives set out in advance. They must also carry out that teaching while connecting the target language and culture(s) to students' academic background knowledge and personal, cultural, and community assets (SCALE, 2017b).

ACTFL's (2015) core practices were explored and implemented in the target programs' methods classes, with the objective of improving scores in each of the three WL edTPA tasks. These core practices are critical to successful student language learning:

- Use target language for learning
- Design communicative activities

- Teach grammar as concept and use in context (IPA)
- Use authentic cultural resources
- Plan with backward design model
- Provide appropriate feedback

In particular, the use of Integrated Performance Assessments (IPA) was emphasized in order to boost Planning task subscores after it was found that previous teacher candidates who used an IPA in their edTPA learning segments tended to receive higher scores on their portfolios than those who did not (Swanson & Goulette, 2018). For the Instruction task, instructors highlighted the critical need to differentiate instruction for the diverse learners in the classroom and to remove barriers to learning as much as possible by using the principles of Universal Design (Scott, McGuire, & Foley, 2003).

Based on previous teacher candidates' performance (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014), the most attention was paid to improving subscores on the Assessment task. Backwards design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), in which teachers state learning outcomes and design assessments prior to planning instruction, played an integral role in WL methods classes at both universities. Determining objectives and student learning outcomes (Gronlund, 2004) before designing assessments and eventually lessons played a central role throughout the teacher preparation programs. These practices were explicitly modeled as part of the WL methods courses, with learning outcomes and their connection to the standards for teacher preparation (ACTFL, 2013) made for each in-class activity and all assignments.

These interventions, prompted by the 2014 study, informed the two research questions addressed in the present study:

1. What effect did interventions related to planning, instruction, and assessment in WL pedagogy classes have on teacher candidates' edTPA performance?
2. How do the data from these two programs compare to national WL edTPA averages?

Methods

This quantitative study investigates teacher candidate performance on the WL edTPA, as compared to a previous study of the same two WL teacher education programs' candidates' performance and national averages on the assessment.

Institutional Contexts. The authors are WL teacher education program coordinators at Illinois State University and Georgia State University, respectively. Although a Georgia State University faculty member, the second author is currently serving as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the United States Air Force Academy. Illinois State University is located in Normal, Illinois and is a moderately large public institution with 20,635 students, with 72.6% White, 10.3% Hispanic, and 8.9% African American (Illinois State University, 2018). It is the oldest public university in the state and one of the largest producers of teachers in the nation (Illinois State University, 2019). Georgia State University is a public, urban research institution located in downtown Atlanta, Georgia with a student population of over 51,000 students (Georgia State University, 2019). It is one of the most diverse universities in the United States Georgia State University, 2019).

Re-examining teacher candidate performance on world language edTPA

While obvious differences between the two universities exist, multiple commonalities are also present. First, Illinois State University and Georgia State University have a combined enrollment of approximately 75 teacher candidates—a 65 percent drop in enrollment over the several years since the previous study (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014), which is consistent with national data on teacher education enrollment in general (Long, 2016). Teacher candidates at both institutions complete general pedagogical coursework in general foundations of education, technology integration, and working with diverse student populations, as well as six credits of coursework in pre-K to grade 12 WL pedagogy that centers on standards-based, proficiency-oriented approaches to instruction and assessment. At both universities, teacher candidates are placed for field experiences in a variety of diverse pre-K to grade 12 schools (e.g., rural, suburban, urban). Finally, both universities are regionally accredited and earned national recognition from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. Due to such commonalities and given the relatively minor programmatic differences between the two, the two samples of teacher candidate scores on the WL edTPA were combined to form one data set.

Participants. Following Institutional Review Board approval, 36 teacher candidates in the two aforementioned WL teacher education programs agreed to participate in the research. The participants represent the total number of graduates during the five semesters from fall 2015 to fall 2017. All participants were seeking initial certification in Spanish or French education, and the majority of participants are female (70%). All participants created a WL edTPA portfolio during their final field placement (e.g., student teaching) and submitted it for official external review. All participants but two passed the WL edTPA with scores sufficient for licensure in their state on the first attempt; the two whose initial scores were insufficient passed on the second attempt. Per edTPA guidelines at both institutions regarding the filming of K-12 students, parents / guardians of the students in the participants' classrooms were asked to grant their permission to videotape their children and use the data for research purposes.

Instrument. Using the Common Core State Standards and the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006) as a framework, the WL edTPA was designed by the AACTE and Stanford University to "measure novice teachers' readiness to teach world language" (SCALE, 2017b, p. 1) while grounded on a three-step teaching cycle of planning, instruction, and assessment. The developers of the WL edTPA state that the assessment is grounded in research and theory, as well as on findings that successful teachers

- develop knowledge of subject matter, content standards, and subject-specific pedagogy
- develop and apply knowledge of varied students' needs
- consider research and theory about how students learn
- reflect on and analyze evidence of the effects of instruction on student learning. (p. 1)

Working independently of college faculty members, teacher candidates must plan a learning segment of three to five lessons, analyze their instruction via video clips that are submitted for review, and use student data to inform their practice.

Specifically, teacher candidates must submit via Pearson's online system lesson plans, copies of instructional and assessment materials, up to 15 minutes of video clips showing in-class instruction, and student work samples, justifying their pedagogical decisions via written commentaries. Materials such as the WL edTPA handbook, rubrics, and training/scoring materials are proprietary with exclusive authorship and copyrights held by SCALE; therefore, such specific information cannot be included here due to copyright restrictions. In states where edTPA is used for consequential purposes (e.g., licensure), the portfolios are evaluated externally by scorers trained by Pearson. However, during edTPA pilot testing, portfolios can be scored locally for formative purposes after having been trained by their local edTPA coordinator or by SCALE.

The WL edTPA, in particular, centers on students' communicative proficiency development in a meaningful cultural context. Portfolios are scored by current or retired K-12 faculty or administrators, teacher education faculty, or university supervisors (Pearson Technology, 2018). WL edTPA scores can range from zero to 65 total points, with 13 five-point Likert scale rubrics: Planning for Instruction and Assessment (Rubrics 1, 2, 3 and 4), Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning (Rubrics 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9), and Assessing Student Learning (Rubrics 10, 11, 12 and 13). Each rubric is scored from 1 to 5:

- Level 1 represents the low end of the scoring spectrum, representing the knowledge and skills of a struggling candidate who is not ready to teach;
- Level 2 represents the knowledge and skills of a candidate who is possibly ready to teach;
- Level 3 represents the knowledge and skills of a candidate who is ready to teach;
- Level 4 represents a candidate with a solid foundation of knowledge and skills for a beginning teacher;
- Level 5 represents the advanced skills and abilities of a candidate very well qualified and ready to teach. (SCALE, 2013, p. 12)

Cut Scores in Illinois and Georgia. Individual states set their own passing scores for the various content areas and have the authority to increase cut scores over time. During the pilot study of teacher candidate performance on the WL edTPA (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014), cut scores were not yet determined for either Illinois or Georgia. Since official implementation began in fall 2015, however, the cut score to pass the WL edTPA in Illinois and Georgia was 29 and 31, respectively, between September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2017. From September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018, the cut scores were 32 and 33, respectively. Illinois increased the necessary scores for the WL edTPA to 35 in September of 2018 and will again increase it to 37 in September of 2019.

Procedures and Data Analysis. In the aforementioned pilot study, trained evaluators scored the Georgia State University WL edTPA portfolios, and the Illinois State University Office of the Provost provided funding to pay the $300 fee per portfolio. At Georgia State University, teacher preparation program coordinators locally scored candidates' portfolios following SCALE training. That

is, all Georgia State University teacher candidate portfolios were placed in *LiveText* and scored locally by the second author and another Georgia State University colleague. Inter-rater reliability was strong (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014).

In the present study, all WL edTPA portfolios were externally scored by trained evaluators once the portfolios were uploaded to the Pearson site and each participant paid the $300 fee. Official scores were returned to the participants and to their universities. Then, the anonymous data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet at each university, and the authors combined the two spreadsheets and checked them for accuracy. Afterward, the data were entered into and analyzed using SPSS 25.0. Due to the low number of participants, only measures of central tendency (e.g., frequency counts, means) are reported here.

Findings

The researchers investigated how programmatic changes to their WL teacher education programs impacted edTPA scores since edTPA became consequential for teacher licensure in their states and following the pilot testing phase. They also compared those scores to national averages on the WL edTPA.

With respect to the first research question about the effect of the combined interventions on each of the three tasks (i.e., Planning, Instruction, and Assessment) since 2014, Table 1 shows that the participants' composite score means decreased more than 3.50 points, from 43.12 (SD = 5.98) in the previous study (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014) to 39.59 (SD = 5.59) in the current study. The subscore for the Assessment task, however, had a modest increase between 2014 (M = 3.04, SD = 0.96) and the time of this study (M = 3.18, SD = 0.56).

Table 1. Means and standard deviations for the three edTPA tasks from two time periods.

	2014 (N = 21)		Fall 2015 - Fall 2017 (N = 37)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Task 1: Planning	3.64	0.46	3.07	0.47
Task 2: Instruction	3.33	0.56	2.82	0.53
Task 3: Assessment	3.04	0.96	3.18	0.56
Composite edTPA score	43.12	5.98	39.59	5.59

Mean scores on Task 1 (Planning for Teaching and Learning) and Task 2 (Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning) decreased by more than a half a point each between the previous and the current study. Specifically, the Task 1 mean score dropped from 3.64 (SD = 0.46) to 3.07 (SD = 0.47) and the Task 2 mean score dropped from 3.33 (SD = 0.56) to 2.82 (SD = 0.53).

Closer examination of the data from the 13 rubrics across the three tasks (see Table 2) showed that participants in the current study scored highest on Rubric 11 (Providing Feedback to Guide Student Development of Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language, $M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.74$) and Rubric 1 (Planning for Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language, $M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.74$). In the previous study, the highest rubric means were almost all found in Task 1, with the exception of Rubric 5 (Learning Environment, $M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.72$).

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, and frequencies for the 13 WL edTPA rubrics from two time periods.

	2014 (N = 21)		2017 (N = 37)	
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
Planning				
Planning for Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language (R1)	3.86	0.65	3.31	0.74
Planning to Support Varied Student Learning Needs (R2)	3.57	0.59	3.19	0.73
Using Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching and Learning (R3)	3.52	0.75	3.20	0.55
Planning Assessments to Monitor and Support Students' Development of Communicative Proficiency (R4)	3.62	0.67	3.04	0.71
Instruction				
Learning Environment (R5)	3.71	0.72	3.14	0.42
Engaging Students (R6)	3.43	0.67	2.91	0.80
Deepening Student Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language (R7)	3.24	0.83	2.89	0.70
Subject-Specific Pedagogy (R8)	3.05	0.92	2.42	0.92
Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness (R9)	3.24	0.70	2.74	0.72
Assessment				
Analysis of Student Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language (R10)	3.38	0.80	3.19	0.84
Providing Feedback to Guide Student Development of Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language (R11)	3.19	1.07	3.36	0.74
Student Use of Feedback (R12)	2.71	1.05	3.06	0.64
Using Assessment to Inform Instruction (R13)	2.90	0.62	3.09	0.66

The lowest mean scores in this study were found on Rubric 9 (Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness, $M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.72$) and Rubric 8 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy, $M = 2.42$, $SD = 0.92$), both of which are part of Task 2, Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning. In the previous study, Rubrics 12 (Student Use of Feedback, $M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.05$) and 13 (Using Assessment to Inform Instruction, $M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.62$), both from the Assessment task, had the lowest means.

Mean scores for Rubrics 12 and 13 increased 0.35 and 0.19 respectively from the 2014 study to the present study, along with the mean score for Rubric 11 (Providing Feedback to Guide Student Development of Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language), which increased by 0.17. All increases in mean scores were found in the Assessment task, while mean scores for all rubrics in the Planning and Instruction tasks decreased. Mean scores for the remaining 10 rubrics decreased, with differences ranging from 0.19 in Rubric 10 (Analysis of Student Communicative Proficiency in the Target Language) to 0.63 in Rubric 8 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy), with five of the 10 rubrics decreasing by more than half a point.

Turning to the second research question concerning how participants' scores compared to national WL edTPA means, data analysis revealed that that national mean for the WL edTPA dropped 4.06 points from 2014 to 2016 (see Table 3). In similar fashion, the total mean score for the two focus WL teacher preparation programs decreased 3.53 points from 2014 to 2017. However, mean composite scores for the two programs were consistently higher than national averages.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for national and programmatic WL edTPA composite scores.

	M	*SD*
2014 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 416)	40.00	7.73
2015 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 572)	37.24	7.30
2016 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 655)	35.94	6.47
2014 Program WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 21)	43.12	5.98
2015-2017 Program WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 37)	39.59	5.59

Discussion

At the time of the 2014 pilot study, colleges and universities in 34 states and the District of Columbia were in various stages of edTPA implementation (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014). Currently, the number of states with institutions of higher education that use edTPA has grown to 41, with 19 states using the assessment for

licensure or program accreditation decisions (AACTE, 2018b). Such growth in use increases the field's urgency to examine the assessment's ability to fairly and accurately measure new teacher readiness. Its high-stakes nature, cost, and influence on teacher education curricula necessitate a critical evaluation of score patterns. The present study compared two WL teacher education programs' edTPA outcomes across time and circumstances. The first study was conducted before edTPA became consequential in Illinois and Georgia, and the second was carried out after it became consequential for individual teacher licensure in both states and graduation from teacher education programs at Illinois State University. The researchers also compared trends within the two programs to those within national WL edTPA data to determine larger patterns of teacher candidate performance.

Results from the initial pilot study indicated that participants scored the highest on Tasks 1 and 2, while the Assessment task proved to be the most challenging (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014). The researchers theorized that these results were found because teacher candidates have many opportunities to plan lessons and enact them; however, these teacher candidates rarely have opportunities to gather and analyze student data that result from their instruction. Even though the participants' scores were above the cut scores necessary for Illinois and Georgia teacher licensure at the time, the researchers redesigned the two programs curricula in an attempt to address the lower Task 3 (i.e., Assessing Student Learning) scores. While there were concerns that an assessment-focused curricular redesign could negatively influence participants' scores on Tasks 1 and 2, the authors, who are the directors of the two programs, agreed that placing a heavier focus on assessment was warranted. Due to programmatic requirements (e.g., maximum number of credit hours in the programs), it was not feasible to add a new course on assessment. In similar fashion, changing the curricula during earlier field experiences (e.g., practica) to focus on gathering and analyzing student data proved challenging. In both programs, completers earn a multiple-level teacher certification (i.e., P-12 in Georgia, K-12 in Illinois), and they have field experiences at all levels of instruction. Analysis of the 2015-2017 WL edTPA data (SCALE, 2015, 2016a, 2017a) show that the redesign was indeed successful at raising the Assessment task subscore, albeit modestly, with the enacted curricular modifications having a positive impact on three of the four Assessment task rubrics.

Specifically, yet briefly, the authors focused curricular changes based on principles of backwards design, writing active and measurable learning outcomes (Swanson & Hildebrandt, 2017), ACTFL's Core Practices, and developing an integrated performance assessment for use in teacher candidates' WL edTPA portfolios. During practicum classes, program faculty placed even more emphasis on teacher candidates starting with the end in mind (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) by beginning with the assessment task when constructing their portfolios (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016). Additional emphasis was placed on the value of writing measurable learning outcomes during methods classes (Swanson & Hildebrandt, 2017) while integrating strategies to build a classroom discourse community (Glisan & Donato, 2017). Such changes clearly had a positive effect on improving Task 3 scores.

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Unfortunately, the focus on assessment practices had a negative impact on scores for all Task 1 and 2 rubrics, as compared to the 2014 study, because of curricular and time constraints to move teacher candidates through the programs in a timely manner. Initially, the researchers were hesitant to share results that answered the first research question concerning the impact of interventions put in place. After all, the programs had additional time to emphasize concepts addressed in the WL edTPA and, yet, the teacher candidates were not performing as well, both overall (as shown by the drop in composite score means) and on 10 of the 13 rubrics. Upon answering the second research question comparing the two programs' data to national data, however, the researchers realized that decreases in scores were a national issue. Mean scores for WL edTPA composite scores and almost all 13 rubrics have steadily fallen across the nation (SCALE, 2015, 2016a, 2017a) since the initial study. As the number of national WL edTPA submissions increased from 420 in 2014 (SCALE, 2015) to 587 in 2015 (SCALE, 2016a) to 672 in 2016 (SCALE, 2017a), the mean composite scores dropped from 40.00 to 37.20 to 35.90 points, respectively. Additionally, national means on all but three of the 13 rubrics declined each year; those three rubrics (Rubrics 10, 11, and 12) showed an initial decline from 2014 to 2015 and in 2016 either rebounded to the 2014 level (Rubric 12) or plateaued (Rubrics 10 and 11). Such a general downward trend may be accounted for, in part, by the increase in submissions and additional educator preparation programs inexperienced with edTPA. Nevertheless, the fact that data from the two programs showed a similar pattern for 10 of the 13 rubrics calls such an explanation into question. The substantial curricular changes made to our programs in order to better prepare our teacher candidates, the increased familiarity with the assessment among teacher candidates and program directors, and the licensure mandate in our states did not seem to have made much of a positive impact on composite scores. The positive impacts of interventions on the three assessment rubrics with higher means were modest at best.

An additional concern, both in the two focus programs and across the nation, is the decrease in mean scores for Rubric 8 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy). This rubric, which is part of the Instruction task, addresses four of the five goal areas from the *World-Readiness Standards* (The National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015)—Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, and Communities. It specifically demands that teacher candidates address all three Ps (i.e., products, practices, and perspectives) from the Cultures goal area in order to earn a score of 2 of on the rubric. In order to earn a higher score, teacher candidates must connect those three Ps to the students' existing knowledge and experiences and encourage the students to use the target language beyond the classroom setting. These expectations may be appropriate if examining the entire learning segment of three to five lessons; they are not appropriate, however, for examining the primary sources of evidence for Rubric 8—one 15-minute, unedited video and one prompt of the written instructional commentary. Demonstrating the impact of such an unrealistic expectation, national data from 2014 to 2016 show that of the 13 rubrics, Rubric 8 consistently has the lowest mean (SCALE, 2015, 2016a, 2017a). The same is true for this study's data set, with the mean for Rubric 8 more

than 0.30 points lower than the next lowest mean (i.e., Rubric 9, also within the Instruction task). Such a finding is particularly vexing since an edTPA task force from ACTFL approached members of SCALE several years ago, presenting issues related to the assessment including Rubric 8. At the time, the task force was assured that the concerns expressed would be taken into consideration when revising the subsequent WL edTPA handbook. However, minimal changes or revisions were made to that handbook, including changes to Rubric 8. In the subsequent version of the WL edTPA handbook's glossary, more information was provided about the Communication goal's three modes and the Cultures goal's perspectives, products, and practices (The National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015), but Rubric 8 remained problematic in spite of the field's efforts to revise it. The existing unfeasible expectations of Rubric 8 not only call into question the reliability and validity of the WL edTPA; they threaten the WL teacher supply across the nation as teacher candidates may miss required cut scores, in part, because of their low score on the rubric.

An overall decrease in total scores at both the programmatic and national levels is evident and alarming. From 2014 through 2016, the national WL edTPA scores dropped over four points. Each year mean scores on nearly every rubric decreased (SCALE, 2015, 2016a, 2017a). A similar trend is found with respect to the program scores for the current study, with composite score means dropping

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over three points from 2014 to 2017. These findings are particularly concerning given that scores required for licensure in Illinois and graduation from Illinois State University will increase to 37 in the fall of 2019 (AACTE, 2018b). With a composite mean score of 39.59 across the two programs, adverse consequences may arise for a teacher education program with higher numbers of teacher candidates who cannot meet cut scores on the first attempt, not to mention the financial implications for teacher candidates themselves.

At present, all 50 states are reporting shortages of world language teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). An increase in cut scores may also exacerbate the already severe WL teacher shortage in both states as well as the nation as a whole (Swanson & Mason, 2018). One of the major issues is teacher attrition (Swanson, 2012). Perda (2013) found that more than 42% of new teachers leave the profession within five years of entry, which supports longitudinal data showing a steady increase in beginning teacher attrition over the past 2 decades (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2013). A result of such attrition is a lack of credentialed teachers. At present, public schools are having difficulties finding certified teachers, especially in world languages (Hanford, 2017; Koerting, 2017), and districts are hiring non-certified teachers on emergency credentials. These non-certified teachers, however, will not have completed an edTPA portfolio to demonstrate their teaching abilities, frustrating the original intent of laws focused on teacher performance assessments. The pipeline feeding schools is not much better. Long (2016) reported that "enrollment in teacher education programs is down significantly—falling 35% nationwide in the last five years" (p. 1).

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Also accompanying higher edTPA cut scores and lower average performance are threats to world language teacher education programs that face closure due to low numbers, if not for poor performance by teacher candidates on standardized assessments. When teacher education requirements are as demanding as they have ever been, extraneous variables outside the control of individual teacher candidates and teacher education programs may make entering the teaching profession unnecessarily difficult for language teacher candidates at a time when they are severely needed in the field.

With these findings, the authors suggest that state boards of education and legislatures consider adjusting cut-scores that have ramped up over the course of several years to more realistic levels. After all, overall means have dropped in national data, despite an increased familiarity with the assessment among teacher education programs and teacher candidates. New York serves as a precedent for this practice. Originally, New York set 35 as a minimum cut score on the WL edTPA through 2017, but then decreased it to 32 through 2019, gradually ramping up again to 34 after 2022 (SCALE, 2018). After all, cut scores do not have to remain stagnant once set and may be adjusted as necessary to regulate supply of teachers into a state's schools.

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Given the findings from this study and the overall national longitudinal trends regarding the WL edTPA, one final implication remains—there remain so are many unanswered questions regarding this high-stakes assessment. First, why do WL edTPA scores continue to decrease both locally and nationally? Is the decrease attributable to the quality of the individual creating the portfolio or to other unknown variables related to teacher preparation programs? This set of questions related to preservice teacher quality then cascade to the next set concerning the quality of portfolio reviewers. Who are the people serving as external reviewers? How long has each served as an external reviewer? How many external reviewers are there and is there a shortage of them? What qualifies them to serve as reviewers of beginning teachers beyond what is stated on their website (Pearson Technology, 2018)? Such questions regarding the external call into question the accountability applied to teacher education programs and individual teacher candidates. If variables beyond their control influence scores, how can individuals and programs be held accountable? Finally, with decreases on all three tasks of the WL edTPA, it is evident that the lower scores are not just a local issue, but rather a national issue, especially in terms of Rubric 8 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy).

Limitations

Given these findings and implications of this research, the authors note the study's limitations. First, data are from only two programs and the number of participants is too low to be able to carry out analyses using inferential statistics. Small scale studies' findings must be interpreted with caution. Further, some of the original study's data, which were used as a comparison for the more recent data,

were generated by program faculty who locally scored the WL edTPA portfolios, not official Pearson scorers. Although those faculty completed the WL edTPA scoring training, the scores cannot be considered official.

Future Research

Nevertheless, the researchers call for more research on the WL edTPA. It would be insightful to continue to examine the aforementioned trends from a longitudinal perspective, both from a program and national perspective, as well as from a qualitative perspective. It would also be of interest to investigate whether these trends exist in other content areas. Additionally, research from other WL teacher education programs discussing initial findings and any programmatic changes to address teacher candidate success would be helpful. Such research would provide opportunities for collaboration among smaller programs to address issues surrounding the WL edTPA. Since its inception on the national stage, edTPA has grown immensely and is now in over 800 Educator Preparation Programs in 41 states and the District of Columbia (AACTE, 2018a). edTPA is a high-stakes performance assessment that concerns teacher candidates and teacher education faculty alike, and its pervasive use for decisions around graduation and teacher licensure is alarming given its problematic nature (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016). Considering that program faculty express concern and worry that WL teacher education programs will be evaluated by their teacher candidates' ability to pass edTPA, more research is clearly warranted. Teacher effectiveness is crucial, but effective assessment of teacher quality is equally important.

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Conversations in immersion: Concerns about pedagogy and gatekeepers

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Abstract

Research on stakeholder perspectives in language immersion contexts is relatively new (Padron & Waxman, 2016; Whitacre, 2015). This current qualitative research examined perspectives of stakeholders at a mini-conference for immersion educators and administrators called Conversations in Immersion. The mini-conference encouraged immersion stakeholders to discuss their concerns about immersion and provided an expert immersion educator and collaborative networking experience to address those concerns. Themes within the data

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emerged from three sources: (1) pre-conference questions, (2) a collaborative discussion session with administrators, and (3) a question-and-answer session with a keynote speaker. Data collected from this conference were analyzed using conventional content analysis. Themes that emerged from the data included pedagogically-based concerns and concerns about how to manage relationships with gatekeepers. Findings indicate that participants' conversations focused on instructional and administrative aspects of language immersion and on the roles of gatekeepers in language immersion contexts.

Introduction

Context of the mini-conference

Practicing immersion educators and administrators have unique pedagogical and support needs beyond traditional classroom and school settings. These needs are not self-evident and may appear nebulous to district and state-level administration. One way to create a productive dialogue for the purpose of determining and disseminating the needs, perceptions, and concerns of immersion stakeholders is to establish a space and a format for educators and school administrators to voice their needs and concerns. With this goal in mind, the Louisiana Consortium of Immersion Schools conceived and organized a day and a half mini-conference called Conversations in Immersion. Conversations in Immersion took place in Southern Louisiana in April 2016. The purpose of Conversations in Immersion was to offer attending stakeholders, including administrators and teachers, a chance to shape the direction of dialogue at the conference. Research on stakeholder perspectives in language immersion contexts is relatively new (Padron & Waxman, 2016; Whitacre, 2015). This current study examined the perspectives of these stakeholders. Specifically, it explored the research question: *What do immersion stakeholders consider to be the most salient issues in language immersion education today?*

> Practicing immersion educators and administrators have unique pedagogical and support needs beyond traditional classroom and school settings. These needs are not self-evident and may appear nebulous to district and state-level administration.

The study uncovered the questions, critiques, and issues that language immersion stakeholders have, and how they communicate those concerns in the context of a language immersion mini-conference that explicitly allowed participants to voice their perspectives and concerns. Data from three sources were collected: (1) Data in the form of pre-conference questions were collected from registrants via a Google form before the attendees arrived and were given to the keynote speakers to address in their presentation, (2) Data from the field notes from an hour-long post-keynote conversation with one of the keynote speakers, and (3) a session specifically created for administrators. In that session, administrators held a collaborative discussion of issues that affect their immersion programs. Over 120 stakeholders, most of whom were from Louisiana, in addition to attendees from Texas and Michigan, attended the conference. The conference program included a full day with two keynote presentations and teacher-led

breakout sessions and a half-day community panel. Approximately 80% of the attendees were teachers, 25% were administrators, and 5% were academics, including graduate students and professors.

Literature review

Immersion education is defined as an educational setting in which students are taught a minimum of 50% of the academic day in the target language (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, 2004). This literature review will describe related research on perspectives and concerns of language immersion administrators, teachers, and parents. The perspectives and concerns represented in the literature reflect language immersion stakeholders' expectations about responsibility, support, and implementation in the immersion context, and examine their role as gatekeepers in language immersion settings. Gatekeepers in the immersion literature have been defined as people who have the ability to limit student access to language immersion education (Mady, 2016; Arnett, 2013; Genesee & Jared, 2008). This current research expands that definition and considers gatekeepers to be people who have the capacity to control or limit student support and access to language immersion pathways. We expanded this definition to include people who have the capacity to control or limit *student support*, in addition to access, because support, once students have entered an immersion program, can determine whether or not students flouris Immersion education is defined as an educational setting in which students are taught a minimum of 50% of the academic day in the target language h within the program or leave. Immersion programs have a high rate of early withdrawals; in Louisiana, 29% of students enrolled in immersion programs between 2001-2009 withdrew before completing the elementary portion of the K-8 program (Boudreaux, 2011).

> Immersion education is defined as an educational setting in which students are taught a minimum of 50% of the academic day in the target language.

Administrators' perspectives

More research has been published on administrators' perspectives than on teachers' or parents' perspectives in language immersion contexts. Emery (2016) and Roque, Ferrin, Hite, and Randall (2016) discussed administration as an essential gatekeeper in immersion because it can control and limit support for immersion pathways. Emery (2016) conducted a phenomenological study that examined what immersion administrators need to know in order to implement and sustain successful immersion programs. She found that administrators need immersion-specific knowledge, a passion for bilingualism, and the ability to balance the uniqueness of immersion with their non-negotiables. Non-negotiables are minimal pedagogical requirements that ensure the amount of time and importance of the target language in order to qualify as an immersion context (CODOFIL, n.d.). While Emery (2016) discussed the qualities that immersion administrators need to possess, she did not focus on administrators' self-perceived needs and lingering questions they had about immersion programs.

Roque et al. (2016) examined language immersion administrators' self-perceptions. They utilized surveys and interviews to conduct an inquiry into the roles, skills, and traits of language immersion principals. They found that principals embody five key roles: immersion guru, immersion proponent, immersion overseer, cultural unifier, and agent of change. While Roque et al. (2016) were able to discern traits that immersion principals believed to be keys to success, the study did not address principals' and other stakeholders' perceived needs or any lingering questions they may have about immersion.

An organization that examines administrators' support and implementation of immersion is the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), in its *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). CAL identified seven strands that immersion administrators need to consider when implementing in an immersion context: (1) assessment, (2) curriculum, (3) instruction, (4) staff quality, (5) program structure, (6) family and community, and (7) support and resources (Howard et al., 2007). CAL gleaned these strands from research on the best practices of successful K-12 immersion programs nationwide. CAL maintains that all strands are important in successful immersion programs. Interestingly, these strands are maintained or controlled by administrative gatekeepers in language immersion settings.

Teachers' perspectives

There is a modest corpus of conflicting literature that discusses immersion teacher perspectives and roles as essential gatekeepers in immersion programs. Forman's (2016) qualitative study of immersion school staff found that teachers perceived that the implementation of language immersion programs was the role of the principal and that support of the program was the responsibility of the school district. Thus, the teachers in this study did not consider themselves to be gatekeepers. Likewise, Cammarata and Tedick (2012) discussed how teachers are limited by administrations' and parents' beliefs about immersion. As such, they do not consider themselves to serve as primary gatekeepers. These findings contradict research by Padron and Waxman (2016) who found that principals attributed the responsibility of the implementation of foreign language programs to their teachers. While research indicates that language immersion teachers do not perceive themselves as program implementers and gatekeepers, administrators may view teachers in this capacity.

Mady (2011) found that teachers can serve as gatekeepers if they limit student support by restricting parental access to immersion programs, particularly for immigrant students. For example, Mady (2016) found that teachers believed that English language education would be more beneficial to immigrant students despite the fact that (1) students would learn both languages in French immersion, and (2) the parents wanted their children to learn both of Canada's official languages. In this study, the teachers' role as gatekeepers influenced parents' and administrators' decision-making in terms of which students had access to the language immersion program.

Conversations in immersion

Parents as gatekeepers

Parents, in their role as benevolent gatekeepers, are crucial for implementation and sustainability of language immersion programs. As Mady (2016) addressed above, parents are gatekeepers who, for example, decide which languages children should learn. However, parents can be swayed by teacher input and perspectives. Parents also provide necessary support to schools. Hatheway, Shea, and Winslow (2015) conducted a qualitative study of a principal's implementation of an immersion program in the northeastern United States. In this study, the principal's first step toward program implementation was the creation of a parent and faculty support coalition. This supports research that indicates that the inclusion of parents in the development of a strategic plan is necessary for the creation and sustainability of effective immersion programs (Battin, 2013; Hatheway et al., 2015; Lucido & Montague, 2013; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Parental input is necessary because student enrollment depends on parental support. Parents support the effectiveness of immersion programs by willingly enrolling their children in the program and through their commitment to support the program at home and in the community. Thus administrators, teachers, and parents are essential gatekeepers in terms of language immersion program support and implementation. They decide who enters, who exits, and who gets supported in immersion. Extant literature does not explore the above stakeholders' concerns or the uncertainties that they encounter when they participate in a language immersion context. This study seeks to uncover the questions, critiques, and issues that language immersion stakeholders have in the context of a language immersion mini-conference that explicitly allowed participants to voice their perspectives and concerns.

> Parents, in their role as benevolent gatekeepers, are crucial for implementation and sustainability of language immersion programs.

Method

Participants

Participants were stakeholders who attended the conference, including immersion educators, local and district-level administrators, as well as academic researchers and graduate students. All participants provided informed consent before data were collected. Of the 120 participants, all but five were from Southern Louisiana with the distribution of teachers matching the number of parishes that had immersion schools. Southwestern Louisiana has a single parish with immersion (18%), Central Acadiana has four parishes with immersion (43%), and Southeastern Louisiana (27%) parishes. Only five of the participants were not from Louisiana; one was from Michigan, and four participants were from a nearby metropolitan Texas area.

Data Collection

Participants provided data from three sources: (1) pre-conference questions that they contributed before they arrived, (2) the collaborative conversation of immersion administrators, and (3) the conference attendees' post-keynote

conversation with a well-known immersion speaker. The questions were collected via a Google Form that was e-mailed to attendees when they registered for the conference (see Appendix A; questions written in French have been translated). Field notes from the two conversations sessions at the conference were gathered by qualified researchers with university faculty positions, who attended those sessions and recorded detailed and essential information from the conversations with the administrators and the participating keynote speaker. Both sessions were one hour in length. Once typewritten, the field notes for the two conversation sessions totaled 10 pages.

Data Analysis

The compiled data set included questions and field notes from three contexts: the pre-conference questions, the conversation session with administrators, and the conversation session with the keynote speaker. First, the data for each context were analyzed separately to develop descriptive codes (Saldaña, 2013) and then aggregated. Once aggregated, data were analyzed using conventional content analysis as described by Hsieh and Shannon (2005). Initially, researchers used inductive category development (Mayring, 2000). They read the field notes several times to get a sense of the whole (Tesch, 1990). From there, codes were derived from the highlighted words that captured key concepts and thoughts (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Initial analysis entailed making notes on first impressions and thoughts, then creating the descriptive coding scheme. After descriptive coding, emergent categories were created by sorting codes based on how they were related or linked together. Then, emergent categories were organized into meaningful clusters using second cycle axial coding (Saldaña, 2013). Finally, researchers defined the established categories and subcategories based on these axial codes. Gatekeepers, the most unanticipated theme, emerged from the axial codes.

Results

Pre-conference questions

Conference attendees were sent a link to an anonymous Google Form survey when they registered asking them to provide up to three questions that they would like to ask the conference keynote speakers. From the Google form survey, 15 attendees submitted a total of 37 questions to prompt discussion during the conference sessions (see Appendix A). Figure 1 identifies the percentage of questions submitted by topic. By far, the topics of gatekeeper, particularly administrators as gatekeepers (39%) and instruction (37%) were prominent among the questions. The keynote speaker and administrators were given the list of questions in advance and chose to address most of the questions in their presentations. Questions that were not explicitly addressed in the keynote speaker's presentation were used to prompt discussion during the post-keynote conversation time. Most questions pertaining to instruction, assessment, and research were addressed in the keynote presentation and the discussion panel. The questions pertaining to gatekeepers, a significant theme of this study, were not

Conversations in immersion
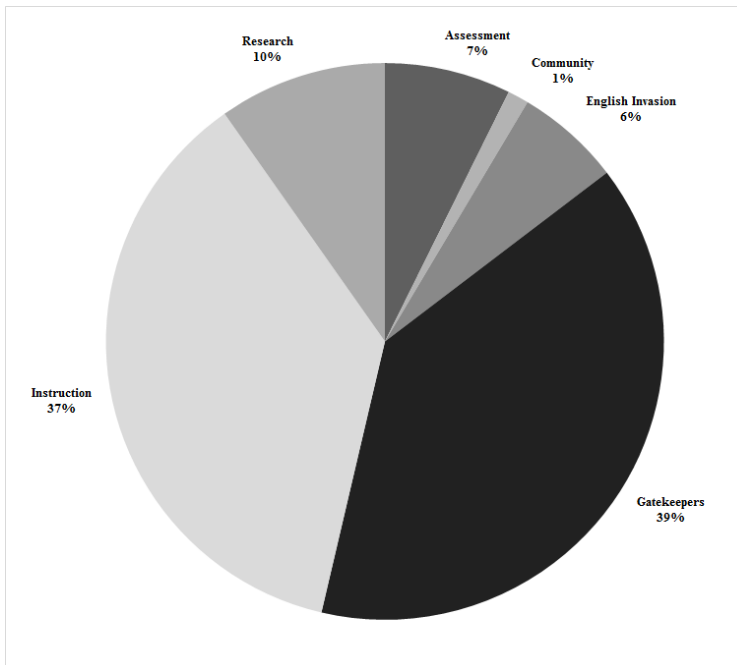
Figure 1. Pre-conference question themes

explicitly addressed in the keynote presentation. This may be because gatekeeping is context-based. For example, issues with administration and decision-making at the district level vary by state and school district. Therefore, the gatekeeper theme emerged more organically from the conversations as participants voiced their concerns with teaching immersion in their school districts and at their particular school sites.

Administrators' conversation

This conversation consisted of a session focused on administrators' interests and was facilitated by a local language immersion supervisor. The audio recordings for this session were virtually inaudible; thus, the data are based on researcher field notes. The supervisor began the session by having the administrators brainstorm and then select two topics that they wanted to discuss in the session. The administrators selected assessment and culture as the main discussion topics for this session. Community involvement was briefly discussed within the culture discussion, which quickly segued to a discussion of the topic of instruction. As with the distribution of topics from pre-conference questions, Figure 2 on the next page shows that instruction and gatekeepers, particularly the state or district as gatekeepers, were the top-ranking themes from this conversation with 49% and 19%, respectively. These themes were followed closely by the theme of assessment (18%). Overall, instruction, gatekeepers, and assessment were the three themes that dominated the conversation at the administrators' session.
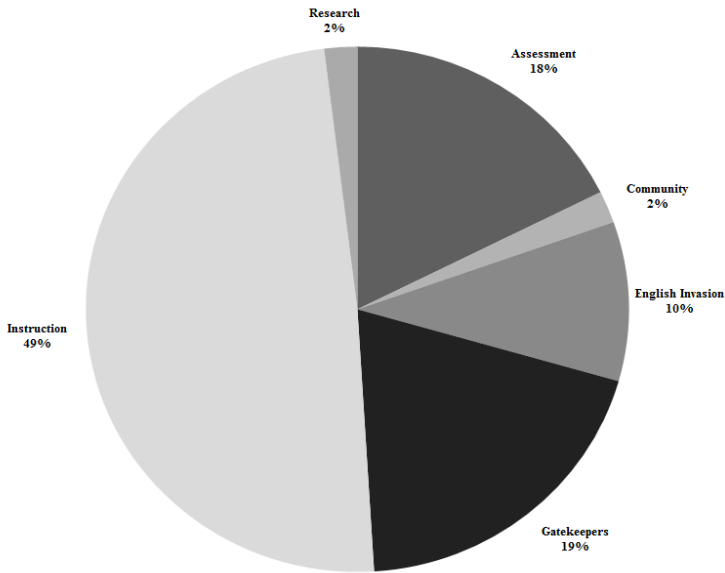
Figure 2. Conversation with administrators' themes

Post-keynote conversation

After the keynote speaker's address entitled, "Literacy, Language, and Academic Achievement," an hour was given to the attendees to ask questions. Initially, pre-conference questions were asked to spark the conversations during this session. Then, participants asked follow-up questions. Researchers took field notes in outline form during the session. The field notes were e-mailed to the keynote speaker for verification of accuracy and validity. After validation from the keynote speaker, the field notes were analyzed for themes. Figure 3 on the next page shows the major themes that emerged in the keynote conversation once it was coded: instruction (65%), research (19%), and gatekeepers (12%). Within instruction, a secondary theme of English invasion emerged. In the post-keynote conversation and the administrator conversation the themes of instruction and gatekeepers emerged.

Aggregated results and discussion

The compiled data set, including questions and field notes from the pre-conference questions, the conversation with administrators, and the conversation with the keynote speaker gleaned five major themes. The five themes, represented in Figure 4 (on the next page), were instruction (45%), gatekeepers (28%), assessment (10%), research (10%), and English invasion (7%). The five major themes that emerged consistently across the data will be discussed below to clarify the connections that existed among all sources of data.

Conversations in immersion
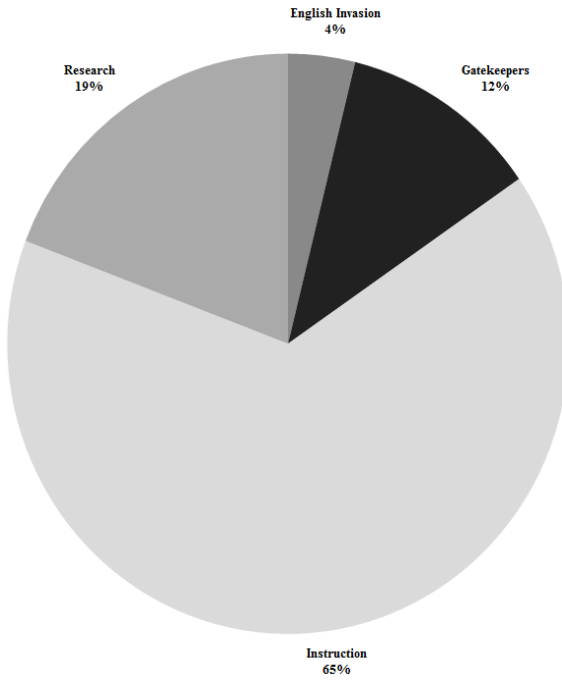
Figure 3. Conversation with keynote speaker
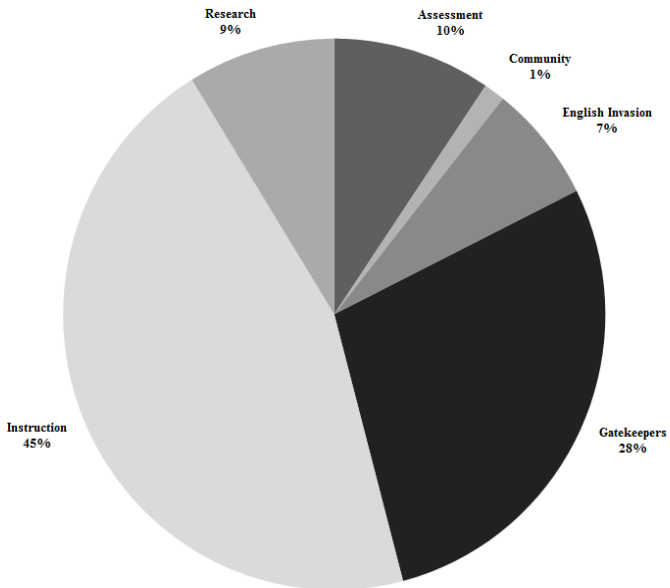
Figure 4. Major themes from compiled data.

Instruction

Instruction in pre-conference questions

The theme of instruction included classroom practices that facilitate effective teaching in language immersion settings. Participants sought information on exemplary materials for teaching specific student populations, how to fine-tune their language skills, and strategies for sharing instructional resources that they found useful. Several subthemes that are described below comprise this broader theme. Participants' pre-conference questions about instruction centered around language precision, immersion materials that meet context requirements, and differentiation for students who need adaptations.

First, participants asked about ways to encourage students to be more precise in their L2 language: "*Our immersion students have a wonderful 'voice' with rich vocabulary, but they struggle with using correct structure and spelling. How can we best meet their needs?*" These concerns reflected research on productive skills of immersion students (Harley, 1992) and how to address them (Lyster, 2016).

Participants also asked where they could find exemplary immersion resources and materials that work with their specific contents: "*Where can we find quality French and Spanish materials for language arts, math, science, and social studies that are aligned with state standards?*" Matching target language (TL) materials was a vocalized struggle for participants because of the varied immersion contexts and the specific materials required for these contexts (Tedick & Cammarata, 2012).

Finally, participants submitted questions about strategies for teaching exceptional students (giftedness, dyslexia, special needs), language and content instruction, and English language acquisition teams: "*Comment mieux adapter le contenu et/ou la lecture et l'écriture aux enfants dyslexiques?*" [How can we better adapt content and/ or reading and writing to our dyslexic children?]. The need for differentiation is consistent with previous literature that reflects immersion teachers' concerns with access to exemplary resources (Walker & Tedick, 2000) and immersion-specific pedagogy for differentiation and special populations (Arnett, 2007).

Instruction in administrators' conversation

Most of the administrators' comments pertained to instruction: (1) what they needed to consider in order to transition to higher grades, (2) which content should they teach in the target language (TL), and (3) which classroom practices should they encourage to increase TL production and interaction in the TL. One of the issues mentioned in their discussion about transitioning to higher grades was that as students matriculate through immersion, less content was taught in the target language: "*Lack of content in language. Expectations by level, university, high school, middle school, dictates what is taught at the level below*" (field notes, April 21, 2016). This means that higher-level high school and university courses that teach language but not content are driving instruction in middle school immersion content courses such as social studies and science.

Issues with content courses offered at higher levels appear to be systemic, dealing with how those courses are administratively coded or the academic tracks that students are on:

Conversations in immersion

> Suggestion of advanced-level French courses that are not AP courses. Seeking French high school course codes not linked to language level. There are two separate tracks so that language options are not restricted to honors/AP track. Students may take advanced language courses without being in honors/AP curriculum. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

This conversation demonstrates the myriad ways that administrators must work to negotiate the fit between the immersion program and the options within a system that is already in place.

Administrators' conversation about classroom instruction focused on procedures that would engage students:

> The problem is not so much that we cannot get students to do something; it's that we don't ask them to do something. For example, you cannot learn how to ride a bike by watching someone; you must ride the bike yourself. Classrooms must be structured to "force" students to engage. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

These elements differ from the pre-conference questions. The pre-conference questions related to pedagogy in the classroom. However, administrators focused more on structural aspects of instruction such as vertical program alignment, selection of content area(s) to be taught in the TL, and best practices for evaluation of instruction.

Instruction in the post-keynote conversation

The most robust theme for this conversation was instruction. Creating opportunities to produce language, learning through routines, and discussing what content needs to be taught when transitioning to an upper level were the most mentioned instructional topics. As with the administrators, the bike riding analogy came up again with regard to getting students to actively produce language in the classroom.

> Although it's not a cognitively complex task, riding a bike can in some ways be analogous to becoming a speaker of a language. The only way to become a bike rider is to ride the bike. You can't learn simply by watching others. Similarly, to become a speaker of a language, you have to speak. Our task as immersion educators is to find many opportunities and ways for our students to speak in our classrooms. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

The keynote speaker also suggested that one way to increase linguistic productivity was to embed linguistic activities into the procedures of the class. This focus on quotidian procedures reflects the administrators' focus on framework.

> To move to the next level, we can expose students to needed language, not through explicit teaching, but by embedding it in everyday routines. Through a routine, you can scaffold new language when you direct students to get in line. For example, we can direct students to get in line, we can say: If you have a snack, have an older brother, have long hair, get in line. To learn the alphabet, If your name has a ____ in it at the

beginning, in the middle, at the end, get in line. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

Structuring the transition to the next grade level was another element that was brought up in the conversation with the keynote speaker. Specifically, what courses should be taught in language immersion programs. The keynote speaker discussed not only which subject(s) would produce the most language, but also, as mentioned in the pre-conference questions, implored teachers to consider if they have what is needed to teach that subject, or, can administration find a qualified teacher to teach the subject (i.e., a certified secondary math teacher with advanced-mid French proficiency). For example:

> Math doesn't always offer rich opportunities to speak, read, or write the immersion language after third grade (it offers some but not as many as other subjects). Science does allow for rich oral and written language use, but some science content is very heavy on technical vocabulary that has little use outside the classroom (e.g., ovipositor, fulcrum). In some states, middle school teachers must have a teaching certificate for the subject they teach and finding someone certified in the discipline who is also highly proficient in the immersion language shapes decisions about which content is taught. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

The keynote speaker's conversation melded together elements from the pre-conference questions and the administrators' discussion. Instructional elements from the pre-conference questions about the practitioner quotidian and pedagogical concerns were prevalent as well as and the administrators' discussion about language structure, systems, and classroom procedures. It is clear from the data that the participants were aware of the importance of what happens in the classroom in terms of instruction and the structure that underlines that work.

Assessment

Assessment in pre-conference questions

In this theme, there were two main types of assessment that participants brought to the fore: assessing L2 language proficiency and assessing student achievement in regular grade-level content areas. These two forms of assessment in immersion are not the same. Language proficiency measures "one's ability to use language for real-world purposes to accomplish real-world linguistic tasks, across a wide range of topics and settings" (Language Testing International, 2016, para. 1), while student achievement measures mastery of content beyond growth in L2 proficiency, such as mastery of mathematics, social studies, science, and L1 literacy.

Regarding measuring L2 proficiency, one participant asked the question: "*What type of summative assessments are recommended for target language proficiency in grades K-8th in Spanish and French for listening, speaking, reading, and writing*?" Another participant inquired about effective benchmark assessments for assessing student academic achievement: "*Benchmark assessment: could you recommend any benchmark assessment, especially at the lower grades, that can paint*

a good picture of a student's progress in literacy and numeracy." Participants wanted resource recommendations that would meet the needs of their programs in two distinct areas of assessment, L2 proficiency and student content achievement. In other words, the questions related to the two forms of assessment were bifurcated. Participants isolated L2 proficiency and academic achievement; they did not perceive them holistically. Cammarata and Tedick (2012) acknowledged the struggle to balance content outcomes with language scope and sequence; they further stated the need for curricula and assessment materials that integrate both of these elements.

Assessment during the administrators' conversation

Assessment was the second most common theme in the conversation with administrators. Specifically, participants were concerned with vertical articulation. Vertical articulation refers to how students' language proficiency was viewed by gatekeepers, or where they were placed when they matriculate from a K-12 language immersion program to post-secondary education. The following quote is an example of the concerns administrators mentioned when students matriculate from one level to the next: "*What is the focus of one immersion level if it does not fold into expectations for the next level?*" (field notes, April 21, 2016). For example, in high school, many of the Louisiana immersion students take courses up to French VI which surpasses AP Levels and most test at the Advanced Low ACTFL level (or B2 CEFR [the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages level]). However, once French immersion students enter college, they are given French placement tests. Because the placement tests focus on grammar, immersion students are frequently placed in beginning or sophomore-level French courses. Despite the fact that a study done through a Language Flagship Proficiency Grant with three major universities, Michigan State University, University of Utah, and University of Minnesota, found that after the sophomore year of college, language courses students are only at the intermediate-low level (Landes-Lee & Rubio, 2017). In other words, participants were concerned that it is common for immersion students to be placed in college courses that are nearly four levels beneath their actual proficiency level.

The language that was used in academic assessments in immersion contexts was another prominent theme in this study. Participants realized that there was a discrepancy between the language of instruction and the language of assessment:

> Immersing students in language would be optimal. Assessments are not aligned to that experience. Students must take tests in English. Preparation and assessment formats contrast. Take reading assessment in English. Take social studies and science in French because those subjects are taught in French. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

This concern about a disconnect between the language of instruction and the language of assessment is apparent and unresolved in bilingual and immersion research. Paradoxically, Nillas (2002) found that Filipino students did better when the mathematics testing was in their target language (TL), while DeCourcy and Burston (2010) found no difference in one year and a slight advantage the following year when

majority language students take mathematics test in their L1. Cammarata and Tedick (2012) also documented this inquietude over balancing content and language in their instruction.

Participants asked questions about assessment in immersion contexts that ranged from assessing language proficiency and content mastery to the appropriate use of L1 or L2 in assessment. Participants were also concerned with how assessments were valued for the purpose of accurate student matriculation. Concerning resources, participants were eager to share effective assessment materials.

English invasion

English invasion in pre-conference questions

The intrusion of English in immersion contexts was a robust theme, often in reference to instruction. Namely, participants wanted to know what strategies were successful in reducing the use of L1 in the classroom: "*How do you get students speaking more? Many of our immersion students understand but respond in English.*" Other participants' questions communicated a desire to move students past their comfort zones and to limit the amount of L1 they use during immersion class:

> If a French-speaking teacher sees that a child is getting very frustrated to the point of tears or yelling because he/she does not understand what is being said, what does research tell us about addressing this situation? Is it acceptable for the French teacher to also use some English OR should the teacher continue to speak only in French? (field notes, April 21, 2016)

Some participants expressed concerns that administrators did not understand the detriment that the invasion of English language use brings into the immersion classroom: "*How do you convince an administrator to respect a request that they not interact in English with your students mid-lesson during observations?*" (Pre-conference question).

These examples clarify three points. First, educators' have a need and desire to keep languages separate in order to preserve immersion space as a TL space. Second, there is also a need to negotiate student motivation and challenge them to increase their oral language production. This also relates to the students' affective needs and if the TL could meet those needs at all times. Finally, there is an underlying conflict revealed when the administration does not adhere to this context of language separation that teachers are working to create. Ballinger, Lyster, Strerzuk, and Genesee (2017) offer a strong case for the separation of languages in immersion, citing a critical mass of research that the majority language, English, has not been definitively shown to improve TL ability. In fact, evidence exists that the use of the majority language hinders mastery of the TL (Ballinger et al., 2017).

English invasion in administrators' conversation

Administrators mentioned the invasion of English when they focused on why it occurs in the classroom and how they try to avoid it. A direct quote recorded in the field notes captures this sentiment: "*In whole group, they speak French. In centers, they tend to speak English. Why?*" The discussion facilitator responded:

Conversations in immersion

"Did you give students the tools to complete center tasks in French?" (field notes, April 21, 2016).

The discussion of English invasion by administrators focused on when and during what tasks English would be spoken in the classroom. In most of the cases, the administrators discussed the task level not meeting the students' language level. Haj-Broussard, Olson-Beal, and Boudreaux (2017) underline this need to ensure that the tasks assigned in immersion correspond to the students' language level. In their research, when this was not the case, English invariably was spoken.

English invasion in the post-keynote conversation

The keynote speaker addressed one question regarding English invasion in the classroom. Her response reiterated a contention, also mentioned in the pre-conference questions, that students need to push past their comfort zones:

> [Participant:] How do you get students to speak more? Many students show that they understand but respond in English.

> [Keynote speaker:] It is tough to get kids away from English because often we do what is the most successful for us and what we are comfortable with. Our students, like most of us, are likely to choose to do what's the easiest for them. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

English invasion occurred when students did not push past their comfort zone or when the instructional/situational task was above their language level. While Swain and Lapkin (2013) discussed how English might help students with a complex task that is above their language levels, Fortune and Tedick (2015) found that increased used of English in the immersion setting corresponded with a plateauing of the minority language proficiency. The other English invasion element dealt with gatekeepers not protecting the linguistic space of the immersion classroom. Haj-Broussard (2003) found that not protecting the immersion space from English invasion resulted in decreased academic achievement. The next section will focus on the participants' perspectives of gatekeepers and their effect on the immersion context.

Gatekeepers

Gatekeepers in pre-conference questions

Administrators, district personnel, and parents were identified by participants as gatekeepers. As previously defined, gatekeepers are individuals who have the capacity to control or limit the support needed for language immersion pathways. In their questions, participants were concerned that principals and district personnel have the power to undermine the use of L2 in the classroom (See Appendix A, question 19). Participants believed that administrators' desire to standardize instruction led to a lack of differentiation for immersion. For example, one participant noted: "*If administrators are requiring their immersion teachers to teach*

> Administrators, district personnel, and parents were identified by participants as gatekeepers. As previously defined, gatekeepers are individuals who have the capacity to control or limit the support needed for language immersion pathways.

in the exact same way as their regular ed counterparts [English Language Arts team teacher], *can we expect the exact same results or will their* [sic] *still be an advantage in immersion?*" Both English invasion and forcing immersion teachers to teach precisely as their regular education counterparts point to a sense of hierarchy, in which language immersion programs are the programmatic "other," often not understood and possibly even undermined.

Within the theme of gatekeepers, a sub-theme included questions and concerns related to issues of immersion support from administrators and districts. One participant echoed a common concern that immersion programs need qualified administrators who are knowledgeable about immersion: *"How do you convince a district that the most knowledgeable and qualified people need to lead immersion schools?"* This relates to the previously mentioned notion that there is an "otherness" about language immersion programs, leading to expressed sentiments among participants that traditional pedagogical methods in non-immersion instruction are not sufficiently effective in language immersion contexts. "*If administrators are requiring their immersion teachers to teach in the exact same way as they regular ed* [sic] *counterparts, can we expect the exact same results or will their still be an advantage in immersion?"*

Parents emerged from the data as a group of essential gatekeepers who are necessary for the healthy functioning of immersion programs. Participants sought strategies on how to cultivate the support of parents: *"How can we get parents to be more supportive of the immersion system?"* In this study, participants felt that parental support is essential to the success of immersion programs. They were interested in eliciting ideas for encouraging parental involvement and support.

Underlying these comments is the issue of openness to and support from gatekeepers. This issue reiterates the findings of Howard et al. (2007) that the district supervisors, school administrators, and parents are all essential to ensuring a sustainable immersion program However, additional research indicates that gatekeepers are not always clear about what their roles are in the implementation of immersion programs (Forman, 2016; Padron & Waxman, 2016; Whiteacre, 2015), and research was not available on the roles of parents as immersion gatekeepers.

Gatekeepers in administrators' conversation.

In the administrators' conversation, the prevalence of the gatekeeper theme underlined how structural support for language immersion was a multifaceted issue. This issue was raised mostly concerning state, district, and parental support. However, fairness in assessment of student proficiency and school performance was another theme. It is interesting that these two themes dominated despite the stated topics of discussion of the session: assessment and culture.

The idea of one school measuring language proficiency and then that proficiency level being disregarded once students matriculate to the next school was discussed as an unfair administrative practice. This qualifies as gatekeeping because inconsistent articulation practices may limit students' ability to be properly placed in appropriate courses within an immersion program. Participants suggested that perhaps legislation was needed to ensure consistent and fair articulation, instead of articulation being left

up to individual administrators. In the conversation, they discussed the "*legislative possibility of SPS score for [international tests] (Ex: If a student passes B1 [intermediate-mid] and no one looks at that in high school, what's the point?*)" (field notes, April 21, 2016). This refers to a Louisiana law that was recently passed that allows site-certified immersion schools to get more points on their school performance score (SPS). The discussion relates to the fact that even though the middle school students take exams that show they are at the Intermediate-mid to -high level, the high schools they matriculate into do not consider that when they are placing them in courses. This means that the students do not have access to the courses that correspond with their actual language proficiency level.

Another issue discussed was that immersion courses were not allowed to count for the same credits as the regular education courses. This differential treatment was controlled by administration and made immersion courses less palatable for students: "*Concern over fair treatment compared to core courses. For example, regular education students may take advanced math courses. Why not advanced language courses?*" (field notes, April 21, 2016).

Stakeholders expressed concern that immersion courses were not equally valued by administration, and thus students did not respect immersion teachers as they might respect teachers of other subject areas: "*How do FL teachers maintain respect from students if the language course is not really valued? How can such respect be established?*" (field notes, April 21, 2016). It is interesting to note that many of the comments on gatekeeping dealt with the language courses taught at the middle and high school level, as opposed to content courses such as social studies and science. Administrators often decide which content courses are taught in the immersion language, in addition to the TL course. Stakeholders perceived that the TL course is not as supported as other content courses taught in the TL.

Gatekeepers in the post-keynote conversation

Finally, gatekeepers were mentioned in the keynote conversation with regard to administrators' selection of subject matter, and teachers' and administrators' needs to ensure that they understood parents' legitimate concerns.

When asked about which subject(s) to choose to teach in the TL when students matriculate into the higher grades, the keynote speaker urged administrators to keep language and resources in mind, but she also mentioned another gatekeeper at those higher grade levels—the students:

> The tricky part was finding useful materials and keeping the students' interest. When students are moving to middle school, they often find the content taught through the immersion is tough—and they don't want it to be hard. At this point in their academic career, students are taking a major role in the decision of whether to stay in the immersion program. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

This idea of students as gatekeepers in middle and high schools, where elective courses compete with each other, is important to consider. Students have a role as gatekeepers because they can choose to participate in a language immersion program, or they may influence peer participation in language immersion, particularly at the

middle and high school levels when they start to make more autonomous choices about coursework.

While students are gatekeepers in the later grades, the initial gatekeepers are the parents. They enroll their children in language immersion programs in elementary school.

> Teachers and administrators need to reassure parents that the seemingly risky choice that they to enroll their child in a program where we teach "hard stuff" in a language that their child doesn't know and that their child will learn that material as well or better than if they were learning in a language they do know was a good choice. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

This emphasis on parents and students underlines the varied gatekeepers that need to be engaged to ensure that the immersion programs are successful.

Consistent with the above findings, in Whiteacre's (2015) study, data showed that all administrators believed that program buy-in was one of the factors of foreign language immersion program success. Involving all stakeholders (faculty, staff, parents, school board members, students, and other members of the community) in the planning of the foreign language immersion programs nurtures a collaborative team effort (Rhodes, 2014). All stakeholders need to support the language immersion program and understand their role in ensuring successful implementation of the program (Forman, 2016; Padron & Waxman, 2016; Whiteacre, 2015).

Research

Research in pre-conference questions

Finally, the questions about immersion research focused on how research could inform innovative instruction in immersion settings. Participants were interested in knowing how research informed immersion education for special education populations. For example: "*Are there any successful interventions for autistic students* [sic] *in immersion that have been studied?*"

Participants were equally interested in how research could inform their interactions with gatekeepers: "*What kind of research has been done about characteristics or training of successful immersion administrators?*" Finally, research on effective immersion models and assessment were an area of interest: "*What model of immersion has given the highest level of target language proficiency according to research?*"

Participants were interested in immersion research for a variety of reasons. Participants' questions about immersion research ranged from classroom interventions, to the immersion model that result in the highest target language proficiency, to the qualities of successful administration in immersion. These findings indicate that immersion teachers are interested in how research can inform and innovate their practice. However, immersion teachers may lack the time and ability to access current research on immersion pedagogies.

Research in the post-keynote conversation

Regarding research, the most mentioned areas included the disconnect between research and practice and the need to collect more data in the field.

Conversations in immersion

> Krashen's work... proposed that speech emerges when the speaker is ready...I was an advocate of the "speech emerges when students are ready" point of view, I attended a conference session in which some teachers said that their students were not allowed to use English. I thought, "How terrible!" Years later, by great coincidence, I became the World Language Coordinator in that school district.... The students' French was quite good, and importantly, and they spoke only French. (field notes, April 21, 2016)

The research on immersion the participants would like to see focused on pragmatic issues. They wanted to know the research on how to negotiate in their jobs, find and utilize interventions, increase-language proficiency, and what is needed for and from administrators at the school and district level. These issues all deal with the two most significant themes in this study: pedagogy and gatekeepers.

Conclusion

Conversations in Immersion was a practitioner-guided conference geared toward providing participants with a voice and an opportunity to discuss what they believed were important issues in language immersion education. Participants discussed many pragmatic and quotidian issues. At the conference, participants discussed their worries about language precision, the best materials or tests to use in their programs, and what research is needed to help inform their practices. These issues in language immersion reached across the themes that emerged from the data: instruction, gatekeeping, assessment, research, and English invasion.

The discussion topics at Conversations in Immersion varied from how to differentiate immersion instruction for exceptionalities (giftedness, dyslexia, special needs) to how to enlist the support from gatekeepers. Another fundamental issue was how difficult it was to move students, teachers, administrators, and parents out of their comfort zones. This was particularly relevant for administrators who must move out of their comfort zones but who need clarification on administrative practices to move and adjust from a regular education mindset to a language immersion mindset.

The theme of gatekeepers was an unexpected finding of this study. Even in the administrator conversation in which they selected assessment and culture as the session topics, "gatekeepers" was the second most-discussed topic. Likewise, in the keynote speaker's conversation that focused on instruction and research, the theme of gatekeepers reemerged.

> The theme of gatekeepers was an unexpected finding of this study.

While there has been some research on the roles of principals and the need to prepare administrators to better implement immersion (Forman, 2016; Padron & Waxman, 2006; Whiteacre, 2015), a more systemic view of the varied roles and power structures needed to support a successful program have yet to be studied.

There are programs, training, and research for each concern that the participants discussed. For immersion instruction and assessment, CARLA offers summer institutes that address how to better implement these in immersion contexts. For parental support, Canadian Parents for French offers support guidelines for

parents of immersion students that can be adapted for other languages. There are even guidelines for administrators (Boudreaux, 2007). However, these disparate elements are not cohesively articulated to create a support structure for immersion programs. In addition, in terms of matriculation into the higher levels, the articulation of assessments needed to be considered. Findings also indicate the importance of student gatekeeping in language immersion contexts.

Recommendations for Practice

Implications from this study indicate that more focus needs to be directed toward how gatekeepers such as administrators, district supervisors, teachers, parents, and students, can relate to and support language immersion learning contexts. Despite the growth of professional development opportunities for teachers with required teacher certification in Utah, and the language immersion teacher certifications programs implemented or in development in Minnesota, Georgia, and Louisiana, little has been done to formally train immersion administrators or district supervisors. Based on these issues, the authors recommend an immersion-specific add-on training that would be required for principals of immersion language pathway schools. The training should address issues such as how immersion education differs from regular education, the need to protect the target language, and how to advocate for and strengthen language immersion programs.

> Implications from this study indicate that more focus needs to be directed toward how gatekeepers such as administrators, district supervisors, teachers, parents, and students, can relate to and support language immersion learning contexts.

Although the majority of stakeholders at the conference taught in French or Spanish immersion programs, concerns about gatekeeping and the mechanics of instruction may be generalizable to immersion programs with other target languages. Gatekeeping may be a non-language bound phenomenon; access to and support for immersion programs hinges upon district, administrator, teacher, parent, and student motivation and awareness regardless of the TL. District level administrators, school level administrators, and parents do not need to speak the TL to support or provide access to immersion programs. However, these gatekeepers need to be aware of the benefits of immersion programs, be knowledgeable of immersion non-negotiables, and be motivated to advocate for language immersion programs. These qualities are not mutually exclusive to any particular language.

Parents and students in the United States rarely have access to a support system to help guide them through the language immersion process. In order to support parents and students, a nation-wide K-16 language immersion specific advocacy organization could provide information and research on language immersion pathways. A language immersion parent and student organization would also be able to support parents' and students' decision-making about language immersion programs and provide an opportunity to reinforce student learning in language immersion contexts.

Limitations

Conversations in Immersion was a small conference in a specific regional area, southern Louisiana. The region has 40 years of experience with language immersion programs; thus, the sentiments expressed here may be different in a region that is just starting their immersion program. Additionally, immersion programs in Louisiana are more varied than programs in other locales. Generalizability to other states or countries is therefore limited due to programmatic variability. Other limitations include a small sample size (n=120) and the fact that data were collected from two separate sources: from the Google form from which pre-conference questions were collected, and from field notes recorded during one day of conference sessions. However, during the data analysis stage, intercoder agreement and peer debriefing sessions were used to strengthen the reliability and transferability of findings (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Future Research

Conversations in Immersion facilitated the sharing of stakeholders' perspectives and allowed stakeholders to receive feedback from peers and experts in the field of language immersion. Drawing from the themes of the mini-conference, it is apparent that instruction and assessment are perennial concerns, as well as concerns about how to encourage TL precision while simultaneously limiting the use of English in immersion classrooms. Further research on best practices for instruction and assessment in immersion contexts will strengthen the overall knowledge base in these areas. The other themes indicated that advocacy and research need to more closely explore how to solidify meaningful gatekeeping for the purpose of supporting immersion programs.

Research in language immersion contexts is not a nascent endeavor. However, as stated previously, research on stakeholder perspectives in language immersion contexts is relatively new (Padron & Waxman, 2016; Whitacre, 2015). This study indicates that future research warrants a closer examination of various gatekeepers' roles, tasks, and responsibilities vis-à-vis immersion. Research should also examine context-based support and educational legislation and policies that have helped or hindered language immersion program growth and achievement. In addition, parents and students should be included in the conversation to ensure that all stakeholders' voices are heard.

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Appendix A

Pre-Conference Questions

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1	How do you secure District support and, if unavailable, outside funding for texts, etc.?
2	Bilingual projects: *alternance des langues* [alternating languages], reading literature il L1 and L2. Are there any specific methods that have been proven to be successful? We heard from Roy Lyster about students summarizing chapter in L1 before approaching the reading of the next chapter in L2. Are there any different approaches that can be suggested?
3	How do we advocate effectively enough to overcome poor administrative support?
4	If administrators are requiring their immersion teachers to teach in the exact same way as they regular ed counterparts, can we expect the exact same results or will their still be an advantage in immersion?
5	What type of summative assessments are recommended for target language proficiency in grades K-8th in Spanish and French for listening, speaking, reading and writing?
6	What should I study for my thesis here in Louisiana?
7	What is the most effective way to address writing proficiency in upper grades?
8	We have high school courses with students who participated in traditional French FLE programs and others who participated in French Immersion programs. Our immersion students have a onderful "voice" with rich vocabulary, but they struggle with using correct structure and spelling. How can we best meet their needs?
9	Are there any successful interventions for autistic students in immersion that have been studied?
10	What is needed to ensure that the ELA teacher and immersion teacher can work well together? What has worked on the past?
11	How can we have a better articulation between elementary, middle, and high school program?
12	*Comment mieux adapter le contenu et/ ou la lecture et l'écriture aux enfants dyslexiques ?* [How can on better adapt the content and/or the reading and writing to dyslexic children?]
13	How can we get parents to be more supportive of the immersion system?
14	Obviously a French Immersion classroom setting has a lot of positives for a child entering school in Kindergarten. What do you feel are the three best attributes of a French Immersion setting?
15	What should I study for my thesis here in Louisiana?
16	Please write in your second question for our immersion experts.

17	How do you get students speaking more? Many of our immersion students understand but respond in English.
18	Benchmark assessment: could you recommend any benchmark assessment, especially at the lower grades, that can paint a good picture of a student's progress in literacy and numeracy. We use DIBELS and IDAPEL (French) for literacy, however the information we gather from these assessments is not accurate of their progress and we need to do a lot of analysis to make results meaningful.
19	How do you convince an administrator to respect a request that they not interact in English with your students mid-lesson during observations?
20	I've heard these terms alternance, translanguaging, and code-switching. Are these the same things? If we are supposed to stay in the target language during immersion, do these processes not happen then in immersion. Is that OK?
21	Where can we find quality French and Spanish materials for Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies that are aligned with state standards?
22	We constantly look for ways to promote our language programs and celebrate the successes of our students. We would like to develop student ambassadors, both current students and alumni, who represent and promote their program / study outside of high school. How have other states and school districts best promoted their programs? Do you know of any successful student ambassador programs?
23	Are there any studies about how the brain works differently within the immersion classroom as compared to regular education?
24	If you were a graduate student looking for a topic for your dissertation in immersion, where would you say there needs to be more work?
25	*On remarque chez les enfants de l'immersion un grand écart de niveau entre leur compréhension (orale et écrite, assez bonne) et leur production (oral, écrite, très lacunaires : syntaxe très approximative, copiée sur l'anglais par exemple) ; faut-il davantage les considérer comme des élèves de FLE ? (si vous êtes d'accord, comment en faire prendre davantage conscience aux profs?)* [One notices that immersion students have a big difference between their comprehension (oral and written are fairly good) and their production (oral and written have huge gaps; a syntax that is very approximative, copying from English); would it be better to consider them as elementary foreign language students (if you are in agreement how can we better convey that understanding to the immersion teachers?)
26	How can we get help with French language textbooks if our district is not supportive of immersion?
27	When a child enters Kindergarten in a French Immersion setting, most of the time they speak only English. If a French speaking teacher sees that a child is getting very frustrated to the point of tears or yelling, because he/she does not understand what is being said, what does research tell us about addressing this situation? Is it acceptable for the French teacher to also use some English OR should the teacher continue to speak only in French?

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28	Please write in your third question for our immersion experts.
29	How do you deal with parents who are not supportive or consider immersion "too difficult"?
30	Routines and scaffolding: are there any resources available to support teachers in scaffolding language through routines.
31	How do you convince a district that the most knowledgeable and qualified people need to lead immersion schools?
32	Immersion students are finishing with very good language skills, but few grammatical competencies. They feel less confident when TL learners who can't put together a sentence or understand a word the teacher says, can out conjugate the best of them. How do we get them to have precision in their language?
33	What model of immersion has given the highest level of target language proficiency according to research?
34	I teach on the high school level. For many of our Immersion students, ninth grade is the first time they will take Science and Social Studies in English. Students have reported negative feelings during their transition period, (embarrassed, out of place, uninformed, wierd [sic]) and we certainly do not want their special immersion experience to contribute to any negative feelings on their first days in high school. How can we better prepare our students (and English-speaking teachers) for this transition out of immersion whenever it occurs?
35	How can you convince administrators that are worried about scores and money and and a host of other things, that immersion is a good idea?
36	What kind of research has been done about characteristics or training of successful immersion administrators ?
37	*Certains enfants ont de grandes difficultés de lecture en anglais (langue maternelle), est-ce que rester dans l'immersion les aide ou au contraire accentue cette difficulté? (les tests sont en anglais!)* *En quoi l'enseignement en Français peut-il les aider dans leur langue maternelle?* [Some students have a lot of difficulty in reading English (their first language), does staying in immersion help them or does it increase that difficulty (tests are in English)? How can learning in French help them in their first language?
38	What ways can we motivate more students to participate in immersion programs without believing them to be too "difficult "?
39	Have any studies been done on the success of students in a French Immersion setting on the ACT test as opposed to students in an English classroom setting and if so, can you share the results with us?

Essential questions for linguistic literacy in the world language classroom

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Abstract

This paper argues for bringing insights from linguistics into the world language classroom. At any level of study, such insights can add intellectual interest to the study of a target language (TL), and can also help students accept and acquire aspects of the TL that are different from their first language or that are inherently challenging. As a supporting framework, the paper proposes five linguistics-based essential questions for world language education: (1) How is the TL different from other languages? (2) How is the TL similar to other languages? (3) What are the roots of the TL? (4) How and why does use of the TL vary? (5) How do people learn and process the TL? The paper illustrates each essential question with relevant aspects of five commonly-taught languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, and Spanish. Finally, it outlines how teachers can incorporate the essential questions in their teaching.

Introduction

Two of the top priorities in the world language classroom are generally recognized to be functional competence in the target language (TL), and an understanding and appreciation of its speakers' culture (or cultures). This paper proposes a third priority: linguistic literacy. Students deserve to know the most interesting facts about the TL. For example, students learning an Indo-European language, such as a Romance language, German, or Russian, should be aware of the size and importance of this language family and how their TL fits within it. Those learning Chinese should know that hundreds of other languages, from the

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Americas to Africa, are also tonal, but that Old Chinese was not. And all should know that children learning the TL as their own first language (L1) face many of the same challenges and make many of the same mistakes that students do.

Linguistic insights add intellectual interest to a language class because they connect the TL to other languages, to general linguistic principles, and to other fields, specifically, history, sociology, and psychology. They can also help students gain proficiency in two ways. First, students may be more willing to accept differences between the TL and their L1 if they learn that these differences are shared by other languages, or, conversely, that they are distinctive or even unique features of the TL. Second, linguistic insights can help students better understand and master challenging aspects of the TL.

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The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. The first section proposes a framework, based on the curricular concept of essential questions, for incorporating linguistic literacy in the world language classroom. The second section gives examples of language features from a variety of commonly-taught languages that address the essential questions. A third section outlines instructional strategies for implementing the framework across proficiency levels.

An Essential Questions Framework for Linguistic Literacy

"Essential questions"—challenging, open-ended questions that provide focus and intellectual depth for a course or unit—have been a staple of curriculum design since Wiggins and McTighe introduced them in *Understanding by Design* (1998). In a follow-up publication, McTighe and Wiggin13) offered examples of essential questions from various disciplines, including world language (p. 3). They presented questions about learning the TL (e.g., "How can I sound more like a native speaker?") and also its culture (e.g., "How can I explore and describe cultures without stereotyping them?"). These are important questions, but they do not sufficiently address the object of acquisition: the TL itself.

The field of linguistics offers a robust framework for generating TL-oriented essential questions for language learning. As a preliminary, one can identify five essential questions for linguistics itself, each based on one of its subfields:

1. *How are languages different?* In the core field of descriptive linguistics, linguists explore the full range of the tools that languages can draw on: different sounds, meanings, and grammatical encodings.

2. *How are languages similar?* The search for universals is perhaps the central goal of theoretical linguistics. It is connected to the practical aim of designing computer systems that can be tuned or trained to process a variety of languages.

3. *How are languages related?* The subfield of historical linguistics establishes family trees among languages and also examines how languages interact and influence each other.

4. *How do social and other factors affect language use?* Language is not spoken in a vacuum. The subfield of sociolinguistics investigates variations in language use due to geography, class, sex, age, and communicative context.

5. *How do people learn and process languages*? The subfield of psycholinguistics covers first and second language acquisition and also how speakers produce and understand language.

Each of these suggests a parallel essential question for the language classroom: (1) How is the TL different from other languages? (2) How is the TL similar to other languages? (3) What are the roots of the TL? (4) How and why does use of the TL vary? (5) How do people learn and process the TL?

Many language features can be viewed through the lens of one or more of these questions. The Spanish past tense is a good example because it relates to all five. Compared to most other languages (question 1), Spanish actively uses a greater variety of constructions (conjugations and auxiliary structures) to express the past (Dahl, 1985, p. 171). At the same time, many languages (question 2), like Spanish, distinguish between ongoing and completed past actions (Dahl & Velupillai, 2013). The roots of Spanish (question 3) explain irregularities such as the identical preterit forms of the verbs *ser* [to be] and *ir* [to go] (*fui, fuiste, fue…*): these originated with *esse* (*ser*'s Latin forerunner), and took over the original past tense forms of Latin *ire* (*ii, isti, iit…*) as these eroded over time (Lathrop, 2003, p. 191). If less educated, or when speaking informally, many speakers add an *s* to the second person singular form of the preterit, e.g. **hablastes* for *hablaste* [you spoke] (a variant form, question 4), because this is the only such form that lacks an *-s* (Penny, 2000, p. 220). Finally, children's errors as they learn the past tense (question 5), such as **saló* [he left] instead of *salió* (Clark, 1985, p. 704), resemble those of students learning Spanish as a second language.

The five questions proposed earlier meet McTighe and Wiggins's various criteria for essential questions (2013, p. 3). For example, they are open-ended, without a "single, final, and correct answer." While each one of these questions can be contemplated by a beginning student, a full answer would require at least a book-length treatment. In addition, they "recur over time." Since the questions are not specific to one aspect of language, students can revisit them during the school year or a longer course of study. As a final example, they point toward "important, transferable ideas." The questions can be applied to multiple target languages, and also connect language study with history (question 3), sociology (question 4), and psychology (question 5).

Note that questions 3, 4, and 5 are thus relevant to ACTFL's (2012) "Connections" World-Readiness Standard ("Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines"). At the same time, questions 1 and 2 provide a principled way to address the "Comparisons" standard ("Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own"). These essential questions should therefore be of value to all language teachers.

Examples from Commonly-Taught Languages

This section further illustrates the essential questions using representative examples from five commonly-taught languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, and Spanish. In addition to providing a start-up set of examples for teachers of these languages, this section demonstrates the applicability of the essential questions to a broad range of linguistic features in a diverse group of languages.

Question 1: How is the Target Language Different from Other Languages?

Marketers know that they can generate interest in a product by describing it as "unique" or "special." Teachers can do the same with the more unusual aspects of a TL, thus turning potential liabilities into assets. These aspects can be identified at multiple levels: demography, orthography, phonetics, and grammar.

Demography. The five commonly-taught languages considered here differ from most other languages in their demographic prominence. Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish are among the world's top ten languages (Eberhard, Simons, & Fenning, 2019), judging by their numbers of native speakers, while French, German, and Spanish are among the top six languages of Europe (European Commission, 2012, p. 5). Moreover, Arabic, French, and Spanish are each official languages in more than a dozen countries. While this information is often shared in beginning courses, the essential questions framework places it in a broader context as one of these languages' distinguishing features.

Orthography. The writing systems of many commonly-taught languages include unusual elements. German is the only language to use the letter ß (ss) and is also unique in its vigorous use of capital letters. The inverted ¿ and ¡ marks are used today only in Spanish. The ñ originally a scribal abbreviation of nn, has become a universal symbol of Spanish; it is used in only a handful of other languages, most with a historical connection to Spanish. Arabic is one of the few consonantal writing systems. Finally, the Chinese writing system is "the only widespread purely logographic script in use today" (Comrie, 2013, section 2, paragraph 6), and was one of the few writing systems invented for a specific language rather than adapted from an existing system (Sampson, 1985).

Phonetics. Many commonly-taught languages incorporate noteworthy sounds. Castilian Spanish has the voiceless interdental fricative /θ/ of *cerveza*, considered to be in the same category of 'unusual consonants' as the clicks (akin to English tsk) used in some languages of Africa (Maddieson, 2013e, section 5). Arabic has two uvular consonants, /q/ (qāf) as in قمر [moon] and /ʁ/ (ghayn) as in غزال [gazelle], and two pharyngeal consonants, /ʕ/ (ayn) as in عروس [bride] and /ħ/ʕ/(hāʾ) as in حصان [horse]; uvulars are uncommon, and pharyngeals genuinely rare (Maddieson, 2013b, 2013e). The French front rounded vowels, /y/ as in su [known], /ø/ as in queue [tail], and /œ/ of œil [eye], are also unusual: most language have none (Maddieson, 2013c), yet French has three.

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Grammar. The co-existence of the two forms of the Spanish imperfect subjunctive, such as *hablara* and *hablase* [would speak], is highly unusual. Such cases of grammatical overabundance are otherwise found only in small sets of words, such as the French verbs *asseoir, s'asseoir,* and *rasseoir*, which have two possible conjugations in a variety of tenses (Thornton, 2018).

A singular aspect of Chinese grammar is its word order in sentences with relative clauses. Almost all languages whose basic word order, like that of Chinese, is subject-verb-object (SVO), place the head of a relative clause (the noun that it modifies) before the clause (Dryer, 2013). An example is the English noun phrase *people who watch movies*, in which *people* is the head noun of the relative clause *who watch movies*. However, Chinese relative clauses precede their head noun, as in 看电影的人 *kan-dian-ying-de-ren* [watch-movie-的-people], with 的 *de* being a preposition used to create the relative clause.

As a final example, both Spanish and Arabic mark gender in their subject pronouns to an unusual degree. Most languages have gendered subject pronouns only in the third person, as in English (*he/she*), or not at all, as in languages including Finnish, Basque, Hindi, and Tagalog (Siewierska, 2013). But Arabic has gendered second person pronouns (أَنتَ /أَنتِ *anta/anti* [you] and أَنتُم/أَنتُنّ *antum/antunna* [you all]), while Spanish first and second person plural pronouns are both gendered (*nosotros/as* [we], *vosotros/as* [you all]).

Question 2: How is the Target Language Similar to Other Languages?

While the goal of the first essential question is to intrigue students, the goal of the second is to reassure them. The emphasis shifts from highlighting exotic features of the TL to debunking superficially exotic elements that turn out to be normal when considered from a broader linguistic perspective. Below are representative examples of such features from orthography, phonetics, and grammar. To simplify the exposition, these examples assume that students' first language is English.

Orthography. The Romance languages use capital letters sparingly. For example, days of the week, months of the year, nationalities, languages, and religions are all written in lower-case letters, as in Spanish *sábado* [Saturday] and *mayo* [May], and French *allemand* [German] and *catholique* [Catholic]. This is not an oddity, but rather the norm in almost all languages that use the Roman alphabet, with English and German the only exceptions.

Phonetics. Many non-English sounds found in commonly-taught languages occur in many other languages as well. Some examples are the trilled /r/ of Spanish *rojo* [red] (Maddieson, 2009, pp. 78-81), the velar fricative /x/ of German *buch* [book] and Spanish *ajo* [garlic] (Moran, McCloy, & Wright, 2014), and the nasal vowels of French, as in *Jean* [John], *fin* [end], and *bon* [good] (Hajek, 2013). Nor are tonal languages like Chinese uncommon: hundreds of languages worldwide employ tone, including dozens in Africa (Maddieson, 2013d).

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Arabic and Spanish are typical in their modest inventories of five or six vowel sounds; this is the most common size worldwide (Maddieson, 2013a). The Spanish vowel system is doubly ordinary because its five vowels form the cardinal set /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/, the most common five-vowel system (Crothers, 1978).

Grammar. The five languages discussed here all divide their nouns into distinct categories, using criteria seen in many other languages. Grammatical gender, a basic feature of the Romance languages, Arabic, and German, occurs in almost half of over 250 languages surveyed by Corbett (2013). In Chinese every noun belongs to a category, usually shape-based, that determines which obligatory noun classifier, akin to *sheet* as in *three sheets of paper* or *stick* in *one stick of gum*, accompanies it in every numerical expression. Such classifiers are found in dozens of languages, mostly in Asia and Central America (Gil, 2013).

Returning to the topic of subject pronouns, all the target languages considered here distinguish singular and plural 'you,' and all but Arabic distinguish formal and informal 'you' as well. Worldwide, most languages make the former distinction (Ingram, 1978), and about thirty percent the latter (Helmbrecht, 2013).

A final example is the personal *a* in Spanish, seen in such sentences as *Visitamos a María* [We visit Mary], where it precedes direct objects that are both human and specific. It is an example of "differential object marking," a phenomenon found in hundreds of languages (de Swart & de Hoop, 2007). Essentially, because nouns like *María* are more likely to be subjects than objects, many languages flag them when they occur as objects in order to avoid confusion. This is especially important in languages that, like Spanish, have flexible word order.

While the second essential question naturally lends itself to differences between the TL and English, teachers can also draw students' attention to similarities with English that reflect typical language behavior. For example, the large numbers of irregular verbs that plague English as well as German and the Romance languages are among these languages' most frequent verbs, such as 'to be,' 'to go,' and 'to have.' This is simply because irregular verbs tend to be normalized over time unless they are used frequently, in real life as well as in the language classroom (Lieberman, Michel, Jackson, Tang, and Nowak (2007).

Question 3: What are the Roots of the Target Language?

Historical linguistics was the first application of linguistic science and is still an important branch of the field. Starting in the 18th century, linguists endeavored to map out the family tree of the Indo-European languages and to reconstruct a hypothetical version of the family's progenitor, called Proto-Indo-European. Since then, linguists have applied the techniques developed by these researchers to other language families around the world.

Today's language student can profit, at a high level, from the fruits of this research. Their knowledge of TL history is too often limited to generally-known facts such as "French comes from Latin," "German is close to English," or "Arabic is related to Hebrew."

The importance of the Indo-European language family should impress any student of German or a Romance language. Indo-European languages boast more

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speakers and are spoken in more countries than languages in any other family (Eberhard, Simons, & Fenning, 2019). Students of Chinese may not be aware that it, too, belongs to a large family, Sino-Tibetan. The different varieties of Chinese comprise the Sinitic branch of this family, while the other branch, Tibeto-Burman, consists of almost 450 languages spoken in southern China, the Himalayas, and Southeast Asia (Eberhard, Simons, & Fenning, 2019). Students of Arabic probably associate this language with the Middle East but should be aware that linguists characterize it as African. The Semitic language family, which comprises Arabic and Hebrew among other languages, is part of the Afro-Asiatic language family, one of the three language families of Africa, along with Niger-Congo and Nilo-Saharan.

Just as an individual's ancestry can provide valuable medical information, so too, learning about the roots of a TL can have practical as well as intellectual value. This is why the use of language history to teach vocabulary has a long and well-deserved provenance. Like rings on a cross-section of a tree trunk, a language's vocabulary reflects its history, showing the cultural cross-currents that have contributed to the language's growth. French provides a good example of this approach (Walter, 1994), as its current vocabulary reflects every phase of French history, from the Gauls of pre-Roman France (e.g., *le druide* [druid]) to today's onslaught of English (e.g., *le weekend*).

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Borrowed words are of particular interest when they form structural patterns. For example, Greek nouns ending in *-ma*, such as *drama*, entered Spanish (and Italian) as an irregular subset: they are masculine even though they end in *-a*. Learning to recognize these words can help students remember their irregular gender. As another example, many Arabic words whose roots have four consonants instead of three, such as مرجان *marjan* [coral] and خنابس *sabanikh* [spinach], come from Persian (Babil, 2014). Etymology provides a useful perspective for highlighting words of this type, which have special treatment in Arabic grammar.

The pedagogical value of language history goes beyond vocabulary: historical insights can inform instruction on grammar as well. As an example, language history explains many of the peculiarities of the Spanish verb system (Penny, 2002; Hochberg, 2016). The duplicate forms of the imperfect subjunctive mentioned earlier evolved centuries apart, from two different Latin past tense conjugations. The irregular verbs *ir* [to go] and *ser* [to be] each merged three distinct historical roots, which accounts for such forms as *vamos* [we go], from the Latin root *vadere* [to go, walk], and *era* [he was], from the Latin root *esse*; the infinitive *ser* itself comes from *sedere* [to sit]. Irregular forms like *conozco* [I know], from the verb *conocer* [to know], preserve the /sk/ sequence of the original Latin verb *cognoscere*. The stem vowel alternations in forms such as *perder/pierdo* [to lose/I lose] and *soñar/sueñan* [to dream/they dream] reflect the general change of Latin ĕ and ŏ to Spanish *ie* and *ue* in stressed syllables (e.g., pĕtra [rock] > *piedra*, bŏnus [good]

> *bueno*). Finally, the double meaning of *hay* [there is/are] stems from the word's origin as a possessive: for instance, today's *Hay muchos árboles* [There are many trees] originally meant something like "One has many trees."

Language history can even illuminate core aspects of the TL. Students of Chinese will be interested to learn that Old Chinese did not have tone (Baxter, 1992, pp. 302-24; Sagart 1999). The tonal system began to evolve in the first centuries of the Common Era, when speakers began to omit certain consonants at the beginning or end of syllables. While still present, these consonants had small effects on a syllable's pitch. (For example, when pronouncing *bit* and *bid* in English, chances are that *bid* will have a slightly lower pitch.) When the consonants were lost, these small pitch differences graduated from side effects to primary carriers of meaning.

Likewise, Arabic, and more broadly the Semitic languages, did not always have these languages' current system of three-consonant roots. Deutscher (2005, pp. 178-206) has argued, based on patterns still seen in irregular verbs today, that the original Semitic language, termed Proto-Semitic, had a more typical linguistic structure, with word roots that included both consonants and vowels. He hypothesized that the change to a consonantal system began when Proto-Semitic developed a critical mass of vowel alternations such as those seen in English *goose/geese* and *mouse/mice*. Once speakers came to see consonants as the primary carriers of meaning and vowels as grammatical markers, later grammatical developments then exploited, and thus reinforced, this dichotomy.

Question 4: How and Why Does the Target Language Vary?

Speech reveals much about individuals: where they grew up; their social class, age, and gender; and whether they consider a conversation to be formal or informal. One need not be a linguist to decipher such clues; most people are keenly aware of language variation. They notice accents, think it is funny (or embarrassing) when a middle-aged person tries to sound "hip," and are careful to use a different speaking style in the boardroom and the barroom. This metalinguistic awareness is especially striking given that in general, language use and understanding take place without conscious attention. Language variation is thus an approachable topic to explore in the classroom.

For most world languages, the main factor affecting language use is geography. Students can learn about dialectal differences within individual countries (e.g., Castilian versus Andalusian Spanish) and/or between countries (e.g., French in France versus in Quebec). For the Romance languages and German, as in English, dialectal differences interfere with communication to only a moderate degree, whereas different varieties of Chinese and Arabic can be mutually unintelligible.

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Dialectal variation often involves the most complex aspects of a language. Learning about dialects can thus validate the challenge that these aspects pose to students, while enriching their understanding of the TL and its cultural context. This principle can be seen at work in aspects of language from pronunciation to grammar.

An apt example in pronunciation is the contrast between Spanish and French vowels. Because Spanish has only five vowel sounds, most dialectal variation in Spanish pronunciation involves consonants: some well-known phenomena are *seseo* and *ceceo* (expansion of /s/ or /θ/), *yeísmo* (loss of the *ll/y* distinction, as in *calle* [street] versus *caye* [falls]), and the weakening or loss of final *-s* (Penny, 2000). In contrast, most variation in French involves vowels, of which the language has more than a dozen. For example, vowels account for most of the pronunciation differences between Belgian and Parisian French, such as the length distinction between "the *a* of *patte* [paw] and the *a* of *pâte* [pastry]" (Walter, 1994, p. 139).

Other pertinent examples come from Arabic and Chinese. Kaye (2009) describes stress as "the most intricate part of [Arabic] phonology," and, correspondingly, reports extensive variation in stress placement among Arabic dialects (p. 485). He gives the example of the word كتبتا *katabata* [both of them wrote], each of whose four syllables is stressed in at least one form of Arabic. Tone is, of course, a major focus in Chinese language instruction, and likewise varies among different forms of Chinese. According to Li and Thompson (2009) "Tonal variation accounts for the most common differences among the dialects of China. It is often true that the dialects in two villages, just a few miles apart, have different tone systems" (p. 606). Tonal systems range from the simple (Beijing Mandarin, with four tones) to the complex (Cantonese, with nine).

Differences in vocabulary are the most obvious hallmark of dialectal variation. Classes might want to keep a word board (physical or virtual), perhaps combined with a map, to track outstanding differences they learn about during a school term. The principle of complexity described above applies in this domain as well. For example, French in France lacks distinctive words for *seventy*, *eighty*, and *ninety*, a lexical gap resulting in such unwieldy numbers as *quatre-vingt-dix-huit* [ninety-eight] (literally [four-twenties-ten-eight]). Not surprisingly, these words undergo considerable dialectal variation, with Belgian, Swiss, and Canadian French using some or all of the simpler *septante*, *huitante (octante)*, and *nonante*.

Personal pronouns in many commonly-taught languages illustrate the connection between grammatical complexity and dialectal variation. German pronouns are particularly notorious. While *ich* [I], *du* [you (informal)], and *er* [he] have distinct nominative, accusative, and dative forms, other pronouns conflate either nominative and accusative, or accusative and dative. Moreover, many pronoun forms are ambiguous; for example, *ihr* is both the third person feminine singular dative and the second person informal plural nominative. Not surprisingly, dialectal variations on this system abound (Howe, 2013, pp. 262-282).

Arabic and Spanish personal pronouns are likewise illustrative. While standard Arabic has an impressive array of 13 personal pronouns, most dialects have eliminated feminine plural pronouns, and also dual pronouns such as

أنتما *antuma* [the two of you]. The Spanish pronouns meaning 'you' encode both number and politeness, a complexity reflected at the dialectal level. *Tú*, the standard informal singular pronoun, has largely displaced formal *usted* in Spain, while *usted* expresses intimacy in parts of Colombia. At the same time, the informal pronouns *vos* (singular) and *vosotros* (plural) are found only in parts of Latin America and Spain, respectively.

A second factor affecting language usage is social class. Many cultures distinguish a "proper" variety of their language from varieties spoken by members of lower socioeconomic groups. It is important for students to understand that there is nothing inherently inferior about "improper" language features. Like the English *ain't* or Spanish *leísmo* (the expanded use of indirect object pronouns), many such features are not recent aberrations, but long-standing variants that used to be more widely accepted. Some variant forms, such as **hablastes* (mentioned earlier), reflect a logical extension of an existing feature. More generally, language is never static, and most changes begin as disparaged variations, a process that linguists refer to as "change from below" (Labov, 2007). If nobody dared to stray from a "proper" version of their mother tongue, we would all still be speaking proto-Indo-European, proto-Afro-Asiatic, proto-Sino-Tibetan, and so on.

Language usage can signal age or gender as well as social class. In Germany, younger people tend to use more English loan-words, onomatopoeia, and superlatives (Johnson & Braber, 2008, p. 257). An intriguing example of a gender difference comes from North African French (Walter, 1994, pp. 155-6). The early French soldiers and teachers there adopted a tongue-tip pronunciation of /r/, under the influence of a pre-existing *lingua franca* that had elements of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. They passed this pronunciation on to the North African men they worked with or taught. Women only began to learn French many years later, from teachers who used the standard uvular /ʁ/ sound. As a result, the uvular /ʁ/ came to be perceived as effeminate, and men continued to avoid it in favor of /r/.

A speaker's dialect, class, age, and sex combine to predict which variety of the TL he or she will normally use. However, few people speak the same way in every circumstance. Most speakers adapt their speech depending on where they are and to whom they are speaking. Linguists refer to these different ways of speaking as *registers*, and usually place them on a continuum from formal to informal. Students can get a better feeling for the range of variation in the TL by studying conversations that capture different registers. An instructive example is Johnson and Braber's analysis of a pair of formal and informal telephone conversations in German, which noted differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (2008, pp. 263-4).

In many speech communities, language variation goes farther than the examples discussed above: it encompasses multiple languages. Languages can coexist peacefully, like Spanish and Guaraní in Paraguay, or not, as in the often difficult relationship between English and French in Quebec. Multilingualism is thus a fascinating linguistic topic for language students to explore. Some possible specific areas to cover are the politics of language, bilingual education, code-switching (combining two languages in a single discourse), and the impact

that cohabiting languages have on each other's vocabulary, grammar, and even pronunciation.

Question 5: How Do People Learn and Process the Target Language?

Psychologists are interested in how children and adults learn language, and how the human mind processes language, once learned. The examples in this section show how sharing the results of this research with students can benefit them in several ways. While second language acquisition research suggests successful learning strategies, L1 acquisition research can reassure students that they will master challenging TL features through time and effort. In addition, language processing research can convince students of the psychological reality and importance of such features.

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Most language teachers explicitly address the process of second-language learning as a matter of course. For instance, teachers discuss learning styles, stress the importance of exclusive use of the TL, and model and practice specific learning techniques. They do this both to help students become better language learners and to promote critical thinking.

Insights from first language acquisition can play a different role in the classroom: that of reassuring students that they are on track to acquire the TL. This may seem paradoxical, for research suggests that unless second-language learners begin early, they are at a significant disadvantage compared to first-language learners (Johnson & Newport, 1989; Slabakova, 2013). This is partly for neurological reasons: the specially adapted role of the brain's left hemisphere in language learning ends at puberty (Werker & Tees, 2005). It is all too often exacerbated by limited hours and mixed quality of second language instruction. How, then, can learning about first language acquisition do anything but make older learners feel bad about their own efforts?

The answer is that first and second language learning are more similar than students may realize. For one thing, even though babies are natural learners, they do not master their mother tongue overnight. Their successful language acquisition is the result of years of effort. Moreover, both types of learners often struggle with the same aspects of the TL or L1. To take an example from pronunciation, the trilled Spanish /r/ is the last sound most Spanish-speaking children learn; 30-40% of children are still working on it at the age of four (Aguado, 2013, p. 20; Bedore, 1999, p.182). Turning to grammar, the complexity of case marking on German articles, as described earlier, ensures that children still make mistakes in this area at age four or later (Mills, 1985, p. 225). In both cases, students who struggle with these skills can be reassured that just as years of practice pay off for children, so too their own persistence will bring success.

Another similarity between first and second language learners is that both make the type of error that linguists call "overgeneralization," in which learners simplify a complex system by overapplying a rule or extending a frequent variant.

Thus children learning Spanish and French, just like adults, "correct" irregular verbs, changing Spanish *sé* [I know] to **sabo* and French *pris* [took] to **prendu*, and overuse the common *-ar* and *re* conjugations, changing Spanish *salió* [he left] to **saló* and French *rire* [to laugh] to **rier* (Clark, 1985). German learners extend the weak form of the past participle, saying **gegeht* for *gegangen* [went] and **gedenkt* for *gedacht* [thought] (Mills, 1985, p. 168). Arabic learners apply the simple plural suffixes ت- *a:t* and ني- *i:n* to more complex plurals, changing شبابيك *šababi:k* [windows] and صنادل *sana:del* [sandals] to شباكات* *šobbaka:t* and صنادلين* *sandali:n* (Albirini & Benmamoun, 2014; Omar, 1973, p. 180; Ravid & Farah, 1999, p. 11). Furthermore, Mandarin learners overuse the generic 个 *gè* classifier; for example, saying 一个羊 **yi ge yang* for 一只羊 *yi zhi yang* [one sheep] (Hu, 1993; Polio, 1994; Zhang, Lu, & Lu, 2013). When students make these mistakes, they can be reassured that children acquiring the TL as their L1 make them too, and that they are, in fact, a sign of progress.

With regard to language processing, insights from studies of adult TL speakers can also motivate students by showing them the importance of the principles they are learning. For example, research has shown that grammatical gender affects speakers' object concepts. Boroditsky, Schmidt, and Phillips (2003) asked Spanish and German speakers to describe in English objects that have different gender in those two languages. Spanish speakers used dainty adjectives such as *golden*, *intricate*, and *little* to describe objects that are feminine in Spanish (such as *llave* [key]), and virile adjectives such as *big*, *dangerous*, and *long* to describe objects that are masculine (e.g. *puente* [bridge]). The German speakers chose very different adjectives, such as *hard*, *heavy*, and *jagged* for masculine *Schlüssel* [key] and *beautiful*, *elegant*, and *fragile* for feminine *Brücke* [bridge]. This finding can impress students of any gendered language with the psychological power of this key aspect of grammar.

Implementation

At a minimum, teachers can incorporate linguistic explanations or perspectives into established lessons as they see fit and as time allows. In order to fully implement the approach described in this paper, however, teachers need (a) a means of sharing the five essential questions with their students, and of reconnecting with these questions throughout a course; (b) knowledge of relevant linguistic aspects of the TL; and (c) activities that help students appreciate these language aspects and link them to the essential questions.

> At a minimum, teachers can incorporate linguistic explanations or perspectives into established lessons as they see fit and as time allows.

Sharing the Essential Questions

Wiggins and McTighe (1998) recommended that teachers pose essential questions at the beginning of a course, then return to them frequently. For teachers who have their own classroom, a logical way to do this would be to have a corkboard or poster dedicated to the questions. Teachers or students could then fill in the board (or poster) with relevant language features as the course progresses.

Essential questions for linguistic literacy in the world language classroom

Teachers who do not have a dedicated classroom can maintain a similar electronic document, such as an evolving PowerPoint or Google Doc.

Linguistic Knowledge

The examples in this article are just a starting point; ideally, teachers will add to them in order to flesh out the essential questions. Unfortunately, teacher training rarely provides the background needed to do this. A typical "Introduction to (TL) Linguistics" class covers the basics of TL phonology, morphology, syntax, and so on; a typical "History of (TL)" class covers the same topics from a chronological perspective. Neither class is likely to emphasize aspects of TL linguistics or history that have direct application in the TL classroom. Likewise, most introductory textbooks on TL linguistics and history have an academic rather than a practical slant.

For this reason, the best resource for a language teacher seeking to incorporate linguistics in the classroom is probably a user-friendly book such as Bateson (2003) for Arabic, Sun (2006) for Chinese, Walter (1994) for French, Johnson and Braber (2008) for German, and Hochberg (2016) for Spanish. The concise language profiles in Comrie (1990) are another useful published resource. Helpful online sources include language-specific linguistics portals such as Mackenzie (1999-2017) for Spanish and Institut für Deutsche Sprache (n.d.) for German; online dictionaries that include etymologies, such as Académie française (n.d.) for French, DWDS (n.d.) for German, and Real Academia Española (n.d.) for Spanish; Forvo (n.d.), a crowd-sourced compilation of word pronunciations from speakers of dozens of languages; and Google's ngram viewer (Google, n.d.), which enables users to visually compare word and phrase frequencies over time in Chinese, French, German, and Spanish as well as other languages including English.

Activities

As mentioned above, teachers may invoke the essential questions simply by adding relevant linguistic explanations and perspectives to their teaching. For a greater benefit, teachers can engage students in take-home or in-class activities appropriate to their level of study. These fall into several categories, illustrated here with language features described in the previous section.

- *Activities that highlight key language features from questions 1 and 2.* Novice German students might make a word cloud of words with an ß; advanced Spanish students might write poems on the theme of *nosotras* or *vosotras*.
- *Data analysis.* Given the numbers 1-10 in a variety of languages, novice students of French or Spanish could predict the family classification of each set of numbers: are they from another Romance language, another Indo-European language, or a different language family? Intermediate Arabic students could propose explanations for errors made by children learning Arabic as L1 (Omar, 1973).
- *Data research.* Novice French students might look up the origins of a set of vocabulary words (perhaps clothing terms). Novice Spanish students could do the same for words ending with *-ma*; not all are Greek, and not all are masculine.

- *Text analysis*. Intermediate German students could test the precept that "frequent verbs are more irregular" by analyzing the verbs used in a newspaper article; advanced French students could compete to see how many differences from modern French they find in a sample of Old French.
- *"Ask a native speaker."* Thanks to the Internet, it is relatively simple for students to find native TL pen-pals, either individually or on a class-wide basis. Novice Chinese students might compare their study of Chinese characters with their pen-pals' own recollections, while advanced Arabic students might ask about their pen-pals' experiences trying to communicate with speakers of other varieties of Arabic.
- *Language/dialect comparisons*. Novice or intermediate students of Arabic, German, or Romance could compare noun genders for a set of words (e.g., body parts) in the TL versus another gendered language. Intermediate Chinese students could use Forvo (n.d.) to compare the tones of familiar words in other varieties of Chinese with those of the TL.
- *Reports and debates*. An intermediate/advanced French student might make a speech advocating gender-neutral adaptations to French grammar; an advanced Chinese class might debate whether Taiwan should adopt the simplified characters used in mainland China.

Conclusion

The preceding sections defined five linguistics-based essential questions for the world language classroom, gave examples of pertinent features from several commonly-taught languages, and suggested how teachers can use the questions to incorporate linguistic insights into their curriculum. As stated in the introduction, this approach can benefit learning in three ways.

First, linguistic insights add intellectual interest to the study of a world language. Topics such as language families, dialects, formal and informal speech, bilingualism, and the psychology of language all have a wide appeal.

Second, linguistic insights can help students accept aspects of the TL that differ from their L1. In some cases, teachers can show that these aspects are shared by many other languages; in others, that they are unusual or even unique; and in still others, that studies of children and adults demonstrate their psychological reality.

Third, linguistic insights can help students acquire aspects of language that are genuinely challenging. In many cases, teachers can validate students' own experiences by pointing out that these aspects are prone to variation or that children are slow to learn them. The fact that children do eventually succeed should provide reassurance. In addition, historical explanations may shed light on tricky subjects or help students learn vocabulary.

A final advantage is less tangible but perhaps more compelling. By acquiring linguistic literacy along with language proficiency and cultural competence, students will learn to appreciate that the TL is not merely a static object of study. Rather, it is a living, complex system that is connected to other languages past and present, to the places and societies that use it, and to its speakers, young and old.

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Reviews

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The Northeast Conference makes available in its *NECTFL Review* evaluations of both products and opportunities of interest to foreign language educators. These evaluations are written by language professionals at all levels representing all languages. The opinions presented by reviewers and by respondents (publishers, tour operators, webmasters, association leaders, etc.) are their own and in no way reflect approval or disapproval by NECTFL.

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Chinese

Fangyuan Yuan. *Business Chinese for Success: Real Cases from Real Companies. 2nd Edition.* **Beijing: Beijing University Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-7-301-24959-8. Includes Textbook, CD with text recordings. $36.99**.

Business Chinese for Success: Real Cases from Real Companies is a comprehensive Chinese language textbook designed for intermediate and advanced Mandarin Chinese language learners in secondary and post-secondary schools. The author developed the *Business Chinese for Success* textbook to assist Chinese language learners in developing and integrating their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills so that they can interact comfortably in a Chinese business environment. *Business Chinese for Success: Real Cases for Real Companies* is comprised of 12 lessons that can support a one-year, two-semester curriculum. The second edition, the first update to the book in ten years, provides students and teachers with an inside look at six multinational organizations and their individual approaches to developing and expanding operations in China. In addition, the text explores case studies related to four Chinese companies and their expansion into both domestic and global markets. Finally, the author introduces language learners to two Chinese companies that rose from humble beginnings to become world leaders in their respective industries.

Pedagogically, the textbook incorporates a language instructional approach that employs task-based activities to balance the teaching of linguistic forms with business content. The author's goal is to encourage the use of language in a meaningful context. Each lesson incorporates authentic language resources that enable learners to develop Chinese business language proficiency in a synchronized, step-by-step manner. Language learning activities included in each chapter include a *Warm-up Stage,* the *Main Text, Vocabulary, Exercises,* and *Business Knowledge.* The *Warm-up Stage* briefly introduces the

company and the specific case to be studied and provides a few questions for students to consider prior to reading the lesson. The *Main Text* consists of roughly 1,200 Chinese characters, in both simplified and traditional formats, and addresses business issues, including marketing, mergers and acquisitions, international growth, government relations, and product placements, among others. The *Vocabulary* section introduces numerous terms associated with the company and industry being discussed, and each term is presented in simplified and traditional characters, as well as in Pinyin, and also includes an English translation. The *Exercises* portion of the lessons typically contains seven to ten different activities designed to improve student ability to use the target language to communicate in a business environment. These exercises include reading comprehension activities; character writing, fill-in-the-blank, and pattern drills; and role-play, interview, information gathering, and guided essay practice. Located at the end of each unit, the *Business Knowledge* section contains a written paragraph that provides students with additional insight into a specific Chinese business concept. In addition, the inclusion of a CD containing target language voice recordings for each chapter's *Main Text* section enhances learners' language acquisition experience.

In *Business Chinese for Success: Real Case from Real Companies, 2ⁿᵈ Edition,* Chapter 1, *KFC's Sinofication* (肯德基的中化)*,* the author discusses how KFC's market entry shocked the Chinese food industry with its standardized approach to business operations. Twelve years later, KFC again surprised the market by adopting interior and exterior designs heavily influenced by traditional Chinese architecture and art and introducing food and beverage items conforming closely to traditional Chinese tastes. Chapter 2, *Starbuck's "Third Place"* (星巴克的 "第三空间"), introduces students to Starbucks's "Third Place" concept where the first place is home, the second place is the office, and the third place is a place to relax and socialize. In the next chapter, *IKEA's Luxurious "Low-Price Products (*宜家的奢侈 "低价品"), students learn that Ikea's arrival in China coincided with China's commercialization of formerly government-owned residential properties. With the conversion to private residential ownership, the consumption of household products significantly increased, and Ikea became a popular player in the market.

In Chapter 4, *Sam's Club in Beijing* (北京的山姆会员店), the author discusses the entry of Sam's Club into the Beijing market, and identifies some of the changes and accommodations, such as the addition of a "live and fresh food" section, Sam's Club made to attract Chinese shoppers. Chapter 5, *P&G's Brand Strategy* (玉洁的品牌策略), introduces students to global marketing and branding strategies, and then explains how P&G's strategies in China have evolved since its market entry in 1988. The following chapter, *Kodak's Industry-Wide Acquisition in China and Beyond* (柯达中国全行业收购及之后), provides language learners with insight into how Kodak, with the support of the Chinese government, initiated an almost industry-wide acquisition of China's sensitive materials firms. It also explores Kodak's failure to grasp the significance of the rapid global digital imaging technological developments, and the resulting negative impact on traditional film sales. These failures resulted in Kodak filing for bankruptcy just 10 years after it controlled over 60% of China's traditional film market.

In the next section, students gain insight and understanding into the rapid growth of several domestic Chinese companies. In Chapter 7, *Hai Di Lao, You Can Hardly Copy* (学不会的海底捞), students are introduced to Hai Di Lao, a hotpot restaurant that opened

in the Sichuan Province in 1994, and is now a globally recognized international restaurant chain with an outstanding reputation for superior customer service. Chapter 8, *China's Hottest School*（中国最火的学校）, addresses how New Oriental recognized a business opportunity within the large market of students seeking to study abroad. Established in the min-1990s, New Oriental quickly became the study abroad preparatory school of choice for students at China's most popular universities. The next chapter, *Baidu: China's Google*（百度：中国的谷歌）, talks about Baidu's role in China's rapid internet development, as well as some of the criticisms it faced from consumers and media watchdogs during the first 10 years. The final lesson in this unit, Chapter 10, *A Chinese Brand, Made in America*（中国名牌，美国制造）, discusses how the Haier Corporation, a Chinese manufacturer of refrigerators and air conditioners, made the decision to build a factory in America and enter the U.S.'s highly competitive home-appliance market.

In the textbook's final section, students study two Chinese companies that have become world leaders in their respective industries. In Chapter 11, *Galanz as a "Price Butcher"*（价格 "屠夫" 中国的节日）, the author introduces students to Galanz, the largest microwave oven manufacturer in the world. Galanz not only produces under its own brand name in China, but also manufactures appliances for international brand names. Chapter 12, *A Snake Swallows an Elephant, Lenovo Acquires IBM and Beyond*（联想 "蛇吞象"收购IBM级之后）, describes how Lenovo initially began producing computers for foreign brands in 1984. By 1990, they were manufacturing their own brand in China, and soon dominated the domestic market. However, in 2005, they stunned the market by agreeing to acquire IBM. How both companies benefited from

Each chapter is very robust. In addition to the standard dialogue, vocabulary, and grammar patterns, instructors are able to select specific exercise activities that address student language acquisition needs and fit with individual instructor teaching styles. All of the lesson-specific activities are designed to strengthen student language development in a business context and encourage the use of their new skills to communicate appropriately in the target language. Other valuable elements of the textbook are located immediately following the final chapter, and include an English translation of each lesson's main text, a listing of grammar patterns employed in each lesson, a key to each chapter's exercise activities, and an alphabetized index of the vocabulary words used in each lesson.

Overall, *Business Chinese for Success: Real Cases from real Companies, 2nd Edition,* provides Mandarin Chinese instructors and learners with a rich variety of authentic second language acquisition materials, real examples of well-known companies and their respective successes and failures while doing business in China, and integrated exercise activities that encourage development of target language reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. *Business Chinese for Success: Real Cases from Real Companies, 2nd Edition*, although adopted by some top-tier universities such as Harvard, Columbia, and Cornell, among others, remains a hidden gem. This 2nd Edition updates or replaces previous case study information and provides students and instructors with tremendous insight into the remarkable success of the highlighted companies enjoyed, the market challenges they confronted, and the challenging decisions that had to be made, sometimes with disastrous results. Given the rapid rate of economic change in China and their diversified international trade activities, learners will be anxiously anticipating an updated 3rd edition of this valuable Chinese business textbook. In conclusion, the updated *Business Chinese*

for Success: Real Cases from Real Companies, 2nd Edition continues to provide students with even more comprehensive, in-depth Chinese business operations information using authentic language resources that promote the development of Chinese language proficiency within a business context.

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Yuehua, Liu, Tao-chung Yao, Nian-Ping Bi, Yaohua Shi, and Liangyan Ge. *Integrated Chinese 3 and 4*. **4th edition. Boston: Cheng & Tsui, 2017-2018. Includes Textbook, Workbook, Simplified and Traditional Characters, Interactive website, Web App, and Sample Assessments. IE 3 Textbook ($66.99**. **ISBN: 978-0-88727-679-8); IE 3 Workbook ($33.99, ISBN: 978-1-62291-157-8); IE 3 Web App ($49.99 for 6 months); IE 4 Textbook ($69.99, ISBN: 978-0-88727-688-0); IE 4 Workbook ($34.99, ISBN: 978-1-62291-152-3); IE 4 Web App ($50.99 for 6 months).**

Integrated Chinese 4th Edition, Volumes 3 and 4 is a comprehensive Chinese language textbook series that is particularly relevant to novice and intermediate Mandarin Chinese language learners in secondary and postsecondary schools. The authors developed the Integrated Chinese series to assist Chinese language learners in developing and integrating their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through the use of multimedia authentic language materials. Volume 3 and Volume 4 can support either a second-year, two-semester curriculum, or Volume 3 could be used as a second-year text, while Volume 4 could be adopted as a third-year textbook. This fourth edition, the first update to the program in over eight years, provides students and teachers with a number of thoughtfully enhanced authentic language resources that assist with the development of second language proficiency in a coordinated, step-by-step manner. Its new design takes full advantage of significant developments in technology and communications, which enables students to immerse themselves in a rich and varied language learning experience. Integrated Chinese's latest edition was developed using the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (ACTFL) 21st Century Skills Map for World Languages. The authors include additional materials that emphasize the five goal areas of the World-Readiness Standards of Language Learning's: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Each chapter's Language Practice activities are categorized by the interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes of communication. The textbooks, in each of the 20 chapters, adhere to the core elements of communicative language teaching in order to help learners climb the proficiency ladder as they progress from one level to the next. In a welcome change from previous editions, the authors have chosen to place the more commonly taught simplified character sets first, followed by their traditional character counterparts. Each of the individual instructional sections (e.g., Text, Vocabulary, Grammar) have also been uniformly color-coded across each chapter, making it easy to find specific sections. In addition, the inclusion of the new Cheng Tsui Web App in the program provides 21st-century language learners and

instructors with interactive multimedia content that enriches and provides variety to the students' language learning experience.

In Integrated Chinese 4th Edition Volume 3, Chapter 1, "Starting a New Semester" (开学), the authors discuss the challenges of new students arriving at the university for the first time. They address how to develop relationships with other students, the pros and cons of living on or off campus, and how to politely express a dissenting opinion. Chapter 2, "Dorm Life" (宿舍生活), introduces students to college housing issues such as whether apartments are furnished or unfurnished, what facilities and services are provided, and expectations of residents. In the next chapter, "At a Restaurant" (在饭馆儿), students learn about the four principal regional Chinese cuisines, discuss individual tastes, describe dietary restrictions, and consider individual preferences for seasonings and cooking styles such as steamed, stir-fried, or grilled, among others.

In Chapter 4, "Shopping" (买东西), students learn to name basic clothing, bedding supplies, and bath items. They are also encouraged to describe their shopping preferences and criteria, discuss discounts, and compare and contrast where and how people shop in their own cultures and communities. Chapter 5, "Choosing Classes" (选课), introduces academic majors and departments, discusses how majors will enhance future employment prospects, and addresses how parents in certain cultures have significant input into which major their student chooses to study. The following chapter, "Dating" (男朋友女朋友), provides language learners with insight into dating, sharing hobbies and interests, describing one's personality, and explaining what one is looking for in a friend.

Students discuss the pros and cons of using the internet in Chapter 7, "Computers and the Internet" (电脑和网络), and learn whether the internet is readily available in other cultures, and how to avoid and overcome tension in a social media conversation. Chapter 8, "Working Part-Time" (打工), addresses how people fund their education, discusses cultural differences in whether parents are expected to pay for college, and considers typical student employment opportunities, as well as how students spend their discretionary income. The next chapter, "Education" (教育), talks about parents' aspirations for their children, whether students' schedules were packed with activities and afterschool learning programs, and how much influence children have over the process. Finally, in Chapter 10, "Geography of China" (中国地理), students learn to locate Chinese cities, provinces, and geographic features on a map, compare basic geographic aspects with their own countries, and discuss China travel itineraries, including recommendations for must-see tourist attractions.

In the next volume, Integrated Chinese 4th Edition Volume, Chapter 11, "China's Holidays" (中国的节日), the authors introduce major Chinese holidays, and identify foods with which they are often associated. They also encourage language learners to compare and contrast Chinese holidays with holidays in their own countries and cultures. Chapter 12, "Changes in China" (中国的变化), describes ways in which places may have changed, discusses consequences associated with change, and explores people's attitudes towards changing places of significance. The following chapter, "A Trip to Yunnan" (去云南旅游), addresses Yunnan's natural and cultural attractions, talks about the differences between hard and soft sleeper train cars, and identifies some of the challenges associated with booking a trip and completing the travel.

Students learn about healthy eating habits in Chapter 14, "Lifestyle and Health"（生活与健康）, as well as types of exercises, lifestyle habits that can prematurely harm long-term health, and differences in exercise habits in China and the U.S. Chapter 15, "Gender Equality"（男女平等）, the authors discuss gender equality in the workplace, and in relationships, and summarize the changes in Chinese women's social status since 1950. The next chapter, "Environmental Protection and Energy Conservation"（环境保护与节约能源）, familiarizes students with green and renewable energy, discusses indicators of a clean environment, and explains steps governments and individuals can take to reduce pollution and protect the environment.

In Chapter 17, "Wealth Management and Investing"（理财与投资）, students learn how to discuss the differences between savers and spenders, identify ways to invest money, and learn about the basic terms associated with the stock market. Chapter 18, "China's History"（中国历史）, provides a general timeline narrative of China's history, describes the historical significance of certain Chinese dynasties, discusses the contributions of key Chinese historical individuals, and talks about key Chinese cultural sites and artifacts. The next chapter, "Job Interview"（面试）, explains to language learners why China has been able to attract overseas talent and corporations, discusses how to handle challenging questions during a job interview, and talks about Chinese attitudes towards, and nicknames for, overseas returnees. In the final chapter, "The World is Getting Smaller"（世界变小了）, the authors discuss how the world is getting smaller, describe the challenges of adjusting to life in a foreign country, and encourage students to consider how different cultures and communities welcome visitors or send friends off for a long journey.

In each chapter, in addition to the standard dialogue, vocabulary, and grammar sections, the authors include supplementary modules such as "Get Real with Chinese," "Chinese Chat," "Characterize It," "How About You," and "A Way with Words." "Get Real with Chinese" introduces students to authentic real-life social and cultural contexts; "Chinese Chat" encourages interaction with Chinese social media; "Characterize It" challenges learners to approach the student of Chinese characters from an analytical perspective; "How About You," which is included for the first time in Volumes 3 and 4, encourages students to compare and contrast their own cultural/community experiences with those in China; "A Way with Words" introduces students to new words and phrases related to vocabulary from the current lesson. Series users also have access to a variety of authentic materials using audio, video, flashcard, and social media activities that enrich the classroom learning environment.

The comprehensive workbooks corresponding with the Integrated Chinese 4th Edition, Volumes 3 and 4 textbooks, continue to include traditional workbook exercises, as well as creative real-world situations that challenge students to develop competency in the three modes of communication. The workbook chapters parallel their associated textbook chapters and provide additional culturally relevant exercises that place students in simulated daily life contexts. These exercises are written at varying levels of difficulty, allowing instructors to use their discretion in making level-appropriate assignments. Finally, every five lessons, just as in the textbooks, the "Bringing it Together" section provides a short cumulative review that may be used as a student progress check.

Overall, Integrated Chinese 4th Edition, Volumes 3 and 4 provide Mandarin Chinese instructors and learners with rich variety of authentic second language acquisition materials, realistic scenarios, and integrated activities that encourage development of interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational skills. The renamed Cultural Literacy section is not only more robust, interesting, and charmingly illustrated than its 3rd Edition counterpart, but its new Compare and Contrast activities encourage students to gain greater insight and understanding of the rich cultural diversity that exists outside of their own experiences. The new How About You section, with its enhanced visual cues that promote language development and encourage more complex student responses, also challenges students to compare their own cultural traditions and activities with those of their Chinese counterparts. While the enhanced photos, pictures, and other visual cues throughout each chapter are commendable additions to Volumes 3 and 4, future editions may benefit from a more targeted approach to photo/visual cue selection. In conclusion, the new Integrated Chinese 4th Edition series continues to provide students with well-organized, culturally-enriched, authentic language learning materials that promote language proficiency development through a seamless, cohesive, level-by-level approach.

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Publisher's Response

Cheng & Tsui would like to thank Professor Hughes for her glowing review of Integrated Chinese. We are grateful that she highlighted so many of the 4th Edition's outstanding new features, and we would like to offer the following comments.

We are particularly grateful for Professor Hughes' acknowledgment of our efforts to "take full advantage of the significant developments in technology and communications" since the publication of the 3rd Edition. In addition to encouraging students to apply their language skills to social media with new Chinese Chat modules, we also strove to enhance traditional teaching methods with innovative educational technology. The ChengTsui Web App™ brings the 4th Edition of Integrated Chinese to life with interactive versions of the textbook and workbook, complete with streaming audio and video, flashcards, extra interactive exercises, and auto-feedback. It should also be emphasized that the Web App is not just for students: users of the Educator Version can assign exercises from the auto-graded workbook to their students and view automatically generated score reports, saving time and hassle. In addition, instructors can access contextualized teaching tips and robust support materials like customizable assessments and sample lesson plans.

Professor Hughes largely welcomes the new design changes in the 4th Edition. She commends the enhanced imagery and calls the redesigned Cultural Literacy sections "more robust, interesting, and charmingly illustrated." However, she would like to see a more targeted approach to photo and visual cue selection, a recommendation we will certainly take into consideration in future revisions.

A small note of clarification: Professor Hughes' writes that Volumes 3-4 "can support either a second-year, two-semester curriculum, or Volume 3 could be used as a second-year text, while Volume 4 could be adopted as a third-year textbook." In fact, the series

has an exceptionally diverse user base and is being used with success in programs with widely divergent pacing requirements. This flexibility is one of the reasons that Integrated Chinese has become the most widely adopted beginning Chinese textbook series in North America and beyond.

As of July 2018, all of the components in the four-volume series are now available, including the textbooks, workbooks, character workbooks, free audio downloads, digital teacher's resources, and Web App subscriptions. We encourage all interested educators to visit our website (**chengtsui.co**) to view our 4th Edition sampler, request hard copies for examination, or sign up for a free trial of Integrated Chinese on the ChengTsui Web App.

Liz Hanlon
Marketing & Communications Associate
Cheng & Tsui

French

Champeny, Séverine. *Imaginez: le français sans frontières*. **4ᵗʰ edition. Boston, Vista Higher Learning, 2020. ISBN 9-781543-303735. Includes: Supersite (imaginez.vhlcentral.com), Student Activities Manual (print or online WebSAM), Lab Audio MP3s, Testing program, Test Generator, vText, Instructor's Annotated Edition.**

Imaginez: le français sans frontières stands out as one of the most successful and widely used textbooks available on the market. It also continues to be one of the most popular intermediate-level French programs. The main objective of the fourth edition, thoroughly revised and updated, is to provide students with a rewarding language learning experience and to help them improve their speaking and writing skills as well as their cultural competency. The program features a flexible chapter organization designed to meet the needs of diverse teaching styles, institutions, and instructional goals. It uses an interactive communicative approach which helps expand students' reading, speaking, listening and writing skills while encouraging them to practice rehearsing situations similar to the ones they are likely to encounter in real life.

The textbook's author emphasizes a six-step instructional design which has proven successful in the preparation of this program. Step 1, Context, gives students an opportunity to reflect on the chapter theme and share their own experiences. Step 2, Vocabulary, provides students with new linguistic resources to express their opinions on specific topics. Step 3, Media, helps students relate their own ideas and experiences to those of native speakers. Step 4, Culture, exposes students to distinct cultures of various French-speaking countries. Step 5, Structure, introduces students to new and relevant grammar points necessary to develop language fluency and proficiency. Step 6, Skill Synthesis, allows students to integrate language skills and connect them to cultural products, perspectives, and practices.

The vocabulary presented in the textbook's chapters focuses on various challenging aspects of everyday life. Among the themes selected are: *la justice et la politique, le progrès et la recherche* or *le travail et les finances.* The vocabulary is current, comprehensive and well chosen for the intermediate level of instruction. Lists of new words and expressions are linked to clickable audio files designed to practice correct pronunciation by listening to native speakers.

The 4th edition of *Imaginez: le français sans frontières* is comprised of ten chapters divided into several sections: *pour commencer* (presentation of new vocabulary in thematic lists), *court métrage* (video program and accompanying activities), *imaginez* (texts and interactive activities related to Francophone countries), *structure* (grammar explanations and exercises), *culture* (cultural readings followed by questions) and *littérature* (authentic literary selections from Francophone writers). In order to emphasize the idea that French is a truly global language capable of creating an international linguistic community *sans frontières*, the author has introduced a wealth of historical, cultural and literary information about various Francophone countries and their unique cultures. A sequence of optional grammar flashcards, *Fiches de grammaire*, included at the end of the textbook, can be used in conjunction with the *structure* section to build on concepts introduced in each lesson and provides additional resources for review and enrichment. Another valuable aspect of this program is the inclusion of *La galerie de créateurs*, which ties language learning to other disciplines and highlights important cultural figures ranging from writers, fashion designers and film directors to dancers and sculptors. Each chapter also features authentic short films from a variety of Francophone countries that relate to the chapter themes and are accompanied by a wide range of pre- and post-viewing activities. The films provide a springboard for students to learn more about the cultural themes and language presented in each chapter.

Imaginez: le français sans frontières comes with a wide range of ancillaries, such as the Instructor's edition of the textbook, a vText, a WebSAM and Lab Audio MP3s. The Supersite, an effective language learning system specifically developed for Vista programs, allows students to access MP3 audio files, video files and interactive, auto-graded activities and exercises with feedback for practice. It has been continually updated and improved and now also includes forums for oral assignments, group presentations and projects, as well as a live chat tool for video and audio chat. In addition, the updated Supersite comes with new enhanced true/false activities, new task-based activities, and grammar tutorials.

For instructors, the website provides a useful course management system with access to tracking, grading and monitoring of student performance. The Web Student Activities Manual contains both the Workbook, the Lab Manual and the online Instructor's Edition which have been revised and now offer teaching suggestions, annotations and the ability to add notes.

There are many other important additions to the fourth edition. Instructors who used the previous editions of the textbook will be able to present and discuss four new short films. In Chapter 1, *Foudroyés* replaced *Le télégramme*. In Chapter 3, *Merci Monsieur Imada* replaced *Le dernier rôle de Jacques Serres.* In Chapter 6, *Le monde du petit monde* replaced *De l'autre côté* and in Chapter 8, *Le Grand Bain* replaced *Le ballon prisonnier.*

The *Zapping* sections included in each chapter and designed to introduce authentic TV clips from around the world have been revised in several of the chapters. In Chapter 1, *Bac 2017: la sophrologie, arme anti-stress* replaced *Mai Lan*. In Chapter 3, *Les téléviseurs portatech* replaced *Un OVNI dans l'information numérique*. In Chapter 5, *Asiatiques de France* replaced *Aide au logement: carton rouge du mal-logement*. In Chapter 7, *Renault Zoë* replaced *Le robot à la française*. In Chapter 8, *Trophées Roses des Sables* replaced *Mission Missile*. In Chapter 9, *Un marionnnettiste génevois* replaced *L'entretien d'embauche*.

Each videoclip provides authentic examples of vocabulary and linguistic structures linked to the theme introduced.

Furthermore, new discussion and writing activities have been introduced in the "*Qu'est-ce que vous appris*" section and two new literature readings have been added. In Chapter 2 "*Le Chocolat protégé*," a French short story from France, replaced "*Tout bouge autour de moi*," and in Chapter 9, "*L'heure des comptes*," an excerpt from a novel, replaced "*Profession libérale*."

The author's goal in the preparation of this program was to create a user-friendly learning environment. Consequently, the textbook has a fresh, magazine-like design. It incorporates excellent page layout, a variety of colors, typefaces, and other graphic elements. Chapter sections are color-coded, and the textbook pages are visually dramatic, with pictures, drawings, realia, charts, word lists, maps of the French-speaking world, all designed for both instructional and visual appeal.

Not unlike the previous editions, this new edition of *Imaginez: le français sans frontières* will no doubt motivate and inspire intermediate French students. The program's innovative nature and flexibility will not only help create a unique and compelling learning experience and stimulate language production but also provide students with all the tools they need to interact and communicate effectively in French in real-life contexts.

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Publisher's Response

I am pleased to respond to Professor Andrzej Dziedzic's review of Vista Higher Learning's Intermediate French program *Imaginez: le français sans frontières*, Fourth Edition. I would like to start by thanking Professor Dziedzic for such a favorable review of the program and for identifying so many of the merits of *Imaginez* that contribute to the success of students and enhance their proficiency in French.

Specifically, Professor Dziedzic confirms that *Imaginez* builds the five language skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and cultural awareness. Furthermore, he points out that *Imaginez* uses a flexible, communicative approach that prepares students to use French in practical, real-world situations. This includes, as Professor Dziedzic acknowledges, the presentation of topics of contemporary relevance in areas such as work, current affairs, and social justice among others that are pertinent and appropriate for intermediate-level French learners.

Professor Dziedzic also recognizes the author's and editors' representation of French as a global language and the broad integration of cultural and historical information from across the francophone world via short films, literary readings, and cultural articles and exposés. Professor Dziedzic also addresses the interdisciplinary nature of the *Galerie de créateurs* section, which connects language learning to fields such as painting, film, photography, literature, dance, fashion, and more.

One of the components of *Imaginez* of which the author and editorial team feel proudest, and which Professor Dziedzic identifies, is the *Court métrage* strand of every lesson, which features an authentic and compelling short film that captures the student's

imagination and exposes them to cultural topics related to the overarching lesson theme. The strand's broad range of thought-provoking pre-, while-, and post-viewing communicative activities elicit reflection and discussion on a polemic topic related to the lesson theme. Professor Dziedzic also points out the *Le Zapping* pages and explains their value in exposing students to a wide variety of additional cultural topics via authentic TV clips.

I am also grateful to Professor Dziedzic for pointing out the value of the *Imaginez* Supersite as well as the fact that Vista Higher Learning continually works to upgrade and improve the site's functionality. Our goal is to allot a maximum amount of language practice by way of diverse media and tutorials and provide students frequent opportunities to express themselves in French. For the instructor, the Supersite provides a powerful course management system and a host of resources including assessments, additional written and oral practice, teaching suggestions, answer keys, and scripts.

Finally, I would also like to thank Professor Dziedzic for pointing out the user-friendly nature of the *Imaginez* program, which he attributes to the page layout and use of graphic elements designed with instructional objectives as well as with lowering the student's affective filter in mind. Professor Dziedzic recognizes the extent to which *Imaginez*, with its compelling and varied content, can motivate and inspire students of Intermediate French to become effective communicators in real-world contexts.

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Choe, Germaine, author; Nathan Lutz, French editor; Nancy Meyers, illustrator. *Language Together French Set 2*: *10 Books with Online Audio for kids*. **First edition. ISBN: 978-09971240-8-8. Paperback—Box Set. MaxiPro LTD, 2018.**

Choe, Germaine, author; Carolina Gómez, Spanish editor; Nancy Meyers, illustrator. *Language Together Spanish Set 2*. *10 Books with Online Audio for kids*. **First edition. Paperback—Box Set. ISBN: 978-0-9971240-5-7. MaxiPro LTD, 2018.**

Online components at *www.languagetogether.net* include Audio Narration, Vocabulary Charts and Translations and Teaching Guides. Audio eBooks are available separately on Apple iBooks. This series can be purchased online for $20.00 per set. *Language Together* offers an educator's rate when purchasing 10+ copies. Samples, as well as a brief history of the company, can be found at **www.languagetogether.net.**

Language Together Spanish Set 2 and *Language Together French Set 2* components include ten books that present the following themes: Introduction/Delivery, Verbs, Food, Tableware, Art Supplies, Feelings, Nature, Jobs, Furniture, and Bedtime. Set 2 Spanish and French is a story-based language learning series that introduces more high-frequency vocabulary and phrases for beginners in the same format as the *Language Together Spanish Set 1* and *Language Together French Set 1*.

The ten books feature 100 new thematic nouns and phrases, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions and abstract concepts that include feelings, skills, hopes, and

dreams. Each book is 16 pages long, and *Language Together* is available in Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese and English/ESL. This review presents Spanish Set 2 and French Set 2.

Language Together Spanish Set 2 and Language Together French Set 2 was developed by teachers and curriculum experts and features a unique Spot Color Immersion Method® that makes languages fun and easy for children. Based on extensive linguistic and classroom research, these *Language Together* stories build vocabulary and pre-reading skills for children up to the age of eight. Set 2 is suitable for preschool to early elementary students.

The grade level at which your school introduces a language learning program would determine the best time to add these wonderful books to your reading list and class curriculum. *Language Together* books are designed to supplement any early language curriculum, whether it be FLES, immersion, bilingual, FLEX, after-school, weekend, or home school programs. The books support vocabulary, pre-reading and review for native and non-native speakers. As a K-6 world language teacher I have fully incorporated both Set 2 Spanish and Set 2 French into my curriculum in the classroom and in the home school setting.

Language Together has developed the *Spot Color Immersion Method* which incorporates research from language experts, such as Stephen Krashen, Steven Pinker, and Blaine Ray. Krashen and Pinker promote natural immersion over grammar and drilling. Ray invented TPR Storytelling in the 1990s, a story-based method which has quickly gained popularity among teachers worldwide.

Moving step-by-step, these simple stories introduce high frequency words and phrases. Target vocabulary is woven into short stories that make kids laugh—and forget they are actually learning.

The *Language Together Set 2 Spanish* and *Language Together Set 2 French* series was first published in April 2018. As in Set 1, these books can be used in a variety of environments using different various teaching methods:

- Whole classroom read-alouds
- Thematic activities: warm up, drills, games, etc.
- Oral presentation practice
- Small group and paired activities
- Free voluntary reading (language library supplement)
- Independent audio review
- Pre-reading and early literacy tool.

Language Together has further developed the multi-pronged approach in Set 2 that works so well in the elementary level curriculum. It fosters Immersion, Flashcards with a Story, Content that helps kids make connections faster through familiar scenarios, Repetition & Patterns that give students structure and opportunities to practice and learn, and an Audio model (with native speakers-online).

In addition to the ten-book pack, teachers receive a 24-page Teacher's Guide filled with much useful information, suggested uses as well as objectives and standards according to the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards. This Guide also includes Receptive Vocabulary Activities, Productive Vocabulary Activities and Extension Activities. It is a wonderful guide for new teachers and offers creative enhancements for the seasoned teacher as well.

Language Together Spanish Set 2 titles include: *¡Correo!, ¡Mírame!, ¡Delicioso!, ¡Tomar té!, ¡Sorpresa!, ¡Toda una estrella!, ¡Qué bonito día!, Cuando sea grande, Las escondidas,* and *¡Buenas noches! Language Together French Set 2* titles are: *Une cadeau-mystère, Regarde-moi, Délicieux!, Le goûter, Surprise!, Une étoile est née!, Une belle journée!, Quand je serai grand, Cache-cache,* and *Bonne nuit!*

Each of these little treasured books includes theme words, useful words and phrases and translations on the front inside cover, with story translations listed by page for each of the 16 pages on the back inside cover.

The book**s** titled *¡Mírame!* (Spanish) and *Regarde-moi!* (French) are among my favorites with which to start off the school year because they introduce two fundamental, proficiency-oriented   concepts: "I can" and "I cannot." In keeping with the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards, students learn early on how to build on activities they can carry out as well as world language learning standards that they can share with others (the "I can" statements). For example, by learning "*Yo puedo saltar"* and *"Je peux sauter"* (I can jump), students can express their accomplishments, such as"*Yo puedo leer un libro," "Je peux lire un livre"*: I can read a book. Or: *"Yo puedo reconocer e identificar muchas palabras que estoy leyendo"*: "I can recognize and identify many words that I am reading." Students also learn to express the goals and skills they have not yet acquired: "*No puedo…..*" or "*Je ne peux pas....*"

¡Delicioso!/ Délicieux! is a wonderful sequel to the Set 1 books on Fruits and Snacks. Kids love to talk about and to eat food and this book builds on more substantial food items beyond just fruits and snacks. They learn phrases such as "the most delicious" and "Super delicious," Let's cook!" and "We're hungry." Following the food theme, one's curriculum can move effortlessly into *¡Tomar té!* in Spanish and *"Le goûter"* in French, as these two little books expand the knowledge of food to include the use of utensils and setting a table with care. I generally incorporate both as well as the Fruits and Snacks books from Set 1 as they can be reviewed together or can be introduced in the unit on food.

The other two books that can be coupled sequentially are: *¡Sorpresa!* and *¡Toda una estrella!"* (Spanish) and *"Surprise*!" and *"Une étoile est née"* (French). These two books cover art supplies and feelings. I have used these together to teach students how to express their feelings through art as well as through verbal expression in the target language. The art supplies conveniently include the most common supplies used not only in art but in a general elementary school classroom. This list includes paper, pencil, ruler, eraser, tape, glue, crayons, paintbrushes, paint, and scissors.

A few of my favorite "useful words and expressions" are "Guess what it is?", "I have," "Make a wish!" and "Watch out!" In the feelings books, students learn to express happiness, sadness, anger, boredom, fatigue, fear, excitement, and surprise, relaxation, and sickness. All these feelings have frequently shown up in my classroom and it is a great tool for students to be able to express how they feel by drawing and creating art (with the supplies) and/or speaking or writing about it.

Finally, the "Nature" book can be a nice complement to any unit dealing with the weather. And the "Furniture" book can be a fun introduction to home furniture and prepositions like "under", "behind", or "on top of". These two books clearly follow the wonderfully entertaining animals and children in Set 2.

These books continue to complement, strengthen, and reinforce my students' reading and comprehension skills. They have heightened my own classroom awareness of how to promote student success by observing their growth in comprehension activities. The excitement they share speaks volumes about how much these two tiny books have to offer. My students ask to read these books. They enjoy reading and answering questions. They enjoy creating drawings and writing simple sentences. They enjoy the success and positive feedback not only from their teacher but also from their classmates when sent to another classroom to share and read aloud.

The books and their images are clearly designed and colored for reading success. The author is available through e-mail and welcomes all feedback and ideas from educators. *Language Together Spanish* and *Language Together French Set 2* are a wonderful addition to any world language classroom for young learners.

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Mitchell, James G. and Cheryl Tano. *Espaces,* **4ᵗʰ edition. Boston: Vista Higher Learning, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-68005-648-8. Includes Student Activities Manual, Instructor's annotated edition, Student Textbook (hardcover); Supersite Plus Code; WebSAM Code; Loose-leaf Student Textbook; Supersite Plus Code; WebSAM Code.**

First published in 2007, *Espaces* has reached its fourth edition in 2019 and features many useful additions. Addressed mainly to college-level classes, it is available in several formats: hard cover, loose-leaf, or vText. The student-friendly Supersite is coordinated with the textbook and contains various types of activities, most of which can be completed using i-pads and various devices. The book contains 15 lessons, each one subdivided into two parts. Each section or "*espace*" is color-coded consistently throughout. The text contains appealing illustrations, both artist sketches and photographs. The package offers numerous options for teachers and students.

All units begin with "*Espace contextes*." This provides vocabulary in context, which students can also hear on the Supersite, accompanied by humorous sketches. Normally they are quite effective. The sketches in Unit 9, however, which introduces food, have only vague suggestions of the items in the market, and students may be at a loss to identify some red blotches as "*fraises*." The theme of each lesson carries through the entire unit, and is reinforced by the "*roman-photo*," which was filmed in Aix-en-Provence and features students from all over the Francophone world. The same characters reappear in each unit in situations appropriate to the theme. While there is no engaging plot, the situations are authentic and the characters speak in comprehensible but deliberate French, thus facilitating student comprehension. The textbook contains a written version of the episode, and along with the Supersite provides relevant exercises. "*Espace culture*" develops the theme with readings, statistics, and information on people and places from France and the Francophone world. These are largely taken from contemporary society and emphasize comparisons and connections as well as culture.

"*Espace structures*" focusses on a basic grammatical concept, one in Part A and another in Part B. The presentation is fairly traditional, with numerous examples and exercises. The Supersite tutorial features a witty professor, who explains the concept with color-coded charts and floating elements. He uses traditional grammatical terminology with which beginning students might not be familiar. The explanations in the textbook and in the tutorial are very complete, and include, for example, all forms of asking questions in Unit II and all types of adjectives in Unit III. While this may be overwhelming for the beginning student, it does provide a useful reference. The text presents grammatical elements in logical order for the most part. It is interesting, however, to see the conditional introduced before the future, and the indirect object before the direct.

"*Flash Culture*" contains a film narrated by two recurring characters, who provide documentation for the theme in question. "*Le Zapping*" in some units uses ads from French television or authentic films. "*Panorama*" presents a cultural snapshot of some area in France or the Francophone world. The earlier chapters deal with the Francophone world; the later ones present the regions of France. While both are important, one might wonder why France does not appear in the earlier units, especially since many students study a language for only one semester or two and may not arrive at the end of the book. In general, the cultural sections and many of the exercises deal with the contemporary world, which may make the material outdated in a short time. However, contrary to previous editions, this one does include classical figures and monuments of French culture, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, les Grottes de Lascaux, and the cathedral of Amiens. It adds political and religious figures as well, and features Notre-Dame de Paris on the cover.

The section "*Savoir-faire*" addresses reading and writing. The "*Savoir-faire Lecture*" offers an interesting passage containing at least some authentic materials. In the earlier units, this may consist of tables and items in lists, easily accessible to novice-level learners. Later lessons contain poems or selections from literature. There are good pre-reading exercises and advice on how best to understand a text in another language. The "*Savoir -faire Écriture*" develops writing techniques systematically throughout the text and in each unit offers plans, examples, and practical advice for various types of writing, such as letters, compositions, and different types of essays. Students learn early on how to use transitions and connecting words to make their writing more precise. The writing section is an excellent feature of this text, and contains valuable elements not often found in beginning manuals.

The textbook and Supersite offer many opportunities for interpersonal and presentational communication. In fact, students can do paired work with a live partner through the Supersite. The Supersite also provides good exercises for learning French language sounds and phonetics. Students can listen, record, and compare their pronunciation with the model. Opportunities for synthesis and review are interspersed in each unit.

Teachers can adapt *Espaces* to many types of instruction. Since most exercises are self-correcting, the package can fit into a hybrid course. With some ingenuity, it can also serve for a flipped classroom situation. Since there are ample materials, teachers can choose what best fits their situation. They can add other items onto the Supersite, such as complementary information for "*Panorama*," grammar exercises, or additional topics for presentational communication. The instructor's edition and the Supersite are

teacher as well as student friendly. The Supersite provides assessment materials and a gradebook that teachers can customize for their needs. It also offers transcripts, a digital image bank, and a complete vText.

While the *Espaces* program provides a wealth of resources, it would be difficult to complete it in two semesters unless the course is offered in an intensive or immersion setting. In fact, the very size and weight of the hard cover edition may be overwhelming. Fortunately, other formats are available. A paper *Student Activities Manual* offers many of the exercises provided in the Supersite. It contains the same illustrations and sketches in black and white. The authors also propose a plan for using the program in two, three, or four semesters. This may help to justify the cost to the student.

On the whole, the fourth edition of *Espaces* offers an excellent opportunity for a "*Rendez-vous avec le monde francophone*," its subtitle. Each unit addresses the 5 C's, the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century and notes them in the student edition. The additions and updates to this edition have enhanced the overall quality of the program. The culture sections in particular are much richer, and now include a section on music. The text uses up-to-date technology, thus facilitating practice for students. *Espaces* makes French attractive to the learner and highlights the important role of the language and its people throughout history and into the future.

Mary Helen Kashuba, SSJ
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Philadelphia, PA

Publisher's Response

First, I would like to thank Sr. Mary Helen Kashuba for her thoughtful review of *Espaces,* Fourth Edition. We are happy to know that in Sister Mary Helen's opinion, the fourth edition of *Espaces* achieves its goal of offering a "*rendez-vous avec le monde francophone.*"

Increasing the visibility of the Francophone world throughout *Espaces* was one of the goals of the Fourth Edition. The *Panorama* section was specifically redistributed to highlight francophone countries and regions throughout the program in response to customer feedback.

Sister Mary Helen expresses a concern that students who only study French for a semester or two may not be exposed to the regions of France since the *Panorama* section that covers them does not appear until later units. While the regions of France do not appear until later units, the *Panorama* in Unit 2 does focus on France, and there is an abundance of other cultural content about France throughout the early units in the *Espaces culture* strand. Instructors who wish to introduce the *Panorama* with the regions of France in an earlier lesson can teach them in the order that best suits the needs of their students.

As Sister Mary Helen noted, the *Espaces* program provides a wealth of resources. She expresses concern that it may be difficult to complete in two semesters. Designed to be used in a 2–3 semester sequence, *Espaces* features 15 units, flexible enough to meet the needs of diverse teaching styles, institutions, and instructional goals. As with all of

Vista Higher Learning's programs, we encourage instructors to use what they feel is most appropriate for their students and their classroom situation.

We are grateful for Sister Mary Helen's praise for the systematic development of writing skills in the skill-building *Savoir-faire: Écriture* section. In this feature, students' writing efforts are guided with a process approach. There are pre-writing strategies, writing tasks with graphic organizers, and post-writing tasks that include peer review and self-editing guidelines.

Sister Mary Helen pointed out that the textbook and Supersite offer many opportunities for interpersonal and presentational communication. The Partner Chat and Virtual Chat activities on the *Espaces* Supersite provide excellent opportunities for conversation practice outside of class. The paired work with a live partner that Sister Mary Helen mentions is available through Live Chat tools that offer students the ability to participate in video chat, audio chat, and instant messaging with a live partner.

We are especially pleased by Sister Mary Helen's closing statement that "*Espaces* makes French attractive to the learner and highlights the important role of the language and its people throughout history and into the future." We could not have asked for a better summary of what we tried to achieve with the publication of this program.

Mary McKeon
Editorial Director, Higher Ed
Vista Higher Learning

Ousselin, Edward. *La France. Histoire, société, culture*. **Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2018. ISBN: 9781773380643**. **Pp. 344**. **Paperback CAD $79.95. ebook CAD $74.95.**

This textbook is aimed at advanced and graduate-level survey courses on contemporary France. It is divided into twelve chapters focusing on the major aspects of French society and culture. The introductory chapter presents general information about France: statistics on demography, size, administrative divisions, climate; the importance of Paris; long-term tendencies, such as centralization, the importance of leisure, and Republican values; symbols (for example, the flag, national anthem, Marianne and Jeanne d'Arc, the "*coq gaulois*," the French language); the main concepts that make up a value system harking back to Descartes and Pascal; historical ties with Quebec and the United States; an introduction to national stereotypes and comparisons between France, the U.S., and Quebec; and finally a few linguistic challenges. The next two chapters focus on the last century or so of French history. We first learn about the main events that shaped the Third Republic: the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, the Commune, Jules Ferry, the "*Belle Époque*," the Dreyfus affair, World War I and the period that followed. The next chapter covers World War II and the Vichy government, the Fourth Republic, the beginnings of the Fifth Republic, decolonization, and the "*Trente Glorieuses*." Institutions are the topic of Chapter four: the Constitution; national elections, political parties; the administrative structure of the country, overseas territories and their origins, the judicial system and the police. Most topics are presented through a comparison between France, Canada, and the U.S. Then readers are introduced to the European Union: its origins, the formation of European institutions, including a useful chronology, the current structure of the EU, its symbols (anthem, flag, motto, Europe Day celebrated on

May 9, the euro) and founding fathers; its successes, limitations, and the controversies surrounding it. Chapter four is dedicated to education with its centralized system, its organization at every level (types of schools, diplomas, teacher training), research, and contemporary tendencies, and challenges. Chapter seven, on the economy, starts with the macroeconomic situation, and then turns to large companies, the role of government, unions and the labor movement, management, transportation and telecommunications, consumption and its evolution. The Francophone world is the subject of the next chapter and looks at the role of the French language in Europe; the consequences of colonialism in various parts of the world (Africa, Maghreb, Indochine); Canada, Quebec, and New Brunswick; and finally the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.* Chapter nine addresses religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity: it first provides the historical context and then continues with the status of the various religions currently practiced in France, the fundamentalist "drifts," the omnipresence of "*laïcité*" (distinct from the concept of secularism in North America), immigration and diversity. The next chapter deals with the rights of women and gender minorities. This chapter offers a historical review going back to the 1789 *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* and the 1804 *Code Civil* of Napoleon, followed by sections on contraception and abortion rights, women and feminism and the importance of Simone de Beauvoir and Simone Veil, the LGBTQIA movement, and the "*mariage pour tous*" movement in 2013. Chapter eleven looks into the evolution of the family as an institution, paying particular attention to the increasing rates of divorce and out-of-wedlock births; natality, and the importance of children; Social Security ("*la Sécu*") and medical care; vacation and leisure. The last chapter presents an insight into the media in France (press, radio, television, Internet) and culture, especially the continued significance of literary culture, the difficulties of the French language and the failed attempt to simplify it, comic strips, the film industry, and the evolution of the *chanson*.

Each chapter delivers a thorough and substantial summary of the theme in a concise and well-organized manner. Several features make this book unique and user-friendly. Words and phrases that may be problematic for students are followed by an English translation within the text, while important points are highlighted in bold characters. Short sections appear in boxes and tables to provide quick definitions, historical reminders, important dates, films on the various periods covered in the chapter, and/or background information on some issues pertaining to each particular topic. Through an innovative approach, QR codes linking online resources are found throughout the chapters, and most of these codes are accompanied with the subject of their content. A comparative approach, contrasting France with Canada and the United States, helps to educate students and make them reflect on similarities and differences with their native culture. Some facts are repeated at times, in order to reinforce topics that have been previously addressed. The sections "*Pour aller plus loin*," at the end of each chapter, include activities such as multiple-choice items, open questions for discussion, and a "mini test"; they offer ample opportunities for critical thinking through classroom discussion and allow students to review the subject matter they have just studied. The conclusion, titled "*Perspectives d'avenir*," goes further than what has been introduced in preceding chapters and opens up on current developments and their potential impact on French society. The book is nicely illustrated with a map of France and numerous photos in black and white. It ends

with a list of acronyms, a detailed index, and a comprehensive seven-page bibliography for further study.

This excellent volume provides a comprehensive coverage of contemporary France while presenting much historical background on the themes addressed. There is enough material to enable instructors to select the content they wish to emphasize, depending on the course focus, student level, and methodology used. The author exhibits an impressive breadth of knowledge on France. In addition to the bibliography and tables, he makes references to various writers, thinkers, anecdotes, and films. Judging from the amount of information and the numerous up-to-date references found in the volume, it is evident that he has researched all his topics very thoroughly. The argumentation is logical within the chapters, and the various concepts and ideas are presented in a clear fashion. Furthermore, the book is very well written. It proposes an excellent synthesis on current scholarship available in various fields—history, philosophy, sociology, demography, literature, the arts, etc. In this respect, *La France. Histoire, société, culture* represents a major contribution and is without a doubt one of the best textbooks currently available on contemporary French society and culture.

Marie-Christine Weidmann Koop
Professor of French
University of North Texas
Denton, TX

Publisher's Response

Canadian Scholars thanks you for your thoughtful and engaging review *of La France: histoire, société, culture* by Edward Ousselin. Marie-Christine Weidmann Koop has outlined the broad range of topics covered by the chapters in a concise and organized manner, as well as summarized the many features offered by the text such as QR codes linking to further resources, mini-tests, and discussion questions. We were delighted to read that this text was found to be comprehensive, user friendly, and versatile for instructors for use in programs across a variety of focuses, learning levels, and methodology.

If instructors are interested in learning more about *La France*, we invite them to visit our **website** or request a **review copy**. We also encourage exploring our **newest catalogue** for all that Canadian Scholars has to offer.

Krista Mitchell (She/Her/Hers)
Marketing Manager
Canadian Scholars/Women's Press

Weidmann Koop, Marie-Christine, ed. *Heurs et malheurs du système éducatif en France*. **Marion, IL: American Association of Teachers of French, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-9885496-8-5. $60.00.**

This collective volume on contemporary issues in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in France contains eight chapters, each one by a different specialist. It is primarily of interest to sociologists of education, and anyone who teaches French language and culture. The challenges facing French education are so similar to those in other parts of the world, however, that teachers at all levels and in every discipline will profit from reading this book.

Marie-Christine Weidmann Koop has a long record of publication in French studies and on the French school system in particular and therefore is an ideal leader for such an enterprise. Her introductory chapter situates the book within the ongoing debate over the purpose and organization of public education in the post-war era, an institution that Pierre Bourdieu long ago defined as a means of reproducing existing class structure. Since then, French society has fretted over the country's declining pedagogical reputation due to its mediocre rankings in the OECD's triennial "Program in International Student Achievement" exams, the increase in student-on-teacher violence, and other crises.

Samia Spencer tackles the question of classroom violence and the consequent decline in the number of people who aspire to a career in the teaching profession. She places the blame in part on the education ministry, which sends its youngest and least-experienced teachers to areas suffering from high unemployment, and fails to train them adequately in classroom management techniques. She explores the delicate issue of cultural tensions, such as the negative reactions of some Muslim students to the classroom discussions and moments of silence in the wake of the deadly 2015 attacks on the offices of *Charlie Hebdo* and on a kosher supermarket. Cultural, social, and economic exclusion of part of the student population plays a role in the rise of incivility and harassment, and even physical assault, which in turn has led to the publication of several best-selling and sometimes sensationalistic testimonials (e.g., Véronique Bouzou: *Ces profs qu'on assassine*, Christophe Varagnac: *Peurs sur l'*école). Although Spencer does not explore in depth the sociopolitical causes of these dysfunctions, nor the hypersensitive issue of the school system's own responsibility in the extreme alienation of some student populations, her well-documented essay is a valuable introduction to an issue that has developed into a crisis.

Classroom violence in the *banlieue* also provides the context for Leon Sachs's superb analysis of Jean-Paul Lilienfeld's 2009 film *La Journée de la jupe (Skirt Day)*. Although it is the first chapter in the book, it is a logical continuation of Spencer's contribution because it grapples with the root causes of the violence that she documents. The crisis, as he sees it, is not cultural as much as structural: the classroom can no longer protect itself from outside forces. It has been invaded by alternative modes of learning (such as smartphones) and sources of spiritual value (such as Islam), and therefore has lost its status as a "sanctuary." The film is punctuated by negotiations: between inside and outside, teachers and students and, in a surprising plot development, between a SWAT team and a teacher who has become a hostage-taker. The repeated negotiations transform the film from what at first appears to be a polemical expression of outrage in the face of student violence of the kind that Spencer reports, into a blueprint for a resolution of the inside-outside dialectic. As Sachs states at the outset, the film is not "great" in any conventional sense, but it is "important:" art can interpret the crisis of school violence more clearly than journalists, sociologists, and teachers themselves.

Cultural tensions also inform Marie Schein's contribution on the "right to education" in the context of mass immigration. Her survey of recent policies designed to address the needs of non-French speaking students is one of the more optimistic essays in this collection. Is her optimism justified? The evidence that she supplies is sometimes anecdotal: she cites Pascal Ory's 2013 dictionary of famous immigrants, such as Charles Aznavour and Marie Curie, which is no proof that assimilationist educational policies

actually work. The initiatives she describes, however, including bilingual education and extracurricular support mechanisms, suggests that fuller participation in society by descendants of immigrants is achievable, even if progress is slow and tortuous.

Rosalie Vermette takes up similar themes of assimilation and multiculturalism, but from the viewpoint of foreign language instruction and its potential to "end social determinism" (34), both by mainstreaming non-francophone immigrants, and increasing multilingualism among Francophone students. Worthy goals, of course, but difficult to implement. Among the dilemmas that Vermette identifies is the fact that the traditional role of Greek and Latin as cornerstones of French identity takes resources away from modern languages, and from the urgent need to improve France's last-place position among European countries in the level of English-language proficiency of its students.

It is obvious that no progress in educational outcomes is possible without constant innovation. Marie Christine Weidmann Koop evaluates the 2013 reforms designed to address social dysfunctions through education, for example by instituting student-centered pedagogy, enhancing civics courses, decentralizing the decision-making process, and prioritizing skills that are in demand in the contemporary workplace. Each of these is controversial, involving changes in power relations, the promotion of multiculturalism over assimilation, and the most hated innovation of all: the "neo-liberalization" of the curriculum that turns schools into training grounds for future employees.

One senses, on reading Weidmann Koop's article, that real change is taking place, and that the French educational bureaucracy is shaking off its inertia. Indeed, initiatives that just a few years ago would have been unthinkable are taking root. "Hip-Hop based education," for example, developed at the University of Arizona as a strategy for teaching language and literature to inner-city students, has started to have a modest impact in France, according to Alain-Philippe Durand, Alain Milon, and Charles Norton, confirming the sense one has throughout this book that a vast experiment in educational reform is underway.

Samira ElAtia examines the consequences of the *baccalauréat* exam's 200-year evolution from an elitist rite of passage to an almost universal certificate of completion of secondary education. If the vast majority of the population takes the *bac*, and the government has been "pushing for a pass rate of a hundred percent or close," then what is the value of the exam going forward? The tension between its status as an instrument for "outcomes assessment" and as a university entrance exam must be resolved if it is to remain relevant.

Higher education also receives due attention. Patricia Cummins examines how universities scrambled to comply with policies of the "European Higher Education Area," including more autonomy for individual institutions, and the adoption of equivalency standards for degrees. The university is no longer just a national concern: global partnerships, and employers in the private sector, put pressure on the system to change faster than in the past. Cummins views such changes as necessary, and calls for greater financial and political commitment under the Macron presidency. One wonders, after reading her overview, how long French traditions such as the *bac* and the *grandes écoles* can survive in a world that is converging towards a unified system. One also wonders what will be lost if the globalizing trends in higher education prevail.

The solutions to the many problems examined in this anthology are elusive. In order to deal with crises, however, one first has to understand them. Because the challenges facing France also exist in North America and much of the world, this book is valuable for any teacher who views education as a path to a more just, diverse, and prosperous society.

M. Martin Guiney
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Publisher's Response

We appreciate the thoughtful and in-depth analysis of *Heurs et malheurs du système éducatif en France.* Our goal as a publisher to is provide current, well-researched examinations of issues of importance to the French-teaching profession. As the reviewer rightly notes, the problems described in this volume are not unique to France. As an association of teachers, we are interested in how current social, political, and economic trends impact our role in the classroom. By learning more about how the French are dealing with these issues, we can better understand how we might respond and better inform our students about the issues facing education.

Jayne Abrate, Executive Director
American Association of Teachers of French (AATF)

Spanish

Andrade, Magdalena, María José Cabrera Puche, Jeanne Egasse, and Elías Miguel Munoz. *Tu mundo: Español sin fronteras.* **2ⁿᵈ Edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2019. ISBN10: 1260111210. Student options include: Textbook, student editions for purchase; loose leaf text; rental options; eBook; student workbook/lab manual; and .Connect online activities. Instructor's edition ISBN: 978-1-260-11123-1. Visit www.mheducation. com for more information.**

McGraw Hill understands well the uniqueness of beginning Spanish classes at the post-secondary level. The publisher readily acknowledges that the instructor of this text will most likely be teaching genuine beginners, false beginners (with prior high school experience) as well as heritage speakers. *Tu mundo* is designed to challenge them all. It is also made affordable to all students by offering several combinations to purchase or rent course materials.

Embrace the Language, not the rules (IAE-iii)! This is the motto of the pedagogical model of *Tu mundo: Español sin fronteras.* Emphasis is on output, preceded by a combination of pre-class grammar preparation, and then negotiated through in-class comprehensible input and communicative activity (IAE-vi). The program is also designed for instructors and students to adapt to a variety of teaching and learning styles. The program can be adapted as a face-to-face, hybrid, or online class. The instructor's manual, resource kits and testing program make the learning system easily adaptable for beginning teachers or a new program. McGraw-Hill provides excellent tutorials,

communication with other users of the program, webinars, and frequent updates for a high-quality support system. They may easily be contacted via internet or telephone.

The instructor receives an instructor's annotated text, instructional videos of classroom presentations, and a copy of the workbook/lab manual. Also included are an instructor's resource kit which is a chapter-specific source for the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), audio scripts to accompany the workbook activities, and scripts for video segments.

The text is divided into fifteen chapters which cover a complete range of Spanish grammar sufficient to satisfy ACTFL standards for intermediate Spanish based on general post-secondary standards.

Several unique components threaded through the chapters connect students with vocabulary, geography, customs of the Spanish-speaking world, and the grammar needed to sustain in-class communication. First, there is *Amigos sin fronteras (ASF)*, a created community of fifteen native Spanish speakers representing people of different age, educational levels and professional careers. They live in parts of the Spanish-speaking world that correspond to the specific geographic areas highlighted in each chapter. They, along with *LearnSmart*, serve as a platform for students to integrate the input gained from the ASF into classroom conversation. The *amigos* address the gap between genuine conversation and that generated in the classroom, making class interaction more relevant. The second resource is *LearnSmart.* Powered by the platform *Connect*, *LearnSmart* is a learning system that provides grammar, vocabulary, and preparation for interaction. It contains two parts both designed to prepare the student for in-class activity: digital activities for grammar/vocabulary acquisition and a streaming virtual study abroad tour which corresponds to the ASF's country within each chapter. The study abroad includes real-life situations for visitors to a foreign country. It addresses differences in customs and situations, which could be important if one loses valuable documents or suddenly finds oneself in need of medical attention. Instructors can track students' progress through Each chapter is divided into five sections. Goals in communication and knowledge of the cultural region of focus are clearly identified in terms of outcome. True to the opening statement of purpose, *Comunícate!* comes first. Its two sub-sections are *Escríbelo tú*, and *Cuéntanos*. This section introduces the theme of each chapter through conversation-provoking pictures, maps, and an introduction to the chapter's geographical/cultural focus of the target country. *Comunicate!* is followed by *Exprésate!* This section is a platform for spoken and written expression. Students can combine grammar preparation from *Learn-Smart* assignments and online interactive conversation into live interaction with class members and written communication. The third section, *Cultura*, focuses on the region of the lesson. Its two sections are made up of *Mundopedia* and *Conexión Cultural*. *Mundopedia* provides readings about the target country that integrate activities in the workbook and *Contextos*. The final section, *Gramática*, is most effective since it is located at the end of the chapter. Each grammar point in the chapter is explained and then followed by practice exercises, making it easily accessible for reference and further study.

In summary, *Tu mundo* is a complete learning program. Its greatest strength is the cohesiveness of the sum of its pieces. Each lesson flows from pre-class activity through digital preparation for real-life practice in the classroom or for chat in a hybrid or

online class venue. Culture is infused through unique presentations by real persons. Output—both written and oral—is produced at every step. The illustrations used in textbook exercises are first quality. Also, the ancillaries are well done and well integrated; they do not seem like afterthoughts inserted to augment the lesson. In this reviewer's opinion, *Tu mundo* is a top-shelf program at an affordable price. It provides students with everything available through today's technology and team resources to succeed in mastering the Spanish language at the intermediate level.

Joe LaValle
Assistant Professor of Spanish
University of North Georgia – Oconee

Publisher's Response

McGraw-Hill is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to Joe LaValle's review of the second edition of *Tu mundo.*

In his review, Professor LaValle begins by pointing out that McGraw-Hill understands the range of skills and experience that students bring into the introductory Spanish course and that *Tu mundo* is "designed to challenge them all." He describes the pedagogical approach as having an "emphasis on output" and adaptable to many different teaching styles, learning styles, and course formats. He provides a list of distinguishing characteristics of *Tu mundo*, most of which are digital features such as Connect (a teaching and learning platform), LearnSmart (an adaptive learning tool), and interactive French grammar tutorials. He also outlines some of the organizing principles of the content, such as the *Amigos sin fronteras*, and provides a description of the many tools and resources available within *Tu mundo*, such as Learnsmart and the Instructor's Resource Kit.

Professor LaValle provides a comprehensive summary of the chapter elements, which will be useful to anyone considering *Tu mundo* for adoption. Each chapter opens with *Comunicate!*, demonstrating the emphasis that this program places on communicative practice, in addition to four skills practice and cultural content that is "infused throughout through unique presentations by real persons."

Overall, Professor LaValle commends the *Tu mund*o program for its excellent content and calls it "a top shelf program at an affordable price." We thank him for this summary of the second edition of *Tu mundo.*

McGraw-Hill World Languages is committed to publishing high quality print and digital content for World Languages, and we are proud to include Tu mundo among our many successful programs. We again thank Professor LaValle for sharing his review of *Tu mundo* with the readership of *The NECTFL Review.*

Katie Crouch
Senior Portfolio Manager, World Languages
McGraw-Hill

Antoniuk, David, and Forester, Lee. Ritmos. 2nd edition. Sarasota, FL: Live Oak Multimedia, 2017. Combo pack includes: Ritmos Vol. 1 & 2 textbooks and 24-month web access. ISBN: 978-1-886553-613, 978-1-886553-62-0 and 978-1-886553-66-8.

Ritmos is a college-level program designed for first-year beginning Spanish language and culture courses. Its main goal is to make students fluent in Spanish and help them to acquire effective cross-cultural communication skills. The program emphasizes language and culture using three equally important resources: an interactive website, *Cuaderno*, and class time. *Ritmos* has a well-defined and innovative structure with a content-based curriculum in which culture is a foundation.

The *Cuaderno* is a combination of textbook and workbook to be used both independently and in class. It is sleek and accessible, easy to be written in and carried to class. *Cuaderno*, the printed part of the program, has two volumes, each containing 5 thematic units.

The *Ritmos* interactive web page is hosted by Evia Learning and can be purchased and accessed via **www.los-ritmos.com**. It offers a very large vocabulary bank, cultural learning and numerous listening activities, which distinguish this program from others. The interactive activities are engaging, and they prioritize the central role of culture. They are carefully tailored to prepare students for classroom activities and for writing. The authentic unscripted narratives for the written texts and the listening pieces challenge students with content designed for intermediate-low learners. This desired level of proficiency follows the ACTFL proficiency guidelines (2012). Students are called to interact with interesting cultural and linguistic material that prepares them for real encounters in Spanish. Furthermore, the continuous exposure to different cadences in Spanish provides students with models to emulate for their own spoken and written production.

Unlike a traditional textbook-based curriculum, the *Ritmos* program invests in displaying cultural learning as a necessary foundation of intercultural communication. The content provides what to say, not just how to say it. Language skills are acquired to create real language and to improve students' ability to comprehend, speak, and write. The grammar taught is reduced in terms of topics but broadened in terms of review, recycling and practicing material throughout the ten thematic units. This approach gives students the opportunity to acquire an in-depth understanding of each unit for long-lasting learning, instead of just doing rote memorization for a test. Also, when students focus on fewer elements in a mindful way, linguistic proficiency can be reached faster and more effectively.

Ritmos embraces the flipped classroom method. In the introductory "How it Works" section the authors explain how to successfully learn step by step. First, students learn how to use the interactive interface to become familiar with new vocabulary and cultural information necessary to communicate effectively. After completion of the online tasks, working with the *Cuaderno* text, students practice vocabulary, writing skills and reading authentic texts in Spanish. C*uaderno* is integrated into the classroom, since it also contains many classroom activities. Finally, students learn in class from listening and speaking with others and with the instructor. Researchers have shown that this approach is most effective in achieving long-lasting learning, where the language is acquired in specific cultural contexts. *Ritmos* gives students the opportunity to learn and to use the language in a creative way while learning important cultural aspects and differences.

Nevertheless, *Ritmos*'s innovative approach resides in the possibility of achieving mastery of the basics to reach intermediate-low proficiency while reducing the quantity

of grammar. Using *Ritmos* students can acquire a deep foundation for understanding the language and the variety of Spanish-speaking cultures without stressing over grammatical perfection. Many books promise a communicative approach, *Ritmos* fulfills the promise and is carefully tailored to deliver real learning outcomes.

The shift in focus to culture from grammar assists students in attaining a greater intercultural understanding of Spanish language speakers. *Ritmos* values intercultural communication as one of its primary objectives and puts it on the same level as language competency. Understanding people from another culture is key to feeling more comfortable communicating. *Ritmos* gives numerous narratives and personal experiences of native Spanish speakers in their home countries and in the U.S. This approach makes material more relatable and provides a base of cultural information necessary to prepare a global citizen.

The two volumes of the *Cuaderno* and the online component are characterized by directness, a convenient design, easy to find structures, and comprehensible icons. All the activities and links are very user friendly. On the main web page, the navigation has three tabs on the top right: Dashboard, Progress Report, and Support. The clarity of the configuration and the simplicity of the neat professional photographs appeal to both students and instructors in facilitating the navigation of the webpage. The dashboard clearly displays the 10 units, covering the essential themes to develop cultural and linguistic competency. The units are: 1. *Saludo*s; 2. *Amigos y familia*; 3. *Modo de vivir;* 4. *En la calle*; 5. *México*; 6. *Ciudadano*; 7. *Celebración*; 8. *Viajes*; 9. *Los EE.UU*; 10. *España*. Each thematic unit is consistently divided in four sections.

Each section has a thematic photograph at the top of the page with the description of the theme, a PDF file containing the vocabulary of the unit and a PDF file transcript with a progress report. Each theme is divided into 8-9 modules. Each module has numerous activities to be selected. The directions for the activities are presented in English; however, the content exceeds the beginner level and conforms to real spoken language in terms of speed, authentic context and colloquial expressions. The grammar structures also present a higher level of proficiency; however, the listening sections are accompanied by a transcript in Spanish with highlighted vocabulary. Once a student moves the cursor over the vocabulary, a popup displays the meaning of the word in English. This helpful tool assists students to better understand real Spanish and to surpass the initial mechanics of staying in the "comfort zone" of translating word by word.

When students start a module, they can see "remaining," "incorrect," and "correct" answers. Each answer also has a "I don't know" option. If a student selects this choice, the computer offers the answer and suggests to "copy the answer." The student is then called to physically type the answer in a box provided, which enhances retention of new vocabulary, grammar and cultural knowledge. One outstanding component of the activities in the modules is the accessible audio in the target language for nearly every word or verb giving students ample opportunity to practice. For example, a fun way to practice "*verbos*" is to use a simulated flashcard**.** Students can practice verb conjugations, shuffle, add audio and select items according to a term or a definition. Instructors can easily monitor progress reports from a visible tab on the top right of the web page to receive accurate feedback on student performance.

The two volumes (Volume 1 and Volume 2) of the *Cuaderno* are conveniently designed for the completion of the two-semester requirement for first-year Spanish courses. Because of the emphasis on culture the embedded grammar explanations do not follow the usual sequence of topics found in most traditional beginning-level textbooks. Grammar is presented in a coherent and simple way in order to articulate and illustrate the rich content students are exposed to. The broad selection of vocabulary does not follow alphabetical order; rather, it follows the content presented, even when an expression contains advanced tenses, such as the subjunctive in the first unit. This approach might be challenging for the first couple of units, but once students have practiced and gained confidence they can develop excellent comprehension skills and function in a Spanish-speaking country. The authentic texts, activities and listening comprehension exercises are pedagogically organized and strategically placed in order to be accessible, so that students can respond to vocabulary and grammar structures in real-life, lively conversations. At the end of each thematic unit there is a useful one-page long checklist of "Cultural and Communication Goals" categorized as "I can" and "I can explain." This tool empowers students to check on their progress and the skills they have developed, valuing their primary role in their learning process and understanding. *Ritmos* is remarkable because it breaks the belief that cultural learning is to be presented and acquired in upper- level courses only; moreover, this program demonstrates that higher levels of language skills can actually be taught and learned through intercultural contexts, instilling a deeper understanding and appreciation for others.

In summary, *Ritmos* accomplishes its goal to provide cultural proficiency and language proficiency. This comprehensive and well-organized program serves the larger goal of making students fluent in Spanish and effective at cross-cultural communication. Thanks to *Ritmos* engaged students can have a transformative experience in the classroom, appreciate and value the Spanish-speaking cultures and gracefully navigate intercultural interactions.

Rosaria M. Meek
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Publisher's Response

We were pleased to read Prof. Meek's review of *Ritmos 2ⁿᵈ edition*, which captures well the essential components of our innovative curriculum. Part of the smooth design Professor Meeks mentions is the focus on authentic imagery, with thousands of custom-shot photos throughout the book and web activities designed to build visual knowledge of the target cultures. The audio listening activities have a great deal of scaffolding to make them accessible to novice and intermediate learners. We consciously avoid unnaturally slow audio and this assistance allows even beginning students to follow simple native speech patterns.

Ritmos is a transitional text, moving away from a traditional present-practice-produce approach to Content-Based Instruction emphasizing Comprehensible Input, very much in line with the newest recommendations from ACTFL. Our goals are to give students

skills they can use with native speakers right from the beginning and to convince them to continue with their language learning after their 1st year course. We hear stories of students interacting with native speakers using both their cultural and language skills even during their first year of instruction, and that is the outcome we are looking for!

Lee Forester
Professor of German
Hope College
Holland, MI
President, Evia Learning Inc.

Blanco, José A. *Enfoques: curso intermedio de la lengua española*, **5ᵗʰ edition**. **Boston, MA: Vistas Higher Learning, 2020**. **ISBN: 978-1-54330-132-8.**

The fifth edition of José Blanco's *Enfoques: curso intermedio de la lengua española* is the latest update of this well-designed and user-friendly intermediate-level Spanish textbook. Our department switched to *Enfoques* (in its third edition at the time) after a long search for a text for our two-semester intermediate sequence, and we have been very satisfied with the choice.

As is the case with many other Spanish titles published by Vistas Higher Learning—we also use two other texts co-authored by Blanco, *Adelante Uno* and *Dos*, in our beginning Spanish courses—*Enfoques* strives to provide a comprehensive text geared to the intermediate level. It covers the entire range of verb tenses (with an emphasis on the subjunctive as well as the perfect aspect) but also addresses other grammar topics (e.g., relative pronouns, prepositions), all the while weaving cultural topics into each unit's readings, videos, and communicative activities.

The scope and organization of this updated edition remain unchanged from the fourth edition. It consists of twelve units, each with a particular theme: *Las relaciones personales, Las diversiones, La vida diaria, La salud y el bienestar, Los viajes, La naturaleza, La tecnología y la ciencia, La economía y el trabajo, La cultura popular y los medios de comunicación, La literatura y el arte, La política y la religión,* and *La historia y la civilización.* As a result, students encounter a wide range of topics that include those of personal interest as well as academic themes.

The organization of each unit is likewise identical to that of previous editions. Each unit opens with *Contextos*, a two-page spread that lists new vocabulary, reinforced by several exercises in different modes (e.g., listening, matching, analogies, odd-man-out, and surveys). This section is followed by the *Fotonovela* and then *Enfoques*, which features a selection of short cultural readings and a very informative cultural video, *Flash Cultura*. The fourth section of each unit, *Estructura*, presents three different grammar topics, each with a variety of exercises to practice form, function, and use. The fifth section, *Cinemateca,* features one *cortometraje,* a short movie (10-15 minutes long) from a different Spanish-speaking country. The *Lecturas* section offers two readings, one literary (e.g., a poem or a short story) and the other more culturally focused. Each unit ends with *Atando Cabos,* with speaking and writing activities to synthesize the unit's content, and a one-page summary of all the vocabulary introduced in each of the six sections of the unit.

I would like to highlight a few of these sections. First, the fifth edition includes a new *Fotonovela.* The original *fotonovela* was a situation comedy that took place in a single setting, the offices of *Facetas,* a small magazine publisher in Mexico City. The updated edition uses Oaxaca as the backdrop for a romantic comedy. So far only one episode of the new *fotonovela* is available, but it appears to follow a format that is similar to many *telenovelas*, with intrigue, interconnected situations, and a touch of overdramatic/comedic acting. At the end of each episode there is a summary of grammar points featured, something which the previous series did not include.

The fifth edition has also changed two reading selections (one literary and one cultural) and two *cortometrajes*. Otherwise, these sections remain identical to those in the fourth edition, as do all of the grammar-based exercises in each unit. At the end of the text is a detailed reference section, with additional grammar exercises (mostly as supplements to topics covered in each unit), a handy glossary of grammatical terms, and verb conjugation tables and English-Spanish vocabulary lists that are part and parcel of many other similar texts. The accompanying *Supersite* provides the same range of web-based exercises for additional practice outside of class. The text itself has been updated with clearer icons to show which exercises are available online. The website also offers access to all audio and video files, which greatly facilitates their use individually or in the classroom.

In summary, *Enfoques* meets and even surpasses its objective to serve as an all-encompassing intermediate text. However, I will also say that *Enfoques,* much like the *Adelante* books we use at the beginning level, presents instructors with an enviable dilemma, namely, an overabundance of material. Since my intermediate courses meet twice a week for 100 minutes per session, I need to complete one unit in about six sessions in our sixteen-week semester. As such, I need to pick and choose topics and activities from each unit, often leaving aside one longer reading, the *cortometraje*, and many of the exercises. That said, the breadth of coverage of *Enfoques* is such that I feel confident that my students will be well prepared to continue their Spanish studies even without doing every activity in each unit.

The fifth edition of *Enfoques* is clearly organized and logically sequenced. Each unit's theme offers a lively context for vocabulary, grammar, and culture and is enhanced by supporting multimedia activities (listening, *fotonovela, cortometraje,* and *Flash Cultura*). In short, it is a solid choice for the intermediate level and prepares students well for more advanced study of the language.

Dennis Bricault
Professor of Spanish
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Publisher's Response

I am pleased to respond to Professor Dennis Bricault's review of Vista Higher Learning's Intermediate Spanish program *Enfoques: curso intermedio de lengua española*, Fifth Edition. We are very happy to hear of his satisfaction with the use of *Enfoques* in his department and to know that he considers it a solid choice that prepares students well for more advanced study of the language. Professor Bricault's comments indicate

that we have achieved our goal of producing a comprehensive and yet user-friendly textbook for the Intermediate market.

The integration of cultural topics throughout a program is something we always strive for at Vista Higher Learning, and we appreciate Professor Bricault noting that cultural topics are woven into readings, videos, and communicative activities. The informative cultural video that he specifically mentions, *Flash cultura*, is a video shot in the form of a news broadcast. Comprehension and expansion activities help students get the most out of the content.

As Professor Bricault noted, the Fifth Edition of *Enfoques* has a new 12-episode *Fotonovela* video program which engages students with comedy and intrigue. This storyline video presents five-minute segments about a not-so-typical family in Oaxaca, Mexico. Each segment is connected to the lesson theme and uses grammar and vocabulary introduced within the lesson. Each episode includes a brief recap of previous episodes and a *Resumen de gramática*.

The new *Lectura* and *Cortometraje* selections that Professor Bricault mentions were updated in response to user feedback. The new *Lectura* texts were chosen to be more engaging for students and instructors. The new *Cortometraje* selections were chosen to provide students with a wider range of Spanish accents and countries represented.

It was particularly gratifying to read Professor Bricault's comment about the "overabundance" of materials available for the Fifth Edition of *Enfoques*, since our goal was to provide all the content, tools, and support needed for the course. Professor Bricault has opted for the right approach in choosing and selecting among the material that is part of the course. He is correct that students will be able to achieve their learning objectives without doing every activity.

Other new and notable features of the Fifth Edition that Professor Bricault did not mention are the new Video Virtual Chat activities for the *Fotonovela* video and new web-only *Conexión con el arte* activities for the *Literatura* strand. These are available on the Supersite.

Mary McKeon
Editorial Director
Vista Higher Learning

Choe, Germaine, author; Carolina Gómez, Spanish editor; Nancy Meyers, illustrator. *Language Together Spanish Set 2*. *10 Books with Online Audio for kids*. **First edition. Paperback—Box Set. ISBN: 978-0-9971240-5-7. MaxiPro LTD, 2018**. **[See p. 91]**

Choe, Germaine, author; Nathan Lutz, French editor; Nancy Meyers, illustrator. *Language Together French Set 2*: *10 Books with Online Audio for kids*. **First edition. ISBN: 978-09971240-8-8. Paperback—Box Set. MaxiPro LTD, 2018. [See p. 91]**

Schwegler, Armin, and Ana Ameal-Guerra. *Fonética y fonología españolas*. **5ᵗʰ edition. John Wiley & Sons, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-119-39571-3. Price $120.95 (paperback).**

Fonética y fonología españolas, now in its fifth edition, has been used in phonetics and linguistics classes all over the United States for many years. This new edition follows the same structure and methodology used in previous editions but some important changes

were made. The new edition is more concise. According to the authors, there was a 20% reduction and the basic design of the exercises was also modified; models and examples have replaced explanations. In terms of content, the biggest changes affect Chapter 12, which deals with voiced sonorants, Chapter 19, which focuses on Peninsular Spanish, and Chapter 21, which deals with Spanish in the U.S. As in previous editions, exercises do not appear in the printed version but can be found on the companion website. These files are downloadable from the companion site free of charge.

This textbook can be described as an introduction to the sound system of the Spanish language but its goals go beyond this theoretical approach: the textbook and the accompanying materials are also designed to allow non-native speakers of Spanish to acquire a native or semi- native pronunciation. In that sense, the book can be described as a pronunciation manual. Moreover, the manual serves as an introduction to dialectal variation in the Spanish-speaking world. The target audience is undergraduate students interested in acquiring a near native pronunciation as well as future teachers of Spanish interested in learning the underlying theory so that they can teach pronunciation in the future. In addition to this audience, the textbook can be used by anyone interested in learning how to correctly articulate Spanish sounds. The textbook is written entirely in Spanish, so it can best be used in upper-level undergraduate courses or in introductory postgraduate courses.

Fonética y fonología españolas is divided into twenty-one chapters. The first nine chapters lay the theoretical foundation. These chapters look at the articulation of vowels, diphthongs and triphthongs, approximants, syllable structure, the articulation of consonants, and the contrast between allophones and phonemes. Moreover, students get introduced to the basics of phonetic transcription, which is done using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The next group of chapters—chapters 10 to 16—has a practical emphasis. Each of these chapters focuses on Spanish sounds and suprasegmental features that might be challenging to English-speaking students. The sounds covered in this section are nasal sounds, voiced sonorants, vibrant and lateral sounds, and voiceless fricatives. Students also get a chance to learn about intonation patterns in Spanish. These chapters are contrastive in nature as students learn about how these sounds are different from their English counterparts. Chapter 17 looks at the English vocalic system while Chapter 18 focuses on the history of the Spanish language and how certain sounds have evolved over time. The last three chapters introduce students to dialectal variation. Chapter 19 looks at Peninsular Spanish and presents the most distinctive sounds of this variety. Chapter 20 does the same for American Spanish and looks at the most distinctive phenomena found in *español de tierras bajas* (lowland Spanish). The last chapter looks at Spanish in the U.S. Here, students learn about the demographics of the Spanish-speaking communities in the U.S. and are introduced to linguistic concepts, such as word borrowing, calques, and code switching. So-called "Spanglish" is also discussed.

One topic not included in the actual textbook is the rules of stress assignment. However, instructors interested in covering this topic can use the supplementary materials available on both the instructor's and the students' companion website. There, they will find an extensive document that walks students through the rules of stress assignment as well as other aspects, such as the use of the *tilde* (accent mark) in diphthongs, hiatus,

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Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts — *NECTFL Review*

Below, you will find a summary of the Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts and the Checklist for Manuscript Preparation. The complete documents for both in PDF format can be downloaded at

- Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts: **http://www.nectfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Review-Guidelines_2017.pdf**

- Checklist for manuscript preparation: **http://www.nectfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Review-Checklist.pdf**

All articles submitted will be evaluated by at least two, normally three, members of the Editorial Review Board. Elements to be considered in the evaluation process are the article's appropriateness for the journal's readership, its contribution to foreign language education and the originality of that contribution, the soundness of the research or theoretical base, its implications for the classroom, and finally, organization, focus, and clarity of expression.

As you prepare your manuscript for submission to the *NECTFL Review*, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. We use the most recent **APA [American Psychological Association] Guidelines** (**http://www.apastyle.org/**), and not those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please use the latest edition (6th ed., 2010) of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or the *Concise Rules of APA Style* as your guide. For models of articles and references, examine The *NECTFL Review*, recent issues of the *Modern Language Journal* or *Foreign Language Annals*. These journals follow the APA style with minor deviations (and those being primarily changes in level headings within articles). Citations within articles, bibliographic entries, punctuation, and style follow the APA format very closely.

2. In order for an article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers, please follow these guidelines carefully to expedite the review and publishing process. Submit your article electronically to NECTFL at **https://nectfl.wufoo.com/forms/authorarticle-information-form-nectfl-review/,** uploading it in the **Author/Article Information Form.**

3. Please think carefully about the title of your article. It should be brief, preferably without subtitles, and *no longer than 12 words*.

4. **We require an abstract of your article.** See pp. 25-25 [Section 2.04] in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2010) for clear guidelines for writing an abstract.

5. Articles will not be accepted if they appear to endorse or sell software, hardware, books, or any other products.

6. **Do not include the names of the author(s) of the article on the first page of the actual text.**

7. Include a short biographical paragraph (this will appear at the bottom of the first page of the article, should it be published). Please include this paragraph on a separate page at the *end* of the article. This paragraph should be **no longer than 4-5 lines.**

8. Please note that the typical length of manuscripts averages approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages, including notes, charts, and references. This does not mean that a slightly longer article is out of the question.

9. Authors should read the manuscript very carefully before submitting it, verifying the accuracy of the citations (including the spelling of names, page numbers, and publication dates); the accuracy of the format of the references; punctuation, according to the APA Guidelines; spelling throughout the article.

10. Please consult the **Checklist for Manuscript Publication** [**http://www.nectfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Review-Checklist.pdf**]. Promising articles have been rejected because authors did not spend enough time proofreading the manuscript. Proofreading includes not only reading for accuracy but for readability, flow, clarity.

11. Remember: In order for an article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers, authors must complete the **Author/Article Information Form**. This form is used to match the author's description of the article with the appropriate reviewers according to (1) instructional level; (2) areas of interest; (3) the type of content; (4) relevant language(s); (5) keywords that best describe the article content [no more than four should be indicated].

Checklist for Manuscript Preparation

Here are a few reminders, many of which are taken directly from the APA Guidelines:

❑ Please remember to use the spell check and grammar check on your computer before you submit your manuscript. Any portions of text in a foreign language must be followed immediately by an English translation in square brackets.

❑ Do not submit an article that includes tracking in Word.

❑ Remember that in the APA guidelines, notes (footnotes or endnotes) are discouraged.

❑ Do not use automatic footnoting or endnoting available with your word processor.

❑ Do not use automatic page numbering,

❑ Please double-space everything in your manuscript.

❑ Use left justification only; do not use full justification anywhere in the article.

❑ The required font throughout is either Times New Roman 12 pt. or Minion Pro 12 pt.

❑ There should be only one space after each period.

❑ Punctuation marks appear inside quotation marks.

❑ In listing items or in a series of words connected by *and, but, or*, use a comma [the Oxford comma] before these conjunctions.

❑ When providing a list of items, use double parentheses surrounding the numbers or letters: (1), (2), or (3) or (a), (b), and (c).

❑ All numbers above nine must appear as Arabic numerals ["nine school districts" vs. "10 textbooks"]; numbers below 10 must be written out.

❑ Page number references in parentheses are not part of the actual quotation and must be placed outside of the quotation marks following quoted material.

❑ Use standard postal abbreviations for states in all reference items [e.g., NC, IL, NY, MS], but not in the text itself.

❑ Do not set up automatic tabs at the beginning of the article (i.e., as part of a style); rather you should use the tab key (and *not* the space bar) on your computer each time you begin a new paragraph. The standard indent is only ¼ [0.25"] inch.

❑ Please reflect on the title of the article. Quite often titles do not give readers the most precise idea of what they will be reading.

❑ According to APA guidelines, the References section contains only the list of works you actually use in your article. Check all Internet addresses before submitting the manuscript.

❑ Be judicious in using text or graphic boxes or tables in your text.

❑ Please makes certain that the components you submit are in the following order:

❑ First page—with the article title, names and titles of authors, their preferred mailing addresses, home and office phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and the name of the primary contact person [also, times in the summer when regular and E-mail addresses may be inactive];

    ❑ First page of the manuscript—containing the title of the article and the abstract

    ❑ The text of the article

    ❑ Notes; References, Appendices—in this order

    ❑ A short, biographical paragraph (no more than 4-5 lines).

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