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B-40 Dwinelle Hall #2640  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA 94720-2640

Fax . . . . . 510.642.9183

Phone . . . . . 510.642.0767  
Administrative Services ext 10  
Classroom Services . . . ext 19  
Duplication Services . . . ext 29  
Library Services . . . . . ext 24  
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Technical Services . . . . . ext 17

**Editor & Designer**  
**Victoria K. Williams**  
*victoria@berkeley.edu*

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### Berkeley Language Center

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*Founding Director*  
*Claire Kramsch*

**Director**  
**Richard Kern**  
510.642.2895

**Associate Director**  
**Mark Kaiser**  
510.642.0767

<http://blc.berkeley.edu>

## A Conversation with Claire Kramsch and Sirpa Tuomainen

*by Mark Kaiser,  
Associate Director, BLC*

MK: Both of you are back from sojourns in Europe. Can you tell us about what you were engaged in there?

CK: I had a semester sabbatical and I spent it in Paris, where I grew up. It gave me the opportunity to go back to my family, friends, and former peers, and finish a book I was writing. I had time to get in touch with colleagues, teachers of German and teachers of English, some of whom I went to school with. It was nice to reconnect with my home country on a more professional basis.

MK: Sirpa?

ST: I spent a year in Finland at my alma mater, University of Jyväskylä. I had a forty percent appointment as a lecturer at the Department of Languages. I taught online Finnish courses and developed web-based materials for those courses and others. Our audience was quite multicultural; the students came from all over the world—from China to Macedonia. I also took courses: ethnography courses out of personal interest and an assessment course under a Title VI grant. The University of Jyväskylä has many European Union (EU) projects, and one has been developing assessment tools according to the guidelines set out in the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*. In addition, I subbed at my own former department, the English Department, teaching a writing course in the spring semester. Developing a blog that I later used in my ethnographic research also took up a lot of my time.

MK: Both of you have spent much time with foreign language faculty in Europe, in France and in Finland. Would you say that foreign language teaching is in transition right now in Europe?

CK: Definitely! Both in France and in Germany, educational systems now have to teach foreign languages within a European Union framework to produce future European citizens and not just French or German citizens. That creates interesting tensions between national and international educational goals. There are clashes of methodology, pedagogic vision, and social class. What are languages good for? Who are they good for? Are they for everybody or just for the elite? The French in particular are now asking quite anguished questions regarding what it means to be an “educated native speaker.”

ST: Finns have always studied different languages. Because we are a country of only five million speakers of Finnish, it's always been important to study several languages, starting in elementary school. We are also a bilingual country in that we've all had to study Swedish. I started first with Swedish, which wasn't called a foreign language but a second mother tongue. It's often called “forced Swedish” because many feel it's useless to study another “small” language. This situation has changed though; from the seventies on, most students began taking English first. With the young and the well educated, English is now a second language rather than a foreign language, or the third language spoken in Finland along with Swedish and Finnish. What's changing is that some parents feel that their children will simply learn English on their own. That's why there's more attention paid to other languages. Because of rapid globalization, the importance of the study of Asian languages and Russian is being discussed more and more.

MK: Within the institutions?

ST: Right. If you live in a big city the schools offer many languages, and you can choose which languages to study. Most children choose English, but there are some who choose a more “exotic” language—mostly because the parents know their children will pick up English outside of school. Because of the *Common European Framework of Reference* as an assessment tool, based on “can do,” the methodology is also changing.

MK: Making it more utilitarian?

ST: Yes. What I saw, however, was that language teaching was still pretty old-fashioned, and I was surprised. I thought pedagogy would be quite modern, based on how well the students learn. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is used in over sixty countries, and Finland ranked first in 2000 and 2003 in many different subject areas. The common view is naturally that what has been done in teaching languages must be good since the results are so good. But there’s a lot of talk about language teaching pedagogy. It’s become especially important in the European Union that students learn about the cultural aspects of the language.

MK: What about English in France? Is that a similar situation? Is it just assumed that everybody learns English and so the focus within educational institutions is on other foreign languages?

CK: The languages offered in French schools are not usually decided by offer and demand but by the Ministry of Education who decides which languages will be compulsory, and at what age. Traditionally, the two first foreign languages offered have been English or German (that you start at age 12), with Spanish as a second foreign language (that you start at age 15), because France has traditionally taught the languages of its neighbors. Today, school children still have to learn two foreign languages, but English has been made into the compulsory first foreign language and Spanish is taken as the second foreign language because of the global nature of Spanish and the job opportunities on the global market. German is still offered, but fewer and fewer high school students take it. The same is true of French in Germany. It’s very sad. The French and the Germans hardly learn each other’s languages any more.

English as a subject matter in French schools is experiencing a tension between being the national language of the British and the Americans, and being a European and global language. On the one hand, English has to be taught according to ministerial guidelines issued by the French national education system that promotes quintessentially French values, such as logic, reason, clarity of thought, lucidity of style, and an understanding of symbolic systems of representation. These values are meant to prepare citizens in a republican democracy to work for the common historical and cultural good of a nation-state called France.

On the other hand, English being the de facto language of Europe, it has to serve the needs of the European Union and be taught according to the CEFR for the teaching of foreign languages. The CEFR prepares learners of English to participate in a global economy according to liberal democratic values like entrepreneurship, participation, individual initiative, competitiveness, and communicative competence.

Teachers of English in French schools are very suspicious of pragmatic approaches to teaching foreign languages. They are critical of what they call *les approches actionnelles*, i.e., action-based, task-based approaches to teaching foreign languages. These approaches, they say, enable you to do things with words, perform tasks, and solve problems, but they don’t necessarily enable you to reflect on language as an object of study. For French teachers, language is an object of study: it “vehiculates” or transmits representations, schemas of understanding, ways of seeing and understanding the world that have to be analyzed and interpreted.

MK: But certainly the business community in France must need people who can deal with language in a very utilitarian way.

CK: That’s precisely where you have the tension between those who are more pragmatically oriented towards the market and those who represent the values of the French educational system. What kind of students are French schools supposed to rear: good consumers or good citizens?

ST: In Finland there is a practical motivation but language learning is at a high level and extremely academic. The Finnish high school or gymnasium has a rigorous program and there’s a very difficult national exam that students have to pass. This means

that students study towards that exam, so even if there are these European guidelines of “can do,” they still do lots of academic work, writing essays and so on. Many students are now writing their theses and dissertations in English. The goal is that Finns will be able to produce high-level academic English.

MK: So, on the one hand you have the educational establishment, which is not that different from the professoriate in the United States, that is looking to develop skills of literary and cultural analysis, and is not looking to train future translators, for example. On the other hand, you have the business establishment that’s probably much more interested in the pragmatic. Where does that leave the government? Where does that leave the bodies that actually decide the policy issues?

CK: In France, between the old educated bourgeois elite that finds jobs as civil servants in France and the new cosmopolitan polyglot elite that finds jobs on the global market, you’ve got the immigrants, mostly from the former colonies. They come to France with their own languages and cultures and they need to be integrated into French society.

Whereas in the US we conceive of integration mostly in economic terms, in France and Germany integration is conceived mostly in cultural terms. That’s why European countries insist on immigrants learning the language, the cultural mores, and the values of the host country. The pedagogy of French language teaching partakes a little from both the pragmatic and the cultural approaches. On the one hand, you want immigrants to acquire communicative competence in the language. On the other hand, if you want to integrate them culturally, they’d better have the training in Cartesian critical thinking and the understanding of symbolic systems that will make them respected middle-class citizens. The French film *The Class* offers a good illustration of that dilemma.

ST: Finland’s a little bit different because while education was once for the elite, there’s a movement for equity in schools that’s been going on for quite a long time. Now everybody has a chance to be educated. Because of immigrants and refugees, there are many Finnish as a Second Language programs, and because we’re working toward creating equity, a lot of attention is paid to textbooks, and how they can be modified

so that the kids can really understand math and science. That's a big issue right now; a lot of money is being poured into this. Finnish as a Second Language is still really new in Finland so we're satisfied if adult immigrants or refugees only learn practical Finnish that allows them to function in society, because they can do their higher education in English. All immigrants take English if they don't know it already because most of the universities and many vocational schools offer all courses in English as well.

MK: Is there a concern that eventually all this is going to lead to a marginalization of Finnish within the culture?

ST: Not really, no. They really look at English as adding another language and using it as a tool. Finnish language and culture are going strong. Finnish is definitely needed for full participation in Finnish society. But English is needed in ever-increasing international contexts. Also, for many subcultures, English is the language used to negotiate common meaning and identity among different ethnic groups.

MK: Is English sufficient for social capital in Finnish society? That is, if you only know English and speak just a few words of Finnish, will you be considered a second-class citizen?

ST: Not necessarily a second-class citizen but never really acculturated into Finnish society.

MK: I call that a second-class citizen!

CK: Why doesn't the Finnish state want its immigrants to integrate linguistically in the Finnish community?

ST: Oh, it does, but Finnish is a complex language, so it's assumed that if adults immigrate, it'll take too many years before they can study at the university level in Finnish. After all, Finnish is a non-Indo-European language with a complicated grammatical structure and non-cognate vocabulary.

CK: But why the university level?

ST: Well, if they study, let's say in any vocational school, they would more likely be studying in Finnish, learning skills. But universities now are very bilingual.

CK: But take for example a Somali immigrant to Finland. In order to take part in Finnish democracy, this immigrant has

to understand political speeches, has to be able to read the newspapers, and has to be able to understand political documents, not study at the university. This immigrant needs to know how to read, write, and speak educated Finnish.

ST: Yes, all the immigrants get to study Finnish, and it is required in schools. However, there is often a choice for the language used in higher education.

CK: Why is there a choice?

ST: Finland is embracing globalization and internationalization of her educational system. The choice draws in foreign students and levels the playing field. I took up this question of language choice with a young Congolese immigrant I met. I said, "Well, you were already in a master's degree program in your country, and you want to study sociology, so why don't you continue your studies in English?" He answered, "I have chosen this country to be my new home so I want to do my studies in Finnish." He wanted to truly become a part of Finnish society. As most Finns would, I found that quite admirable, but unusual.

MK: Historically, in French society for example, knowing a second and or third language was part of being an educated Frenchman. There was a certain social status that one acquired through education and knowing a second and third language. Is the purpose today more one of the creation of a European identity? If we assume that knowing a second language isn't so much about intellectual capital as it is necessary for the functioning of this new European state, is that then the definition of a European, a person who can work across many languages simultaneously both at a pragmatic level, but also a fairly high intellectual level? Is that part of the push? Is it a part of a strengthening of the European state?

CK: Yes, and that's why there's so much talk about multilingualism and intercultural learning; these two things are at the forefront of concerns of foreign language educators. Because multilingualism is needed in order to be able to operate linguistically across the borders of Europe, people attach a great deal of importance to becoming multilingual. There's a lot of debate about capitalizing on families of languages as a way to foster multilingualism in the schools. In other words, if you've learned English as a first foreign language should you not learn

German rather than Spanish because German is part of the same Anglo-Germanic family? Or if you know Spanish, should you not learn Italian? Or perhaps exactly the contrary: because you've learned Spanish, you should be learning German. So there's a lot of talk about that.

You have two almost rival conceptions of what is needed within a united Europe. One is that you need multilingual competencies or glosso-diversity; you need to know as many codes as possible in order to communicate on the linguistic level with as many people as you want. On the other hand, you have the scholars in intercultural learning like Michael Byram in Durham, Adelheid Hu in Hamburg, Karen Risager in Denmark, and Geneviève Zarate in France who come from schools of education or anthropology, who are less linguistically and more culturally oriented. They feel that you don't need only linguistic skills to get along with your neighbor within the European Union. What you mostly need are psychological and moral skills of tolerance and understanding. It is less important to know one language in depth; it's more important to have the ability to work together even if you don't share a language.

ST: The intercultural side of language learning has always been emphasized in Finland probably because of the business communities in the European Union, although even before the EU came into being it was a big concern in Finland. There is now a European Union standard called the *Guidelines of One plus Two Languages*. Finland has actually upped it to Two plus Two. Finnish and English are probably in most cases the first two. Beyond these there will be two more. Asian languages and Russian are being pushed a lot these days.

CK: A lot of these issues are discussed in the *Précis du plurilinguisme et du pluriculturalisme*, edited by Geneviève Zarate, Danielle Levy, and myself and published in 2008 in Paris by the *Editions des archives contemporaines*. Because of the scholarly background of the first two editors—Geneviève Zarate is an anthropologist, very much of the Bourdieu school of thought in sociology, and Danielle Levy is a literary studies specialist who happens to be interested in personal narratives—the *Précis* does not have much of a linguistic orientation.

The *Précis* tries to orient the teaching and learning of foreign languages away from

the mostly instrumental view of the CEFR, and away from an exclusively institutional view of language learning. It argues that the CEFR does not take into consideration enough the construction of identities, the circulation of values across borders, the inversions or even inventions of meaning necessary for transcultural understanding. In addition, foreign languages should not be seen as exclusively a subject matter taught in schools, but as an aspect of everyday life, in the workplace, in the family.

MK: Is the teaching of languages being affected by technology as greatly as it is here?

CK: Throughout the four years that I collaborated on that project, not once was there any talk of technology. It's just not on the radar.

ST: In Finland it's definitely on the radar. There's a lot of talk about technology and technology is used frequently. All the universities have a Language Center where practical skills in many languages are taught. The Erasmus Program students, for example, who come for three months or longer on exchange, take Finnish as a Second Language at the Language Center. They use modern techniques in teaching and a lot of technology. Students have a site where, in addition to live classes, they can do self-study, hook up with a speaking partner, and do web-based learning. It's extremely well developed.

MK: The European Union notwithstanding, it sounds like there are significant differences across Europe! How would you compare what's happening in Europe with the way we're looking at foreign language teaching here?

ST: I would compare it with English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching here. ESL has always used modern approaches and is using more and more technology. Often foreign language teaching in the US has lagged behind.

MK: In what way?

ST: From what I've seen of how languages have been taught in high schools and even at the universities, it seems like the newer approaches haven't been introduced or haven't caught on. There's been a more traditional way of teaching. Europe is more advanced because there are more languages being taught and it seems to be more important there than here. In Finland it's abso-

lutely necessary to learn foreign languages so the approach, the attitude, is very different. People have a lot of motivation to learn; evening courses in many different languages fill up quickly. Average working class people are eager to learn Spanish or Italian, for example, before vacationing in Spain or Italy.

MK: As you were telling me earlier this afternoon, foreign language teachers are valued. The foreign language subject matter is valued within the schools, and the instructors are valued, whereas in the American secondary educational system, they're all marginalized. It's not a core academic subject; it's one of the things cut when budgets get cut.

ST: Yes, that's part of it. The general attitude, the attitude of the government, everything really supports foreign language teaching. Of course that means that you have more tools, you have more money, and you can develop it more. It's pretty advanced, in many ways.

CK: I would concur. There's a sense of urgency in Europe: foreign language learning in Europe is not an exotic luxury but a historical and geographical necessity. And it raises identity questions because it happens mostly at the elementary and the secondary level, not the university level, at a time when youngsters are trying to define who they are and how they fit in.

ST: It's true. In Finland, immersion programs are quite popular. Many parents send their children to immersion programs. The most popular are in Swedish or English. There are also some schools using French or Chinese or even Sami. These are actually free public schools. I don't know if anyone has thought of the question of identity if both parents are Finnish and their child is in a Chinese school. It will most likely be a new research topic in a few years!

MK: Does the identity question then impact, for example, the large Arabic populations in the suburbs of Paris? Do they have access to Arabic instruction within the French schools?

CK: Sometimes, yes. But Arabic in French schools is taught as a foreign language not as a heritage language.

ST: I can't remember how many kids you need to have in a particular school—it may be five or six—speaking a particular language, but they will get some home

language instruction every week for a couple of hours at least.

MK: Thank you both for this very stimulating discussion.

## Notes from the Director

by Richard Kern

Despite great uncertainty about future budgets, languages have been thriving this year, thanks in large part to the efforts of Arts and Humanities Dean Janet Broughton, who was able to direct funds to language departments last summer. It is too early to know what the 2009-2010 year will bring, but if you are in a position to make a financial contribution to support the teaching of languages at Cal, there has never been a better time. If you are not able to contribute financially but know someone who could, please let us know at the Berkeley Language Center.

There is a good deal of important language news to report, both statewide and locally. In January the California State Board of Education adopted content standards for World Languages, putting language and culture teaching on the same footing as math, science, history and other core academic subjects. This is excellent news for language teachers in the schools, and it may well lead to improved foreign language preparation of students entering the UC system. By the way, the Center for Applied Linguistics recently released its 2006-2009 *National K-12 Foreign Language Survey*. This survey examines trends in enrollments and the number of schools offering foreign languages, the types of programs offered, the kinds of curricula and methodologies in use, and teacher qualifications and training. The survey can be found at <http://www.cal.org/projects/flsurvey.html>.

Speaking of K-12 schools, the East Bay Foreign Language Project (EBFLP) is now moving forward under the leadership of a new director! Gail Hetler, a highly experienced teacher and a proven leader in foreign language education, has just been appointed as Site Director of EBFLP. Gail will work with Mark Kaiser and myself to develop a teacher leadership team and a series of professional development workshops for FL teachers in Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano counties. Welcome, Gail! And many thanks to Jan Costella for her years of dedicated leadership of EBFLP when it was located at St. Mary's College.

This past February, the BLC hosted the UC Consortium for Language Learning and Teaching colloquium on "World Language Proficiency in the Californian

Context." Three panels considered: (1) the potential impact of the 2007 MLA report on languages in higher education, which urges a rethinking of university language departments' programs and organizational structures; (2) how the California educational infrastructure is (or is not) fostering students' translingual/transcultural competence in foreign languages; and (3) how foreign language competence relates to the fabric of Californian society. Speakers were chosen from a wide range of institutions, including the Modern Language Association, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, the UC and CSU systems, school districts, the California Department of Education, international corporations/organizations, and the press. All presentations were recorded and will be available at the UC Language Consortium website: <http://uccllt.ucdavis.edu/events/index.php>

*L2 Journal* has been launched! The *L2 Journal* is a fully refereed, interdisciplinary journal edited by Professor Claire Kramersch which publishes articles on all aspects of applied linguistics broadly conceived—second language acquisition, foreign language pedagogy, bilingualism and multilingualism, language and technology, curriculum development, teacher training, testing and evaluation. An initiative of the UC Language Consortium, the *L2 Journal* is also supported by the BLC and the Dean of Arts & Humanities, and publication and wide electronic distribution are made possible by the University of California's eScholarship Digital Information Repository. Please consider submitting a manuscript for publication. Complete details about the journal, including a style sheet for submissions, are available at <http://www.L2Journal.org>.

A new undergraduate minor in *Applied Language Studies* has just been approved on the Berkeley campus. Administered by UGIS, the minor is designed for students who have studied languages and who wish to add a research component to their language learning experience. A wide range of courses from languages, linguistics, anthropology, cognitive science, education, and psychology can be applied to the minor, and a special core course—*Introduction to Applied Language Studies*—will be taught by Professor Claire Kramersch this coming fall. Details will be available soon on the website of the Undergraduate Division.

The BLC blog, *Found in Translation*, has continued to make significant strides. This past month alone, *FIT* was visited by 523 readers in 43 different countries and 36 states here in the US. My personal thanks to graduate students Usree Bhattacharya, Dave Malinowski, and Youki Terada for their outstanding contributions and devotion to the blog. If you haven't visited *FIT* lately, check it out at [foundintranslation.berkeley.edu](http://foundintranslation.berkeley.edu)

Finally, mark your calendars for two events happening this summer: June 15-18 the UC Language Consortium will offer a four day workshop on the use of film in foreign language teaching. The workshop is being coordinated by Associate Director Mark Kaiser, and will be held at the BLC. Space is limited, so if you are interested in attending, consult the UCCLLT website for information on applying.

A second, and major, summer event is the 2009 Linguistic Institute on "Linguistic Structure and Language Ecologies," jointly sponsored by the Linguistic Society of America and the UCB Linguistics Department. The Institute's theme highlights the relation between linguistic structures and the ecologies in which they are embedded, including physical and psychological contexts, demographic and social contexts, and historical and geographic contexts. A host of courses will be taught by a stellar faculty from July 6 to August 13. For detailed information, see the Institute website at <http://lsa2009.berkeley.edu/index.html>.

Thank you all for your continued interest and support. Best wishes as the semester winds down and you prepare for summer.

# Notes from the Associate Director

by Mark Kaiser

## Status Report—LFLFC

We are continuing to develop and enrich The Library of Foreign Language Film Clips. As of mid-April, we have just over 4000 clips published from 147 films in 32 languages (see chart below). If you don't see your language or want to see more films in your language, let me know.

I am pleased to announce that we received a 2009 grant from the UCCLLT to continue cutting and tagging films this summer. Our focus will be on Korean, Italian, and Persian and we hope to have 500, 500, and 200 clips, respectively, published in those languages by summer's end. In addition, Professor Hongyin Tao of UCLA received a UCCLLT grant to cut and tag Chinese films, and we expect to have 800 clips in Chinese by the start of the fall quarter at UCLA. Finally, we plan to continue building out the Spanish collection.

Language	Films	Films with clips	Clips published
Arabic	16	0	0
BCS	3	0	0
Bengali	2	0	0
Bulgarian	6	0	0
Chinese	42	0	0
Czech	13	0	0
Danish	6	4	110
English	0	0	0
Finnish	14	4	137
French	63	25	1029
German	39	14	570
Hebrew	13	3	0
Hindi	9	0	0
Italian	38	0	0
Japanese	45	20	627
Korean	20	0	0
Pashtu	2	0	0
Persian	12	0	0
Polish	6	0	0
Portuguese	4	0	0
Punjabi	5	0	0
Romanian	5	0	0

Language	Films	Films with clips	Clips published
Russian	91	64	1234
Spanish	64	7	284
Swahili	4	0	0
Swedish	9	0	0
Tamil	5	0	0
Thai	5	0	0
Turkish	14	5	13
Urdu	1	0	0
Vietnamese	6	0	0
Wolof	6	0	0
Zulu	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>4004</b>

We also continue to add features to the LFLFC. Recently we rolled out our clip annotation tool, enabling instructors to add text comments to the video clips they order for their classes and the ability to access annotations created by other instructors from across the UC system. Kudos to Chris Palmatier and Srikanth Narayan for the development of this useful tool.

In May we will have a major rollout of LFLFC v. 2.0. The user interface will be redesigned, so the application will have a slightly different feel to it, but the major new development will be features allowing us to extend the application to the other eight UC campuses where foreign languages are taught.

Each campus will have a collection manager, who will be responsible for determining which films are owned by that campus. Instructors at each campus will then have access only to those published film clips for which the campus owns the DVD. Eventually, other campuses may contribute their own films to the collection and then UCB instructors would not have access until the BLC purchased a copy.

## UCCLLT Summer Workshop

This summer, June 15–18, I am organizing the UCCLLT's Summer Workshop "Teaching Language and Culture with Film." Please see page 15 for the flier for this event with a list of speakers and titles. Note that each campus may have three lecturers and graduate students attend as fully funded participants. Others may attend on a space available basis—registration is required. See

<http://uccllt/events/summer09/register.php> to register.

## EBFLP

I am pleased to announce that the East Bay Foreign Language Project has hired a new Director. Gail Hetler, currently working as a consultant for the West Contra Costa Unified School District, brings many years of foreign language teaching and significant experience in curricular development and professional training. We are most fortunate to have her on board. I am also pleased to announce that Victoria Williams has agreed to serve as Gail's Assistant Director.

## DL Classes

Next fall we will have another offering of courses taught in DL mode to UCLA and potentially other campuses as well: Khmer, Zulu, Swahili, Wolof, Danish, and possibly Finnish and Bulgarian. Please let me know as early as possible if you are interested in teaching your class to other campuses via video conferencing technology.

## BLC Lecturer Profile: A Lucky Girl

by Sirpa Tuomainen

“You’re such a lucky girl. You’ve got such a good life!” exclaimed my Turkish ESL-teacher trainee, Ino. I shook my head, but when Ino explained further, I started contemplating his statement, and I had to agree. I do think that in terms of work, I have a close to perfect—albeit very busy—life. I have ended up sharing my time with many fascinating aspects of language and culture. I teach my native language, Finnish, which is always so close to my heart. I train ESL and EFL teachers and occasionally give in to my addiction of teaching an ESL class. Now, the latest addition, as the Academic and Outreach Coordinator for the Berkeley Language Center ties it all together. I get to be part of the research side of second language acquisition as well as learn from colleagues, seasoned teachers of a multitude of languages and graduate students with fresh, innovative ideas. And this all comes with a supportive and helpful group of colleagues that even nourishes my creative appetite by providing me with the opportunity to cater the BLC receptions. How lucky I am, indeed! Who would have guessed? It all started a long time ago in a little village in Northern Finland.

Every February for years, we eagerly awaited our cousins’ arrival from Helsinki for ski week. They always came with exciting plans for us younger cousins. When I was seven, my cousin Outi decided to teach English to me. I rushed out to buy a little blue-and-white-checked notebook, a pencil, and an eraser. I was well equipped, ready, and eager to learn. The first lesson has stuck in my mind: An elephant is a big, gray animal. A mouse is a small, gray animal. I remember wondering how come the word ‘elephant’ sounded so much like the Finnish word, *elefantti*, but ‘mouse’ was so different from *hiiri*. That was my first attempt at comparative linguistics and the beginning of my lifelong adventure with languages.

When I was nine, we started Swedish in school, then English, and later German and Latin. At university, I studied the obligatory French and voluntary Spanish, and now I’m grappling with Italian. My favorite subjects beyond languages were geography, art, and Finnish. Geography and art allowed me to learn about other cultures, and in the Finnish class I got to write. I’ve been writing for as

long as I can remember. The most meaningful essay assignment took place when I was a third grader: A Country You’d Love to Visit. What a hard decision! I studied the Magyars and looked at pictures of *sakura*, cherry trees. It was a choice between Hungary and Japan. Japan won, and thus started my love affair with anything Japanese. I still haven’t had an opportunity to study Japanese nor have I had a chance to visit Japan, but both are always on my wish list.

My story is mostly accidental—like many things in life probably are for most of us—but different languages and cultures have been an essential part of my life since the first elephant and mouse lesson or before. I never studied to become a Finnish teacher, but ended up as one. I never planned to live in America, but became a Berkeley girl. By the time we started thinking of children, I had wised up and did make a plan to bring up possible future children bilingually and biculturally and have succeeded at that.

The Finnish Studies Program at Berkeley was established in 1995. A year later, I was invited to found a Finnish language program. Since then I have also become an instructor in a combination live/distance-learning classroom. Finnish students can now join my classes from other UC campuses. Figuring out ways to shorten the distance with the live and distance students has challenged my pedagogical notions and forced me to seek new ways to provide meaningful experiences to both sets of students.

Distance teaching is obviously high tech teaching. I was able to hone my skills while spending the 2007-08 academic year at my alma mater, Jyväskylä University, in Finland where I worked as a web lecturer. My classroom was a global one with students from Beijing to Macedonia and everywhere in between. I also developed Finnish teaching materials for the web and subbed at the English department where I myself had been a student thirty years prior. In addition, I turned into a graduate student again—my favorite activity on earth—and took fascinating courses in ethnography and assessment. For assessment purposes I had a chance to look into English learning done by Finnish ten-year-olds. Their language skills are quite impressive. In fact, many are *not* taking English at school but concentrating on other foreign languages since “everyone will learn English anyway.” Finland has truly become quite multicultural and multilingual.

This revelation led me to record my year in my home country—now a multiethnic society—in a blog. The blog ended in a re-entry culture shock story. Since my return in August 2008, everyday life has been too hectic to allow time for reflection. But *¡Ojala!* Maybe soon I’ll have time for reflecting. My immersion year did, however, revitalize my fervor in including more culture in my language courses. In compliance with the new MLA guidelines on translingual/trans-cultural competence of students reflecting on the world and themselves through the lens of another language and culture, I have added cultural components, such as a language/culture log kept throughout the semester. It has been intriguing to witness the inventive ways students have fulfilled the assignment: Some changed their Facebook language to Finnish, some marveled at the variety of Finnish cheeses available at Berkeley Bowl, and one explained the joy of learning how to really pronounce the Finnish words in the TV commercials for Xylitol gum in his native Korea. Never a boring day as a language educator!

To sum up, on one hand, working as an ESL teacher has kept my international juices flowing and given me the chance to peek into many languages and cultures through my motivated and eager immigrant students. On the other hand, teaching Finnish language and culture has kept me deeply rooted. It has also forced me to keep up to date with the changing Finnish language and my more and more multicultural native land. Maybe I really am a lucky girl!



# BLC Fellows' Reports

## Translingual/Transcultural Competence:

### An operational approach to the MLA report

by *Désirée Pries, Lecturer and Second Year Coordinator, French*

The 2007 MLA report calls for a reevaluation of our curricula, approaches, and methodologies with the goal of fostering translingual and transcultural competence (TL/TC). Comparing an instrumental view of language learning to a constitutive view, the report outlines specific goals and analytical skills for students. In addition to acquiring functional language abilities, students “are taught critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception. They acquire a basic knowledge of the history, geography, culture, and literature of the society or societies whose language they are learning; the ability to understand and interpret its radio, television, and print media; and the capacity to do research in the language using parameters specific to the target culture.” (MLA p. 4)

For me, this implies a language program that not only allows for immersion in the target language, but also fosters critical framing and transformed practice (Kern 2000). The classroom provides students with an opportunity to occupy a third place (Kramersch 2006), where they can operate between native/target languages and cultures, in order to think critically about both.

The specific goals defined in the MLA strive to foster the education of speakers who are able:

- “to operate between languages”
- “to function as informed and capable interlocutors with educated native speakers in the target language” (*proficiency allows both linguistic and meta-linguistic exchanges*)
- “to reflect upon the world and themselves through the lens of another language and culture”
- “to comprehend speakers of the target language as members of foreign societies”

- to recognize their own heritage, traditions, and metaphors that inform their own culture to see themselves “as members of a society that is foreign to others.” *I adapted this from the MLA report’s “to grasp themselves as Americans,” as this is a problematic statement. Here at UC, we have many international students and, according to a report from 2007, 66% of Berkeley undergraduates had a least one parent who was born outside the US.*
- “to relate to fellow members of their own society who speak languages other than English” *and recognize that they may be ‘foreign’ to other members of their own society* (MLA pp. 4-5; italicized print indicates my comments/adaptations)

The analytical skills that students can acquire throughout their years of university study, both in lower and upper division courses, include:

- Proficiency in the target language, allowing them to converse with educated native speakers through both linguistic and meta-linguistic exchanges;
- Solid command as well as an analytical knowledge of specific metaphors and key terms that inform culture;
- Understanding how a particular background reality is reestablished on a daily basis through cultural subsystems (MLA pp. 4-5).

These cultural subsystems include a variety of cultural objects and artifacts: mass media, literary and artistic works, stereotypes (self, others) developed and negotiated through texts, cultural metaphors, symbols of sites of memory, or buildings, historical figures, popular heroes, monuments, currency, culture-specific products, literary and artistic canons, landscapes, fashion, cuisine (see MLA pp. 4-5 for a complete list). All cultural artifacts become an object of critical study and exploration in a curriculum that develops multiple literacies.

A literacy-based approach can foster TL/TC competence in students in advanced academic program settings and allow students to occupy that third place between languages/cultures; our goal is to raise awareness, developing a metalanguage that allows for critical re-examination, interpretation/translocation. Students become more aware of the

cultural heritage and metaphors that inform the target and their own native language.

It is helpful to outline specific goals that we communicate to students, fellow instructors, faculty and administrators. Emphasizing the constitutive view of language learning, and defining translingual and transcultural competence through practical examples, is important to ensure the quality of our students’ education, but also to emphasize the importance of language programs in critical economic times.

For example, we can reconsider the metalanguage used in our department and student goals, our course descriptions and syllabi. The following is a short, straightforward adaptation of the online catalog course descriptions for second year French:

Intermediate French—French (FRENCH) 3 [5 units]

*(Previous) Building on foundation established in first year, trains students in listening, reading, writing, and speaking French. Review and refinement of grammar.*

Description (*Revised*): Building on foundation established in first year, trains students to develop an awareness and appreciation of the culture of the French-speaking world, and refine their skills in listening, reading, writing, and speaking French.

Advanced Intermediate French—French (FRENCH) 4 [5 units]

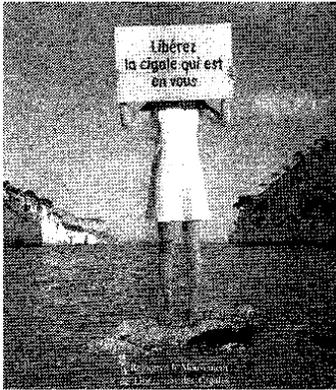
*(Previous) Advanced training in listening, reading, writing, and speaking French. Review and refinement of grammar.*

Description (*Revised*): Further development of an awareness and appreciation of the culture of the French-speaking world and advanced training in listening, reading, writing, and speaking French. An introduction to the analysis of texts.

These revisions allow for transparency in the link between language and culture and underline the constitutive goals of language learning.

Over the past semester, I have developed several sample classroom activities that demonstrate the fostering of translingual and transcultural competence. These activities are based on the current textbook, as well as film clips from the BLC film clip library,

and other outside supporting materials. Here is an example of an activity included in the third semester French course textbook. This is an advertisement to invite tourism in southern France.



The slogan reads “Liberate the cicada within you” (*Libérez la cigale qui est en vous*).

Students encounter this ad at the end of a chapter which opens with a fable from 17th century author Jean de La Fontaine, “La Cigale et la fourmi.” Thus, they are already familiar with the literary metaphors informing this ad. The cicada is also an insect that sings throughout the summer, and which they may know from films based on Pagnol’s texts, or learn in the introduction to this ad in the text.

Focusing on transcultural competence, the instructor would ask the following questions: “What traditions inform this ad?” (literary, cultural, geographical) “Do we use fables (or other literary texts) in American ads?” A discussion could follow about the cultural metaphors that typically inform American or other ads.

Focusing on translanguingual competence, students could be asked to translate the slogan into English. They might discuss whether or not a literal translation would be meaningful to an English speaker, and attempt to find an equivalent such as “liberate your inner child” or “liberate the child within you.” They can compare the metaphors informing the French and the English slogans. The teacher might then animate a whole class discussion of the American connotations of the word “childlike” (and its complement, “childish”), and compare these to the qualities of the cicada implicitly celebrated in the ad (rebelliousness, a free-spirit, indepen-

dence, playfulness), returning to a focus on transcultural competence.

A follow-up activity could include filling out a survey about the amount of time they and/or their friends and family devote to leisure activities, and compare that to a survey completed in France. Students might compare the amount of time dedicated for holidays and paid vacations in France to conventional vacation allotments in America.

A further discussion, written assignment, or exam might ask students to call upon their critical framing skills and answer the question “If you were a business manager in France, could you use La Fontaine to motivate your workers?” All three of the analytical skills identified by the MLA (listed above) are practiced in this activity with an emphasis on translanguingual/transcultural competence.

In addition to clarification of goals and specific, practical classroom activities, an ever important and ongoing question remains that of assessment, both of the students, and of the program. Assessment of students can take the form of portfolios (see Euba, 2006 Fellow), language and culture (b)logs (Tuomainen and Gipson, 2007 Fellow), as well as oral and written exams.

The MLA report calls for communication and collaboration across departments and fields of studies, as well as inter-departmental communication to help bridge the gap between upper and lower division courses. I look forward to further collaboration with my colleagues and all those interested in revisiting the way we teach today.

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# BLC Fellows' Reports

## Filmmaking and Foreign Language Instruction

by Jillian Porter, PhD candidate,  
*Slavic Languages and Literatures*

Filmmaking is a powerful tool for literacy-based language instruction. Elaborating on the New London Group's findings, Rick Kern shows that a well-rounded literacy-based program should incorporate four basic curricular components: Situated Practice, Overt Instruction, Critical Framing, and Transformed Practice. Situated Practice involves spontaneous communication without metalanguage. Overt Instruction develops metalanguage by introducing linguistic or social rules and conventions. Critical Framing emphasizes explicit reflection on such rules or conventions. In Transformed Practice, students create new texts on the basis of old ones.

Transformed Practice is the component most often lacking in language programs, but it is crucial to meeting the goals of a literacy-based program. Transformed Practice always entails a work of translation—from one language or cultural context to another, from written to oral speech, from a text to a performance, or from the sign systems of language to those of film. Therefore, Transformed Practice helps students to reflect critically on the work of translation that is always a part of foreign language acquisition, and to experience firsthand how meaning is not absolute but is rather conditioned by language, culture, and communicative medium.

Filmmaking always involves Transformed Practice. Even a simple project—filming a dialog from the textbook—involves the Transformed Practice of acting. A more complex project—making a film adaptation of a literary work—includes several stages of Transformed Practice: writing the screenplay, drawing the storyboard, acting, shooting the film, editing it, and perhaps adding music.

Unlike live performance activities that involve a high degree of Transformed Practice, filmmaking yields a material product that can be reviewed later. Knowing that their performances will be captured on camera,

students may put more energy into memorizing their lines, speaking correctly, and acting than they would for a live performance in class. Since filming can be done outside of the classroom, students may use props, costumes, and locations in a meaningful way. This provides an even more memorable context for communication and helps students to retain linguistic structures long after making a film.

Filmmaking also has the advantage of distancing student performers from their audience. Whereas many students seem unwilling to try their best when speaking in front of their peers in class—apparently fearing to make mistakes or else to seem more driven than others—filming in small groups may relieve them of these social pressures.

Moreover, student films may be used in future learning activities. For example, they may be used as the basis for listening comprehension activities or class discussions. In addition to their usefulness as instructional materials, these films demonstrate the students' past accomplishments and are enjoyable to watch.

Finally, in an age when film and television prevail as two of the most popular art forms and means of communication, helping students to gain a basic familiarity with film production enables them to think more critically about how meaning is made and disseminated in the cultural products they encounter every day.

Now I will turn to the concrete example of a film three Russian students and I made this fall. The students were enrolled in a Russian Conversation class and had each had at least two years of college-level Russian. For an extra course unit, they chose to meet with me for an additional hour each Friday for nine weeks to make a film adaptation of Alexander Pushkin's 1834 short story, "The Queen of Spades" (*Pikovaia dama*).

Individual classroom activities and homework assignments were designed to integrate the study of language, culture, literature, and film. Students were presented with grammar and vocabulary that directly related to the themes of the story, the literary theoretical topics we used to analyze the story, and the cinematic concepts and

techniques students implemented when making the film.

In the first phase of the project, students read "The Queen of Spades" in English translation, referring to the original Russian text as time permitted and in preparation for our class discussions, which were conducted in Russian. In the second phase, the students wrote a screenplay and made a film. They were required to limit the words in their screenplay to Pushkin's own lexicon, so they worked more with the Russian text in this phase, effectively locating, selecting, and abridging lines from characters' dialogs and the narrator's commentary.

"The Queen of Spades" is about gambling, so before students read the story they learned Russian card game terminology and also played the game featured in the story—faro. When students read the story for the next week, they were able to understand how the game is played and interpret its significance in the story.

Our discussions of gambling carried over to our discussions of time and temporal structure. The students reviewed Russian expressions of time in order to summarize "what happens when" in the story. Next, students were introduced to the Russian formalist literary terms *siuzhet* and *fabula*. Terms that pertain to the temporal structure of narratives, *siuzhet* and *fabula* provided students with a critical framework for analyzing time in "The Queen of Spades." As a result, the students noted that Pushkin's story is structured on the principle of cyclical rather than linear time. Students linked the story's tendency to start over again and again to the temporal logic of gambling: In gambling, as in Pushkin's story, the end of the game is often but the pretext for a new beginning.

The second literary point we covered—the genre of the fantastic tale—complemented the grammar point of how to express one's point of view in Russian. Often, the reader of a fantastic tale is unable to determine whose perspective on the events is being presented—the character's, the narrator's, or the author's. Since the fantastic itself foregrounds the question of point of view, to exercise linguistic expressions of opinion, argument, and uncertainty is to rehearse the

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epistemological problem the genre poses. In class, the students expressed divergent points of view about whether the story is a work of the fantastic. By examining Pushkin's ambiguous play with narrative point of view, the students eventually concluded that the story is a work of the fantastic because it invites multiple contradictory interpretations.

Finally, the students made a film that exemplifies their ideas about gambling, time, and narrative point of view. In their screenplay and during the editing process, the students reordered the events of the story in such a way as to highlight Pushkin's own temporal manipulations. They also worked with cinematic point-of-view, using camera set-ups to recreate the fantastic ambiguity as to whose perspective on the events is being shown. Thus, the students' film offers an analytical interpretation, or "reading," of Pushkin's story. Overt Instruction on Russian grammar and vocabulary, generic conventions, literary theoretical concepts, and basic filmmaking techniques provided the context for Situated Practice and Critical Framing in class discussions, and informed the students' Transformed Practice when they made their film.

The students' film of "The Queen of Spades" can be viewed on my project website at <http://dcrf-dev3.berkeley.edu/jillian/>. This site contains sample films and suggestions for incorporating simple as well as complex filmmaking projects into the foreign language curriculum. Interested instructors may check out a camera and tripod from the BLC.

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## Crossing the Bridge: Shifting Perspectives on and in First-Year Turkish Through Film

by Jason Vivrette, PhD candidate,  
*Comparative Literature*

This semester, together with the invaluable input of my colleagues in the Berkeley Language Center, fellow first-year Turkish GSI, Kristin Dickinson, and Mellon Lecturer in Turkish, Ayla Algar, I developed a semester's worth of activities for Turkish 1A (Elementary Modern Turkish) built around film clips taken from Turkish cinema, with one film clip or sequence of film clips serving as the fulcrum for each unit in our textbook (approximately one clip every two to three weeks). A collaborative endeavor from the start, the project was designed to dovetail with Kristin Dickinson's own BLC project, a literacy-based approach to first-year Turkish being undertaken in spring 2009. As the two of us will continue to co-teach Turkish 1B in the spring, the second semester will see the continued development of film clip-driven exercises, just as the seeds for Kristin's project have been sown throughout the course of Turkish 1A.

I first began thinking about structuring a Turkish curriculum around film clips while teaching Elementary Arabic in the fall of 2007 under the guidance of Arabic Program Coordinator and former BLC Academic Coordinator, Dr. Sonia S'hiri. As is the case in many university-level Arabic programs today both in the United States and beyond, the primary textbook for the first two years of instruction at UC Berkeley is *Al-Kitaab*, a series that makes great use of video clips narrating the intersecting lives of a young Arab-American girl living in New York and her Egyptian cousin, with at least one video segment serving as a structuring device for the grammar and vocabulary of each chapter.

One of the most compelling aspects of the most recent edition of the text is the inclusion of supplementary DVDs featuring alternate Egyptian Colloquial versions of the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) dialogues for each video clip. While MSA constitutes

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the primary shared language of communication throughout the Arab World—as well as in the Arabic classroom at Berkeley—the explicit incorporation of dialects into the curriculum and the subsequent ‘official’ status they acquire as sanctioned means of communication alongside MSA not only gives students the opportunity to learn a number of basic expressions in a spoken variety of Arabic, it also offers them a small glimpse of the endless linguistic and cultural variation present in the language and the region, ultimately helping students to challenge a simplistic, monolithic understanding of the Arab World and the greater Middle East.

While Turkish does not exhibit nearly the same degree of linguistic diglossia encountered in Arabic, I was nevertheless intrigued by the idea of utilizing a wide selection of film clips as a structuring device for the teaching of first-year Turkish, clips that would introduce students to the remarkable degree of cultural diglossia present in the Turkish context. Given that the major deficiency of the two most widely used textbooks for university-level Turkish instruction in North America is a lack of exercises, cultural notes, and activities representative of the multicultural nature of Turkey and the multiplicity of identities contained in the term ‘Turkishness,’ it became all the more imperative that Kristin and I comple-

ment and complicate the text with a component that could open classroom discussion to accommodate perspectives beyond a uniform understanding of the languages and cultures implicated.

To be sure, the project of expanding the acceptable definition of ‘Turkish’ and ‘Turkishness’ to encompass a multitude of shifting linguistic and cultural positions, including migrant Turkish communities outside of Turkey and minority populations within the Turkish national space, did not mean objectively observing the various speech communities in question from afar, discussing the so-called ‘target culture’ from within the comfortable confines of the classroom, safely outside the area of study. Rather, equally as important was the task of bringing discussion to bear on the participants in first-year Turkish themselves and their own varied backgrounds and histories. For in the end, bringing Turkish film into the classroom was just as much about focusing the camera on the instability of Turkish culture nationally defined as it was about turning a lens on students’ own shifting identities, particularly as players in a larger, global Turkish community.

Consequently, the goal of my project became threefold: 1) to bring the multicultural nature of Turkey, Turkish culture, and Turkish language to the fore in the first-

year Turkish classroom and curriculum 2) to use this multi-centered and fragmented representation of Turkishness as a vehicle for student expression of their own place inside (and outside of) Turkish culture as first-year students and 3) to make use of film and other multimedia in tandem with the Berkeley Language Center’s Library of Foreign Language Film Clips to achieve the first two goals.

Early on in the semester, a fortuitously scheduled screening of German-Turkish director Fatih Akin’s 2005 film, *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* at the Pacific Film Archive on campus presented a perfect opportunity to address the first goal. Thanks to a Course Improvement Grant from the GSI Teaching and Resource Center, our entire class was able to attend the film, a documentary bringing together the music of Istanbul’s past and present, ranging from Romany music to Turkish rap and hip-hop culture, from Arabesque melodies to Kurdish dirges.

Following the screening, by way of a variety of activities built around specific excerpts from the movie stored on the Library of Foreign Language Film Clips, we were able to highlight and problematize the prevailing representation of the relationship between Istanbul and the rest of Turkey as synecdochic, where Istanbul as *the* metropolis



not only stands in for, but often conceals the peripheries it contains. By focusing our sights on such erasures and resituating them on a cultural map, students were able to then begin reframing their understandings of the endless (and often contradictory) possibilities of what constitutes Istanbul, or an Istanbulite for that matter. The discussion generated from these clips, together with that from other key initial clips confronting the complex nature of what Turkishness embraces, functioned both as a lens directing our gaze and a touchstone to which we constantly returned throughout the semester to reconsider and reevaluate our subject of study in the light of new clips, each possessing its own set of identity issues in new contexts.

In this way, we were able to move beyond the vague appeals to pluralism and tolerance so common to American foreign language textbooks (from which Turkish studies are, by and large, sadly not exempt) and instead direct our attention to tracing the contours of culture across contexts, showing students the fault line and thereby giving them the tools to perform the work of reconciling irreducible difference—both trans-cultural and intra-cultural—themselves (Kramersch 1993). Indeed, this is the task at hand as Kramersch sees it: “What we should seek in cross-cultural education are less bridges than a deep understanding of the boundaries. We can teach the boundary, we cannot teach the bridge.” The objective is not “to find ways of bridging the gap, but to identify and explore the boundary and to explore oneself in the process” (1993: 228, 231). From the instructor’s perspective then, ‘crossing the bridge’ as classroom practice is about *getting over* the need to build bridges so that we may instead begin defining the landscapes and the spaces between them as potential sites for cross-cultural and intra-cultural contact, regardless of whether or not they may be successfully bridged.

For the student’s part, ‘crossing the bridge’ is a constant and (at least) bidirectional movement, where stepping outside of oneself and setting foot on the uneven terrain of one’s own identities becomes just as important as exploring the shifting landscapes on the other side. As Pavlenko and James write, “crossing a cultural border is about ‘renarra-

tivizing’ a life. [...] Entailed in the crossing [is] the active and intentional (re)construction of a history. Without a new narrative the crossing would not have been possible” (2000: 174).

Director Fatih Akin, as both insider (a participant in the production of Turkish culture) and outsider (a German resident who also consistently approaches Turkey from the outside in his cinematic narratives), makes for an ideal figure through which to begin tracing and, in the process, (re)constructing students’ own personal narratives, the vocabulary of which forms the backbone of so many first-year language programs. Other such figures, whether agents like Akin engaged in the creation of the films investigated, or figures within the diegetic space (Canadian ethnomusicologist and singer Brenna MacCrimmon, Turkish-born Kurdish musician Şivan Perwer) or the very subjects of filmic inquiry themselves (poet in exile Nazim Hikmet), served as additional models, all marked by fluid and overtly hybrid identities in relation to Turkishness, each one with its own set of problematics to contribute. Ultimately, it was by means of activities facilitated by these often-marginalized existing models, now rendered legitimately ‘Turkish’ by virtue of their inclusion in the curriculum, that students truly came to grapple with their own relationships with both Turkish and their native languages, in addition to the identities they represent.

In one such example, the protagonist of another Akin film (*Gegen die Wand*, 2004), Cahit, a German-Turk with few remaining connections to Turkish culture—and even less affection for it—becomes the perfect model for the Turkish student of only four weeks based on the character’s extremely limited command of the Turkish language. In the act of scripting a new scene between the protagonist and his assimilated Turkish lover to accompany the original clip, students are given the chance to play with their own hybrid identities as English-Turkish speakers through the mirror of a German-Turk who at once performs and denies his Turkishness. All the while, in assuming his identity, students demarcate their own changing limitations with/in the language, whether self-imposed or simply out of lack, as they express themselves in a mix of two

languages reflecting Cahit’s own linguistic practices with Turkish and German.

Ideally, activities of this nature requiring a conscious navigation of the mutable place of the student in Turkish culture, in tandem with an introduction to a variety of contexts illustrating challenging and contradictory manifestations of Turkishness, can help students begin to perceive the contours of the cross-cultural terrain concerned. By attuning students to these kinds of questions from day one, we can better prepare them to deal with more abstract instances of the cultural issues broached in future semesters, issues that will certainly play a central role in the texts that form the core of Kristin’s literacy project for Turkish 1B. Likewise, in reconstructing the curricular focus as such, we too as instructors can subject our own methodologies to similar critical reflection, helping us to effect a new narrative of lower-division language classes in greater dialogue with cultural questions traditionally reserved for upper-division literature courses as we continue to explore the landscapes of language and culture, however unbridgeable in their own infinitely ephemeral convergences and divergences.

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## Found in Translation

by *Usree Bhattacharya*,  
PhD candidate and  
GSI, Graduate School of Education

*Found in Translation* is the Berkeley Language Center's "open" blog, providing a thriving communal space for students, teachers and language aficionados to discuss language issues. It's a platform for exploring questions about the meaning of language in our everyday and academic lives, a forum where posters can "write about the languages in our lives, and our lives in language."

Over the past six months alone, *Found in Translation* has been viewed by over 900 unique visitors, using 13 different languages, in 57 countries within six continents, and in cities across 36 different states in the U.S. alone.

Since its inception in Spring 2007, some 54 bloggers have written over two hundred twenty engaging and insightful posts on *Found in Translation*. For a little taste, check out regular contributor and PhD student Dave Malinowski's (username daveski) Linguistic Landscape series, including thought-provoking posts like "The faces of Berkeley," "Signs all the way home: Keep Off Media(n)," and "Do you know where this is?" Or explore UC Berkeley professor Claire Kramsch's post about the Cartesian precision of French life in "Parisian grammar." BLC director and UC Berkeley professor Rick Kern's post on the centripetal and centrifugal forces exerted on students in "Blog Pressure" is another inspired post. Other stimulating posts include: Katie\_K's post on her favorite word in Russian, in "Моё любимое слово (русское, конечно!)." Another undergraduate student, Carmen Chung, navigates the spaces between and through Chinese and English in "Bilingualism: The new thesaurus." Adam Mendelson, a doctoral student, discusses the framing of Spanish teaching pedagogy in "Spanish: Foreign or Second Language?" Graduate student Dave Patterson writes feelingly on the passing of Proposition 8 in "Same Sex Marriage and the Internet." And, an absolute must for any FIT visitor is Youki Terada's provocative digital story, a compelling remediation of the text and images from blog posts on FIT.

As *Found in Translation* turns two years old, we are pushing to involve more members

of the Berkeley language community and beyond in the blog. We have recently started a student group called *Found in Translation*, and we plan to host exciting foreign movie nights and liveblogging events over the course of the Spring semester. We have also established a bigger online presence on the social networking site Facebook: you can join the student group, or become a "fan" on our page. We also plan to visit the many language classes in the Spring to encourage lecturers and students to utilize FIT as a space to explore language learning/teaching issues. Finally, we expect to have some celebrity guest columnists on FIT soon, as well as interviews from language luminaries. It promises to be a linguistically delicious semester—speaking of which, check out linguisticallydelicious' captivating post, "I may never learn a second language."

If you find yourself inspired, please join the community and tell your story at <http://foundintranslation.berkeley.edu/>

## Facts you might have never heard about—test your language/culture IQ!

by *Sirpa Tuomainen*  
BLC Outreach Coordinator

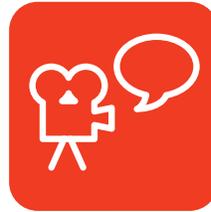
1. How many ethnic groups are there in China?
2. What do you think одеколон (odekolon) and шедевр (shedevr) mean in Russian? (Hint: they are borrowed from a European language.)
3. Who first had an "authorized" (by the monarchy) translation of the Bible, the English or the Welsh?
4. Why don't Asian men ever wear green hats?
5. Brazilian phone "booths" are popularly called this body part, in the augmentative form. What is it?
6. From which famous Italian movie does the word paparazzi come?
7. What's so special about this Finnish word: *saippuakivikauppias* (a soapstone salesman)?
8. How many official minority languages are spoken in Denmark?
9. How will you greet someone in Tibetan at all times?
10. What is the biblical name of the underwater gates which, hopefully, will save Venice from rising waters?

1. Fifty-six.
2. *Eau de Cologne* and *chf d'œuvre* (borrowed from French)
3. Queen Elizabeth I authorized publication of the Bible in Welsh. *William Morgan's Bible*, translated from original Hebrew and Greek sources, rather than from the Latin Vulgate, was published in 1588 (the same year as the Battle of the Armada), and became an important factor in Welsh efforts to resist pressure to use English in all spheres of life. The authorized English translation was commissioned in 1604 and published in 1611. We know it as the *King James Version*.
4. It symbolizes infidelity. Historically, it was said that when men wore green hats they were cheating on their wives with mistresses.
5. *Orellha* (Big Ear).
6. *La dolce vita* by Federico Fellini!
7. It's a palindromic.
8. Three: German, Faroese, and Greenlandic.
9. *Tashi Dolei* [*bkra shis bde legs*] (= Good luck and good health!)
10. Moses.

ANSWERS

*A summer workshop  
presented by the UC Consortium  
for Language Learning & Teaching*

# Teaching Language and Culture with Film



## University of California, Berkeley, June 15–18, 2009

Marylin FABE (UC BERKELEY)  
*The Language of Film*

Richard KERN (UC BERKELEY)  
*Making Connections between Film and Literacy*

Mark KAISER (UC BERKELEY)  
*Teaching with Film Clips*

Sabine LEVET (MIT)  
*Cross-cultural Comparison through Film*

Anne-Christine RICE (TUFTS UNIVERSITY)  
*Implementing a Curriculum Built Around Film*

Thomas J. GARZA (UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS)  
*Film as (Con)Text: Using Visual Media in  
Russian Language and Culture Classes*

For complete program, presenter  
information, and presentation abstracts, visit  
[blc.berkeley.edu/film\\_workshop\\_2009.html](http://blc.berkeley.edu/film_workshop_2009.html)

UCCLLT  
UC Davis  
220 Voorhies  
One Shields Ave.  
Davis, CA 95616



Apply to be one of the funded representatives  
from your UC campus by sending an email  
message to each of your campus's Consortium  
Steering Committee members, stating your  
name, department, language(s) taught, and  
your interest in attending the workshop  
*Teaching Language and Culture with Film.*

Steering Committee member names and  
addresses can be found on the UCCLLT web site  
at [uccllt.ucdavis.edu/steering.php](http://uccllt.ucdavis.edu/steering.php)

The workshop is open to faculty and graduate  
students in all languages, but registration is  
required. Space is limited, so register early.

## About the Berkeley Language Center

The Berkeley Language Center (BLC), established in 1994, serves as a resource center for all language teachers on the Berkeley campus.

The mission of the BLC is to improve and strengthen foreign language instruction on the Berkeley campus by keeping teachers informed of new developments in the fields of language pedagogy, second language acquisition, and applied linguistics.

The BLC promotes and facilitates the use of new language learning technologies in the classroom. The BLC is particularly interested in helping lecturers develop new materials, attend conferences and in-service training workshops, and publish their ideas and materials. It has modest funds to help lecturers attend professional meetings and develop new teaching projects.

The BLC provides audio-video-computerized lesson materials, listening, viewing, recording, duplicating and archiving facilities and related technical and administrative services. The BLC also administers the Dwinelle Computer Research Facility (DCRF) which supports humanities faculty, engages in computer-based research projects, and provides equipment and technical expertise for the development of instructional materials.

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## BLC Newsletter Committee, 2008–09

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## Berkeley Language Center

University of California, Berkeley  
B-40 Dwinelle Hall, MC #2640  
Berkeley, CA 94720-2640

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# Berkeley Language Center

A stylized, handwritten-style logo for the Berkeley Language Center, consisting of the letters 'BLC' in a bold, cursive font.

## Newsletter

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