

# **AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction**

## **Advanced Foreign Language Learning: A Challenge to College Programs**

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Heidi Byrnes  
Hiram H. Maxim  
**Editors**

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Advanced Foreign Language Learning: A Challenge to College Programs

*Heidi Byrnes and Hiram H. Maxim, Editors*

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# Fostering Advanced-Level Language Abilities in Foreign Language Graduate Programs: Applications of Genre Theory

Cori Crane, Olga Liamkina, and Marianna Ryshina-Pankova

## **Abstract**

*Findings from two surveys (Spring 2002) regarding the perceived needs of graduate students from U.S. foreign language (FL) doctoral programs in fostering advanced second language (L2) development are discussed. Participants include thirteen FL graduate students, nine FL program coordinators, and one FL department chair. Analysis of the surveys reveals (1) the central role lower-level language teaching plays in FL graduate students' L2 development; (2) the need among graduate students to understand L2 ability in terms of contextualized language use; and (3) graduate students' desire for greater departmental support of their L2 abilities. The paper argues for the construct of genre as a means for conceptualizing and promoting advanced-level language development. Genres graduate students will likely encounter as future members of the profession are presented. Two case studies of graduate students' experiences with the genre précis further illustrate how a genre approach can foster L2 academic abilities. General recommendations for FL graduate programs are offered.*

## **Introduction**

Recent investigations into the professional demands placed on aspiring foreign language (FL) academics have highlighted the expectation that academic job seekers should possess "near-native" abilities in their second language (L2) (Koike and Liskin-Gasparro 1999). Because this requirement pertains in particular to non-native speakers of the target language(s) of the FL departments, and often assumes equivalent if not better abilities in English, what is at stake is not simply the knowledge of a language other than English, but rather the broader issue of academic literacy that is essential for membership in the professional FL community.<sup>1</sup> From the standpoint of professional integrity, the expectation on the part of FL departments that FL scholars and teachers ought to hold very advanced language abilities is hardly surprising. What is puzzling, however, is the fact that, by and large, FL graduate programs have not addressed the issue of developing the L2 abilities of their own graduate students. This is true despite long-standing calls for rethinking an understanding of the nature of language and central principles of language learning, most prominent in this discussion being the need to overcome the language-literature divide (Byrnes 1998; James 1989; Kern 2000, 2002; Swaffar 1991, 1998). These discussions, at least among FL pedagogues, have been limited essentially to the undergraduate level. Their curious absence in FL graduate education leaves one with the impression that graduate students are expected to have mastered the language abilities necessary for further study *prior* to

entering their programs. Those who have not are to deal with language deficiencies on their own time and with their own monetary means (Valdés 1998). Indeed, graduate students are keenly aware of the lack of attention devoted to fostering L2 abilities in their programs, a point that was reiterated most recently in Koike and Liskin-Gasparro's (1999) study on the perceptions of graduate students and hiring committee members of Spanish departments regarding the MLA job listing requirement of "near-native proficiency."

While a replication of successful undergraduate FL programs is not necessarily the answer to this conundrum at the graduate level, an inclusive discussion which extends to the interests of graduate students by examining, and perhaps rethinking, central beliefs we hold regarding language and language learning may be a good start (Byrnes 2002b; Swaffar 1999). Steps in this direction have already been undertaken inasmuch as pervasive constructs like *near-native proficiency* and the ideal *native speaker* as the goals of FL education have been questioned within the larger FL teaching community (Byrnes 2002b; Garza 2003; Kerr 2003; Koike and Liskin-Gasparro 1999, 2003; Kramsch 1997; Train 2003; Valdés 1998).

Motivated in part by Koike and Liskin-Gasparro's study as well as our own recent departmental discussions regarding graduate students' FL development, we, as three graduate students, set out to examine in greater detail other graduate students' perceptions of their FL abilities and needs. Based on a survey that was conducted in Spring 2002, we examined statements from our peers representing other FL departments in the United States on their experiences with developing language abilities in their respective programs. More than anything, the responses we received allowed us to tap into the mental and discursive worlds that graduate students created over years of language study as to what constitutes and what leads to advanced L2 abilities. A central insight emerging from the survey findings is that graduate students require suitable frameworks to understand at the necessary level of specificity advanced-level language use and, by extension, advanced-level language learning. As our survey respondents suggest, both requirements can be met through consideration of the contexts of language use that are particular to academic and teaching domains.

Taking the survey responses as a starting point, we next turn our discussion to the literacy events that structure language use that graduate students are likely to engage in as future members of the profession. Here, we explore the idea of genre as a particularly advantageous way for conceptualizing and promoting advanced-level language development. Two of our own case studies, as they relate to the concerns brought up by our respondents, illustrate ways in which a genre approach can foster L2 abilities, particularly for academic registers located within the broader contexts of teaching and scholarship. These examples are not to be seen as simple band-aids to a phenomenon that, as theorists and practitioners both agree, occurs along a long developmental trajectory. Rather, they are to be taken as means for linking language use to situated practice, a concept, as we shall argue, that both faculty members and graduate students could adopt for individual and programmatic use.

We close our discussion with an outline of general recommendations for the FL field that may be incorporated into graduate programs. All of these suggestions are rooted in models of literacy and place emphasis on the generic conventions that make texts recognizable forms to their users.

## The Survey

### Methodology and Participants

In Spring 2002, we administered a survey investigating the issue of departmental support of students' advanced L2 abilities from two perspectives: that of graduate students on the

one hand and of FL program coordinators and FL department chairs (FLCs) on the other. Approximately two hundred FL coordinators and chairs of U.S. university FL departments offering doctoral degrees in foreign languages and literatures<sup>2</sup> were contacted and asked to respond to a survey eliciting information about their graduate programs, perceptions of what constitutes advanced-level language abilities, and the departmental practices of L2 support (for the FL coordinator and department chair version of the survey, see Appendix 1). Coordinators and chairs were also asked to pass the electronic questionnaires on to those graduate students in their departments who are non-native speakers of the department's target language (for the graduate student version of the survey, see Appendix 2). The graduate student questionnaire was more extensive than that of the FLCs and probed students' self-perception of their L2 abilities,<sup>3</sup> asked them to describe their experiences with the L2 in their graduate programs, and inquired about departmental practices of L2 support. It also elicited biographical and general program information. In order to have a basis for comparison, we included several parallel questions on both surveys: they pertain to the desired L2 abilities of the graduate students and to the ways the departments help students achieve these abilities.<sup>4</sup>

Thirteen graduate students from seven large research institutions,<sup>5</sup> nine FL coordinators, and one FL department chair representing ten different large research universities responded to the survey. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the respondents' target language emphases, as well as the academic departments represented.

**Table 1**

Survey Participants: FL Graduate Students, FL Coordinators, and FL Department Chairs

	<b>FL Graduate Students<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>FL Coordinators</b>	<b>FL Dept. Chairs</b>
Number of respondents	13	9	1
Number of institutions represented within group	7	9	1
Academic departments represented	German (7) Slavic languages (3) Romance languages (2) Near Eastern languages (1)	German (4) Romance languages (4) Near Eastern languages (1)	German (1)
L2s studied at graduate level	Arabic, French, German, Russian, Spanish	Arabic, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Persian, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish	German
Native languages of respondents	English (10) German (1) Hungarian (1) Polish (1)	---	---

## Results and Discussion

Although the number of responses precludes any statistical analyses of significance, important patterns from our data do emerge, and it is for this reason that we proceed with a discussion of some of the key findings.

### A. Graduate Students' Evaluation of their Language Abilities

Most students surveyed (11 of 13) note an overall improvement in their L2 abilities since beginning their graduate studies. Such development is most often characterized by increases in vocabulary (particularly academic), improved understanding and use of grammar, ability to address a wider variety of topics, and improved reading comprehension (particularly of academic texts). Teaching, study abroad, reading academic texts, and speaking to native speakers are the major activities that students report as contributing to their language development. Coursework, however, remains absent from this list, a finding that is confirmed by most students' admission that they do not use the L2 in class (see the next section for further discussion). In fact, limited opportunities for writing and speaking in the L2 on academic subjects have, according to one student, led to a deterioration of his speaking abilities.

In terms of students' self-assessment of their language abilities, a clear differentiation between the receptive and productive modalities is evident (see Table 2). Listening and reading are characterized by almost all students as their strongest abilities, while over half place their speaking and writing abilities lower on the scale of relative strength.

**Table 2**

Students' Self-Ratings of their Relative Strength in the Four Modalities of L2 Use

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<i>Very strong</i>	11	10	5	4
<i>Strong</i>	2	2	3	4
<i>Moderate</i>		1	5	4
<i>Weak</i>				1

Note: In all tables, numbers in columns refer to the number of respondents who checked this category.

When graduate students are asked to evaluate their strengths in the L2 use along two major contexts that are presumably expected of them in their FL departments, namely informal (i.e., speaking with friends, writing personal letters, or reading "for pleasure") versus academic (i.e., writing papers for coursework or reading academic texts), they tend to view their ability to communicate in informal contexts as much stronger than in formal or public ones across three modalities<sup>7</sup> (see Table 3).

**Table 3**  
Students' Self-Ratings of their L2 Abilities in Two Types of Contexts

	Academic Writing	Informal Writing	Academic Speaking	Informal Speaking	Academic Reading	Reading "For Pleasure"
(a) <i>Very good</i>	1	6	2	8	5	9
(b) <i>Good</i>	6	6	5	4	6	4
(c) <i>Satisfactory</i>	1		3		2	
(d) <i>Needs improvement</i>	3		3	1		
(e) <i>Not applicable</i>	2	1				

Elsewhere in the survey, students were asked to elaborate on the evaluation of their own L2 abilities. Interestingly, at this point none of the respondents differentiated between contexts of use. Instead, language abilities tended to be assessed in a global manner, and primarily in terms of modality, grammar, and phonetics. The following two responses from the graduate student surveys illustrate this point:

"Near-native accent, some grammar errors."

"Good knowledge of grammar, culture, colloquial German [...], history, make grammar mistakes when I speak [...], nervous to write but good at writing in German, reading and listening comprehension is great, wide passive vocab[ulary]."

This finding poses an interesting contrast to the responses tabulated in Table 3 where the survey question itself had differentiated between various contexts of modality and domains of use. It is worth pondering why the general questions regarding students' self-assessment of their proficiency in the L2 yielded relatively little insight into their language abilities as being affected by contexts of use. The responses to the open-ended questions of language proficiency may reveal more than anything a lack of an appropriate *conceptual* framework for graduate students to discuss advanced-level L2 learning and abilities, let alone suitable language to characterize them. Without such a framework, students are left without effective strategies for addressing perceived shortcomings on their own and for demanding targeted help from their departments.

It would appear, thus, that the first step in conceptualizing language proficiency must involve a consideration of the *contexts* of language use, both current and future. The discussion of the survey responses in the next section illustrates what these contexts might be, as identified by both FLCs and graduate students.

## B. Opportunities to Use the L2

First, FLCs and graduate students tended to differ in the areas identified as contexts in which students would eventually need to use the L2 in their professional lives. FLCs expect graduate students to be able to use the L2 upon completion of their Ph.D. programs in a variety of academic and professional contexts, such as language and literature teaching, conducting research and writing for publication, professional communication, departmental life, and giving conference presentations in the United States and in L2 academic

communities. Graduate students (12 of 13), by contrast, indicate college-level teaching as the main context in which they expect to use the L2. Relatively few graduate students (3 of 13) note the expectation of conducting research and communicating with colleagues, or presenting academic papers in the L2. These results are summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4**

Expected Contexts of L2 Use after Completion of the Graduate Program  
(Survey question administered to faculty and graduate students)

	FL Coordinators (N=10)	Graduate Students (N=13)
1. Teaching	9	12
2. Research and publication	6	3
3. Communicating with colleagues, departmental life	6	3
4. Conference presentations	4	2

The importance students attribute to teaching as the primary and, for many, the *only* context for use of the L2 in future professional settings appears to reflect the departmental practices the students currently observe and in which they participate in their own programs. As Table 5 shows, teaching stands out as the main domain of current L2 use identified by our student informants.

**Table 5**

Contexts in Which Graduate Students Use the L2  
(1—very infrequently, 5—very frequently)  
(Survey question administered to graduate students only)

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1. Teaching			1		12	
2. Professional reading		1	4	2	6	
3. Personal reading	1	3	1	3	5	
4. Jobs in which target language is used	3	1	2		3	4
5. Conversations with professors	3	5	2	1	2	
6. E-mailing/letter writing	5	2	4	1	1	
7. Conversations with friends	3	2	5	2	1	
8. Graduate courses	4	4	2	2	1	

Note: A “not applicable” (N/A) category was added by the respondents.

All thirteen graduate student respondents report having taught undergraduate-level courses, the majority indicating classes at the first two years of undergraduate instruction,<sup>8</sup> and only two having taught through the first three years of their undergraduate



programs (introductory through advanced courses). Despite teaching primarily at introductory and intermediate levels, the majority of respondents (8) indicate that teaching was helpful to the overall development of their L2 abilities. This finding highlights the importance graduate students ascribe to teaching opportunities for their own language use, a view that is echoed in accounts of student teaching within FL environments (Byrnes, Crane, and Sprang 2002). At the same time, however, this result necessarily raises the question of how *advanced* language abilities that are needed to function in academic and public contexts can be developed through teaching lower level courses. If teaching at the lower level is the primary and most frequent contact with the L2, graduate students' opportunities to develop a level of language use that moves beyond the "primary discourses" (Gee 1990) of familiar, everyday life are inherently limited (Byrnes, Crane, and Sprang 2002; Koike and Liskin-Gasparro 1999).

Striking among the contexts of use cited is the role of graduate course work, which according to many informants does not elicit use of the L2. This finding is corroborated by answers to subsequent sections of the survey, in which graduate student informants from three different departments disclose in greater detail the role that English plays as the main language of communication in their FL departments. As one informant notes, the "chances to practice academic [L2] are few and far between because of this." A more or less even split between the number of courses in the L2 and in English is reported by students from three other departments, and only one informant asserts that courses in her department are generally conducted in the L2. Two major reasons for the use of English in the classroom are cited: the interdisciplinarity of courses to include students from other departments and the convention to publish and present at conferences in English rather than in the L2. Furthermore, many of the student informants comment that native speaker professors of the L2 tend to conduct their classes in the L2, while English-speaking professors do so in English.

The reported dominance of English in the classroom carries over into the language used in fulfillment of course requirements. Most graduate students choose to write their course papers in English (11 of 13), despite an option for the L2. Several reasons for students' language choice are cited, ranging from a low comfort level communicating in the L2 to the comparatively greater ease and quality of work in English. Two respondents further point to the pressure to write in English in academic contexts in their graduate programs. As one states: "I know of no other foreign language program in which students are practically encouraged to write papers in English."

None of the students who opt to write at least some papers in the L2 (6 out of 13) report having been given any specific instructions or models for language use. Rather, they received feedback on content only (3 of 13) or on language use limited to sentence-level grammatical errors (3 of 13). A similar picture emerges in students' oral presentations in class: over half of the informants present exclusively in English. Again, no individuals claim to have received any language-specific feedback or guidance in these speaking events in either language.

### C. Evaluation of Language Support in Graduate Programs

Despite their high expectations of L2 use among graduate students, half of the FLCs report that their departments provide no or not enough support for academic language development, with no or very few courses taught in the L2 and no "graduate language courses." This estimation largely corresponds to that provided by the graduate students, many of whom express a desire for more language support in their programs. However, not all students are discontent with what their departments offer. Some report satisfaction at receiving linguistic support in seminars, having to pass language tests, and being able to attend language-oriented courses offered by the department.

As reported by all faculty and many graduate student respondents, financial support to send students abroad or to language summer schools constitutes the primary means for departments to further the linguistic development of their graduate students. As one FLC respondent states: such support constitutes "the single most helpful aspect of their [students'] language maintenance in the program." Another FLC, however, suggests that the overreliance on study abroad among FL departments may reveal a lack of adequate knowledge and experience on the part of the language coordinators in teaching graduate-level courses that would promote students' further linguistic development. The responses of graduate students and FLCs appear to echo Valdés' (1998) concern that students "are expected to take care of their continued language learning on their own" (p. 7) by arranging to go for research or study abroad in the L2 countries, though with assistance from their programs.

While opportunities for study abroad were deemed especially valuable in reaching desired levels of language ability in the L2, no specific details were provided as to what such experiences might actually entail. This is somewhat troubling given the relatively sparse literature on the linguistic effects of study abroad. More information is needed in understanding the role that formal instruction plays within abroad settings, as well as the different discourse communities, particularly academic ones, that are available to language learners in the L2 environment. Furthermore, there is emerging evidence that marked deceleration of linguistic growth may occur upon return from study abroad (Coleman et al. 1994, as reported in Freed 1995), pointing to the responsibility of well-devised programmatic efforts to sustain and develop language abilities *after* study abroad. Thus, blanket recommendations to study abroad for graduate students may reveal a sort of avoidance strategy on the part of FL departments to take responsibility for their students' linguistic development.

The majority of students and some faculty members favor departmental support of graduate students' development of their L2 abilities. Here are comments from two graduate students who would welcome increased attention to advanced language development:

"I feel language support should be considered critical. Everything else we are learning to do (teach, read and write about literature) depends on a sound knowledge of the target language."

"I think it should be a larger component. On the job market we are expected to have near native proficiency, which we have to [ac]quire in addition to getting a graduate education. The department could provide more help with that."

Faculty responses advocating this position see the provision of means for furthering linguistic development in the L2 *and* English as critical for both effective future teaching on the part of today's graduate students and professional credibility of graduate programs. However, two other positions represented by faculty express reluctance for programs to become involved. One group views it appropriate in the American academic context for departments to offer most courses and require students to write course papers in English. This appears to stem from the belief that students enter graduate programs primarily to develop research skills and to appropriate content knowledge, language not being an issue. Reminiscent of bifurcated programs within FL departments that offer separate language and content courses, this view presents a model of knowledge that ignores the linguistic means that are central to shaping and expressing this knowledge in the L2 discourse community. A second group argues that graduate students should enter doctoral programs with sufficiently advanced language skills, thereby rendering the need for subsequent language support superfluous. This position, however, reveals an expectation that has been characterized as unrealistic and troublesome, considering the

extremely short, at least from the language acquisition standpoint, but typical four-year long undergraduate study period for L2 majors (Byrnes 1998).

So, what is it that graduate students desire in their FL programs? Several respondents believe that courses and the requirement of writing papers in the L2 would be a good start. Many wish for stylistic feedback on their written work. Several suggest advanced-level language workshops and courses integrated into the departmental curriculum, and not just from allied summer language programs. Concrete suggestions include "Academic Discourse in the L2" or "Writing in the Academy" courses where students are introduced to the field of academic writing and publishing practices in their L2. Others call for testing students, particularly in the beginning of the program, to assess their L2 abilities and offer suggestions for improvement. Several students indicate that providing more financial support would expand students' opportunities to improve their language abilities outside of the department.<sup>9</sup>

To summarize, we see that teaching lower-level language courses is the primary context for L2 use and is considered a site for graduate students' language development, whereas their own graduate coursework plays a considerably lesser role and in fact is frequently absent as a context for L2 use or learning. Only when prompted do students identify strong and weak areas of their language use and ability in terms of situations and contextualized uses of language. Finally, some graduate students and faculty express concern that their departments are not doing enough to foster students' language development, leading to the desire among the majority of graduate students for more support from their departments in developing their language abilities, though the exact shape of this support varies. It is with these findings pointing to an understanding of language and language learning based in contextualized use that we now turn to the notion of genre for further discussion.

## **Conceptualizing Language Support for Graduate Students: A Case for Genre**

Beyond the issues that were directly probed in the questionnaires, analysis of the responses reveals notions of language learning rooted in the traditional bifurcation of language and content. While only one graduate student rejected outright any practice that would incorporate language features into the graduate FL classroom, stating, "[graduate] seminars are not a space for language pedagogy," the suggestions put forth by other informants point to a view of language and content as discrete entities: language is conceived of as playing a supplementary and subordinate role to content. Consequently, although language support at the graduate level is seen as important for acquisition of disciplinary knowledge (e.g., through independent "stylistics" courses), it is nevertheless regarded as a separate activity from that of conducting serious research in particular content areas.<sup>10</sup>

This separation of language and content mirrors the existence of two well-known autonomous domains of instruction in FL programs: language and literature. As others have noted (Byrnes 1998; James 1989; Kern 2000; Swaffar 1991), a hierarchical relationship between the two pushes content to the more advanced end of foreign language study, leaving language issues to be dealt with at the beginning levels. This view is reflected in the non-academic and sometimes unserious suggestions provided by some of our survey respondents. Although using the language in everyday situations, such as foreign language tables, as put forth by some informants, undoubtedly provides for comfortable and valuable opportunities to use the L2, it is unlikely to lead to a professional L2 proficiency level. In any case, such suggestions only reaffirm the secondary role of language in FL departments.<sup>11</sup>

By contrast, a social-semiotic perspective (Christie 1989; Halliday 1993; Vygotsky 1978) that sees the creation of knowledge and the development of cognitive skills as dependent on

language offers a useful construct for FL departments to understand and conceptualize the connection between content and language. In recent years, a number of linguistic scholars have pointed to this very relationship, representing both ontogenetic and phylogenetic perspectives. Halliday (1993) and Hasan (1996b) in their research on L1 language learning explain the nature of the simultaneous mental and linguistic development that occurs in response to the needs of an individual to interpret experience, to have this interpretation validated by others, and finally to express this experience in discourse. From a phylogenetic viewpoint, research by Bazerman (1998), Halliday and Martin (1993), and Myers (1992) reveals that the construction of knowledge, such as seen in scientific theories or historical descriptions, does not merely reflect reality, but is a result of an active sense-making that occurs within a specific social context, i.e., against the background of common values, practices and beliefs, *and* in a shared language. Thus, language as it is used in the social interactions of particular disciplines directly impacts the creation of knowledge and is inseparable from rhetorical, i.e., linguistic, processes bearing traces of these interactions (Hyland 2000).

Drawing on this epistemology, it becomes apparent that graduate studies in languages, literature, and culture offer a particularly opportune site for examining the discursive nature of knowledge construction, that is, the complex relationships between authors, audiences, purposes, ideologies, and ideas manifested in the linguistic choices made within texts. From this standpoint, then, advanced-level language learning must be considered inseparable from the appropriation of knowledge.

In recent years, genre theory has been used as a way to conceptualize the relationship between content, language, and participants in discourse. One of the earlier attempts to formulate this connection can be traced back to Bakhtin (1986) and his contribution to the notion of the *speech genre*. According to Bakhtin, every social activity involves language use that is not random, but instead relates to such contextual variables as participants and goals. He observes that this connection is realized in all aspects of language use: from choice of lexical and grammatical features to the organization of utterances. Moreover, since the activity types recur in society, language use associated with a particular activity is also of a recurrent nature. Through iterative language used in a particular situation, stable and mandatory patterns of use called “speech genres” gradually take shape.

This view of language through the construct of genre has found great resonance in language learning theory and practice across secondary and post-secondary educational contexts such as *The New Rhetoric, English for Specific Purposes* (ESP), and *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL) (Hyon 1996). While varying somewhat in their linguistic and content foci, as well as in instructional approaches, these orientations all share an understanding of genre that is based on the *typicality* of rhetorical and linguistic features as they relate to particular *communicative purposes* of texts residing in particular discourse communities. From this stems a major goal of genre theorists, particularly of SFL researchers: to provide learners from less dominant discourse communities access to the dominant discourses that privilege specific generic conventions.

For academic registers, the larger framework of genre has proven to be a productive way of highlighting the role of language for pedagogical purposes. Two related fields, *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP) and *English for Academic Purposes* (EAP) have made major contributions in relaying success stories of advanced-level learner development by focusing on particular professional and academic disciplines in a functional manner and assessing linguistic development within the context of well-specified expectations and goals (Johns 2002; Swales 1990). More concretely, a number of studies have suggested using genre-based approaches to language pedagogy as a means for creating and structuring lessons (Adam and Artemeva 2002; Flowerdew 2002) and introducing

students to linguistic patterns that give voice to their own specific disciplines (Celce-Murcia 2002; Dudley-Evans 2002; Guleff 2002; Martin 1993; Schleppegrell 2002). Within this tradition, analyses tend to focus on rhetorical structures as well as syntactical and lexical choices as they relate to specific communicative purposes.

With their functional orientation towards language, applications of genre theory in many ways resemble those of pragmatics and speech act theory found in the rather large body of interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics studies (Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz 1985; Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Boxer 2002; Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993; Kasper and Schmidt 1996). While these two broad fields share many commonalities, they also diverge, particularly regarding aspects of advanced-level academic language use. The pragmatic emphasis on the properties of interactants (e.g., their negative and positive face) and on the assumed social factors that affect the strategies participants choose in constructing speech acts, including social distance, relative power, and absolute ranking of impositions in a particular culture, parallels the treatment of interpersonal relations entailed in genre theory. However, as applied pragmatics tends to focus on participants' discourse strategies and specific speech acts in primarily conversational settings, aspects of context other than the interpersonal are backgrounded or even excluded from analysis. This includes the role of language itself as a structuring and organizing device. By contrast, genre theory addresses the essential components needed in the construction of knowledge and incorporates the broader context of culture through analysis of the three aspects of situation, i.e., content, participants, and the role of language. In other words, interlanguage pragmatic studies are particularly adept at capturing the social dimensions of casual conversation and narratives, and genre theory seems more suited to bettering graduate students' L2 academic discourse abilities.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that a genre approach is not without its own limitations. As Pennycook (1996) argues, when a static and prescriptive view of genre is implemented in pedagogy, it may fail to appropriately address diversity and difference, which can lead to uncritical reproduction of texts. It is, however, precisely the explicit teaching of generic conventions that empowers both L1 and L2 learners, by providing them access to the dominant L1 or L2 discourses. This access becomes possible inasmuch as such a pedagogy understands that creativity, reflexivity, and critique are communicatively most effective when they follow the conventions of genre. This suggests that learners should master these patterns first in order to be able to further appropriate and even question or subvert the very genres in which such conventions appear. Therefore, a genre-based instructional model can and should incorporate a reflexive stance towards dominant genres by guiding the questioning of the underlying assumptions and ideologies tied to their texts (Cope and Kalantzis 1993; Hasan 1996a; Kress 1993). As Hasan (1996a) recommends, learners should be encouraged "to ask why the said is being said, what it implies, and on what grounds [...]; whose point of view does the writing represent [...]; why it [the text] is structured the way it is; [and] what would change, for whom and at what price, if the structure were to be changed" (p. 411).

To summarize, critical study of genre can advance disciplinary knowledge through the investigation of generic language patterns as they are situated in terms of content and positioned in particular role relationships characteristic of the prevailing disciplinary discourse(s). Since discourses are always ideologically determined, studying genres and discovering their underlying assumptions means learning how individuals in a foreign culture or in various disciplines think and act. Thus, looking to the genres that characterize specific disciplines may offer much in terms of understanding the culturally laden linguistic choices that make texts appropriate for their users.

## Genre as Context of Culture

As we have outlined above, thinking of language use within the framework of genre allows one to see the culturally determined practices that shape individuals as members of particular discourse communities. From this standpoint, rather than viewing graduate students' language abilities across a band of general contexts of everyday life, it may be more productive to think of their language use as situated within the authentic genres that are likely to constitute their lives as academics. Work in register analysis, particularly within the field of corpus linguistics, has begun to explore the types of texts that are presently found within English-speaking academic environments (Biber et al. 2002). To our knowledge, however, no such analyses involving texts typically used in FL departments in the United States have been undertaken.

Considering that most of our respondents cited needed practice in the productive modalities of the L2, we have collected what SFL theory has labeled a *genre potential*, i.e., "all the linguistically-achieved activity types recognized as meaningful (i.e., appropriate) in a given culture" (Eggins 1994, pp. 34-5), for all spoken and written texts that FL academics might be expected to produce in their respective L2s. Table 6 provides an overview of academic genres that should be available to graduate students in the humanities for productive use in the L2, though certainly not an exhaustive list and one that would be expected to change as old genres continue to change form and new ones evolve.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 6**

Genres in the L2 Appearing within U.S. FL Academia (for Productive Use)

	Spoken	Written
Monologic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job talks/presentations</li> <li>• Lectures</li> <li>• Teaching (dependent on task, language level, course focus, teaching style, etc.)</li> <li>• Presentations of departmental issues (e.g., of courses, projects, policies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissertations</li> <li>• Academic articles for publication in books, journals</li> <li>• Book reviews, review articles</li> <li>• Annotated bibliographies</li> <li>• Books</li> <li>• Abstracts (for presentations and publications)</li> <li>• Grant and fellowship proposals (including summaries of research focus)</li> <li>• Correspondence (e.g., to visiting scholars, institutions with exchanges)</li> <li>• Academic CVs</li> </ul>
Dialogic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job/MLA interviews</li> <li>• Teaching (e.g., class discussion, role-playing; dependent on task, language level, course focus, teaching style, etc.)</li> <li>• Discussions with colleagues, students (formal, e.g., advising sessions)</li> <li>• Discussions with colleagues, students (informal, e.g., discussions in hall)</li> <li>• Question-answer sessions of presentations</li> <li>• Panel discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-mail discussions (in groups, i.e., for list-serves in field, with classes)</li> <li>• E-mail correspondence</li> </ul>

As expected, these genres appear primarily within the realms of research and teaching.<sup>13</sup> Due to the great variation in individual and departmental teaching practices, as well as differences in language levels and content foci of individual courses, it is difficult to delineate any further specific genres found in teaching. However, looking to the other genres that constitute FL academic life, it becomes clear that specialized academic content areas are mapped across a myriad of configurations involving various role relationships, such as critic/reader, lecturer/audience (i.e., student, colleague, employer), proposer/judge, and commentator/respondent. In other words, it is particularly in the range of interactions in terms of participant roles that these genres differ most widely.

Studying a list such as the one above can prompt FL departments to specify those academic practices involving use of the L2, and then create for their graduate students occasions in which they can hone and develop advanced-level language abilities in a variety of genres and professional environments, representing teaching, scholarship, and service. Before such deliberations can take place, however, textual properties of relevant genres must be well understood (Freedman 1993, 1994, as cited in Hyon 1996; Hasan 1996a). As applied linguists have shown, (Swales and Najjar 1987, as cited in Paltridge 2002), handbooks and manuals pertaining to particular written genres are for the most part not based on actual text analyses and often miss important aspects of textual conventions. Therefore, finding appropriate models for spoken and written discourse, upon which explicit instruction can be built, should be central to a genre-based pedagogy.

Ideally, a discussion of genre potential for curricular and pedagogical action would involve consulting all participants within a program, including most importantly its graduate students, in determining specific language needs. Occasions for practice may involve teaching advanced-level classes, presenting information to the department, and writing and publishing in the L2. They do not, however, have to translate into exact emulation of genres provided in the table. In fact, helpful exercises may involve working with the “classroom genres” (Johns 1995) that contain some of the same generic elements as those found in the real-life tasks of the FL profession, or becoming familiar with the “occluded genres,” such as the *submission letter*, that support the more predominant genres of the academy (Swales 1996). To ensure that students appropriately transfer knowledge of genres across tasks within the academic FL field, a clear delineation of the communicative purposes of classroom and authentic genres influencing linguistic and content choices would need to be provided in instruction (Johns 1995). In the following two case studies, we track the path of such a classroom genre, the *précis*, through our own graduate studies, showing how its textual properties cross paths with some of those found in the genres listed in Table 6 in terms of communicative purposes, audiences, and stylistic conventions.

In the first case study, Marianna Ryshina-Pankova discusses how explicit instruction of the features of the genre *précis* in a graduate literature class helped her in developing her writing style for subsequent work in the same course. In the second case study, Cori Crane relates how knowledge of the *précis* has proven valuable across language learning contexts throughout her graduate education.

### **Case Study #1: Developing Cognitive and Linguistic Abilities through the Genre of Précis (Marianna Ryshina-Pankova)**

In the first year of my graduate study, I was given the choice to compose a paper in English or German (the L2 of the department) and opted to write in the L2. I received my paper back with detailed and useful comments regarding its content and a short evaluation of the language that rendered my style as simplistic. In a subsequent discussion of the paper, the professor restored my confidence by saying that my style would improve

as a result of reading research articles in the L2 and automatic emulation of the discourse strategies and high register expression that would ensue from it. While I tried to imitate the proper academic style in my later work, I found it difficult to see the specific elements on which I should focus. In a following semester, however, I received *explicit* instruction on how to draw on academic articles as a source for writing research papers, both in terms of content and appropriate language use.

In Spring 2001, I took a course on German autobiographical fiction, which covered works by major contemporary authors and included theoretical readings on contemporary literary criticism. The purpose of the secondary readings, as was explicitly stated by the instructor, was not only to establish a critical discourse for discussing primary texts, but also to serve as a basis for oral and written assignments designed to practice academic discourse in the L2.

Among the various assignments for the course, we were required to write a *précis* of an academic article. (For extensive discussion of the *précis* as a template for pedagogical action, see Swaffar, this volume.) The instructor first introduced the students to the concept of *précis*, then asked us to write our own in the L2, to which she provided detailed feedback in terms of content, rhetorical organization, and expression. Finally, the instructor presented her own *précis* on the same article as a model, which generated further discussion of the genre in class.

The *précis*, or critical summary, is a widespread academic genre. Casanave and Hubbard (1992) found it to be the most frequent type of writing assignment administered by the humanities and social sciences faculty at their university (Stanford). The purpose of a *précis* exceeds the goals of a simple summary of the text's main ideas. Rather it exposes subtle links between the communicative intentions of the author, its audiences, content, and argumentative structure via specific language use. Thus, it requires analysis and synthesis of the main ideas, detailed observation of how these ideas are instantiated through structural, linguistic, and rhetorical means, and evaluation and critique of the argument in view of its communicative task and in relation to the issues of one's own disciplinary interest.

The instructor presented the genre as consisting of three moves. The first part included a brief summary of the main ideas highlighted in the text and as situated against particular academic disciplines, cultural contexts, and intended audiences. In terms of language use, this activity required, on the one hand, complete familiarity with specific vocabulary of the article, to allow for manipulation of the text for the purpose of a condensed summary, and on the other, the ability to use certain rhetorical expressions to present the author's ideas, such as the following:

Der/die Autor(in) setzt sich mit dem Thema auseinander, indem...

*The author problematizes the topic by/through...*

Der/die Autor(in) erörtert ...

*The author discusses...*

The class received a list of these expressions in the L2 to clarify the meaning and use of terms appearing in the articles in class.

The second part of the *précis* included commentary on the organizational structure of the article. Students were encouraged to expose the macrostructure of the article by identifying important discourse markers in the text and categorizing them according to chronological, argumentative, or descriptive structures. Furthermore, students looked at the microstructure that included expression of comparison and contrast, illustration by



example, and reference to other authors. The instructor provided language scaffolding to refresh students' memory of the expressions in the L2 that identify organizational moves:

Der Autor behandelt das Thema, indem er ...x (acc.) y (dat.) gegenüberstellt.  
x (acc.) und y (acc.) miteinander  
vergleicht.

*The author handles the topic by contrasting/comparing x and y.*

Work on this part allowed the graduate students not only to become aware of the organizational patterns and their L2 linguistic realizations employed in the research article, but also to engage in a reflective discussion on this matter and use meta-expressions in their commentary.

The third part of the précis contained reflection on the article's implications and its evaluation. In this section, students were asked to show the relevance of the article to their own understanding of a topic area and draw parallels to other course readings. Here again, scaffolding of linguistic expression was made available by acquainting students with the lexico-grammatical structures appropriate for rendering personal opinion in academic discourse, for offering criticism, or pointing out advantages of a text:

Indem der Autor x mit y vergleicht,                      gibt er zu verstehen interpretiert er ...  
*By comparing x and z the author                      makes clear/offers an interpretation ...*

Für mich ergibt sich daraus ...  
*This indicates (to me) ...*

Writing a précis in this course helped students as future literary scholars become aware and reflect on the important issues in literary criticism and ways in which they are discussed. The students, however, also profited as learners of the language. By writing critical summaries in the L2 they had an opportunity to use specific vocabulary typical of literary criticism discourse or of particular topic areas within it and to practice meta-language expressions necessary for framing one's commentary and critique of these ideas. The benefits of learning how to write a précis extended beyond this particular course for me. Allowing for critical conceptualization of secondary literature, the précis has become a building block in writing research papers or book-reviews for other classes. Moreover, as I prepared for my comprehensive exams, I became very aware of the knowledge that I had gained from work with the précis, particularly as I compiled my annotated bibliography for books in the L2.

## **Case Study #2: Transferring Linguistic Conventions across Genre Types (Cori Crane)**

The second case study describes my experience of drawing upon knowledge of genre in my L1 (English) and my L2 (German) to give a formal presentation in German. In pointing to a few key activities throughout my graduate education that helped me prepare for this event, I describe how language abilities were transferred across tasks to meet the needs of the increasingly more independent roles accorded to each speaking event.

In Fall 2001, I presented to visiting administrative officials from our sister exchange institution abroad a short outline of a Business German course that I had taught the previous summer in our university's study abroad program. In the presentation, three instructors were asked to describe advanced-level German courses that were offered in our program, placing particular emphasis on how they relate to the larger goals of our

department's curriculum. Two professors and I were asked to speak in German each for ten minutes on three different courses.

Presentation of courses has become a standard practice in our department since its undergraduate curriculum reform. Typically conducted in English and varying slightly in content and form, instructors provide a brief summary of the focus of the course, followed by specifics on course goals, content and materials, tasks, and evaluation criteria and procedures. Reference to the goals and learner profiles associated with the particular language level in question (usually the upper advanced-level courses in our curriculum) clarifies how new or revamped courses fit in with the established curricular goals. In addition to *describing* and *referring*, this spoken genre entails *justifying* decisions regarding course changes and plans. Indeed, a question-and-answer period follows the presentation and often revolves around the rationale for such components as reading lists, tasks, and general emphases of the course.

Having had exposure to the rhetorical structure and the purposes of this genre, even in the L1, was helpful in preparing me for the particular event before our foreign university visitors. My ability to create a coherent and cohesive whole in the L2 was further aided by the preparation I had received in the genre of *précis*, serving as a model for both written and spoken discourse.

During Georgetown's DAAD 1998 summer institute for advanced-level learners (see Byrnes 2002a for an account of this program) I was first introduced to the *précis*. There, I became familiar with its communicative purpose of concise summary and evaluation through the reconstruction of textual arguments. In particular, emphasis was placed on developing awareness and use of cohesive markers necessary in delineating precisely the relationships between statements in texts. The concerted effort of combing through L2 texts in search of these discourse markers and sharing the information with other participants in the seminar allowed me to develop an ability to produce a *précis*, as well as use its structural elements for oral presentations of the same material, an exercise that was explicitly linked to the development of written abilities in the summer institute.

Three years later, I began teaching "Text in Context," an advanced-level course located at the fourth semester of intensive instruction (after 18 credit hours), whose explicit goal was to challenge students to develop German academic literacy abilities. As instructor for this course, I once more had practice and exposure to the genre of *précis* and its oral variation. This time, however, I was in the position of instructor instead of student. My new role entailed now modeling the behavior for my students, as well as providing them with ample introduction to the task at hand and explicit feedback regarding various versions of their drafts. Preceding the written version of the *précis* was an oral presentation of the same material, with special attention devoted to linking the arguments of the text via discourse markers so as to frame the information in a succinct and articulate manner. The activity involved the use of such rhetorical moves like introducing a topic, citing authors, enumerating arguments, comparing and contrasting, and expressing opinion. Students were asked to incorporate these features in their oral presentations as appropriate, having at hand only the bare arguments and chunks of vocabulary important for triggering their memory of the text.<sup>14</sup>

In my presentation before the university visitors and departmental members, I found myself relying on some of the same organizational patterns that I had learned in the summer institute and passed on to my own students in subsequent German classes to give structure to my presentation. Using an overhead projector to show an outline of my points, I was able to give my ideas coherence, explicitly linking them through the learned discourse markers.

Transferring the linguistic know-how of presenting in the L2 from the classroom to a public, professional setting was made possible in great part due to the mentoring I received in my department. As Belcher (1994) maintains in her case studies of three ESL graduate students' academic literacy development, it is not only the mentor but also the *discourse community* in which graduate students are apprenticing that impacts their ability to succeed as future members of the profession. In terms of being able to speak in front of and act as a representative of my department, the high level of confidence that professors involved in this project expressed in me and in particular their openness to work with me prior to the event, was paramount for success in this talk. Along similar lines, I have been fortunate to be able to develop language abilities in progressively more formal contexts throughout my graduate education. This highlights the importance of finding a balance between giving students opportunities for academic-like discourse practice in the L2 and the necessary scaffolding that takes place prior to such occasions.

Looking back at this one experience, I see many elements as having contributed to my language development. First, having our out-of-town guests from the L2 culture provided a real-life need to communicate in the L2 at an academic discourse level. Second, this opportunity was made possible because I had already taught an upper advanced-level class. Related to this were the varied, and layered, opportunities—as student, teacher, and finally departmental representative—to work with language features characteristic of academic language in the L2. Third, I was supported by professors and native speaker graduate students who were willing to help me in preparation for the talk. Finally, as the department accords pedagogy a scholarly, professional status, I was able to link the spoken and written formal, established genres found in our departmental culture (i.e., curriculum documents, handbooks, and formal presentations) to the communicative purpose at hand.

While this experience may appear unique in some respects for a graduate student, it is in many ways representative of the contexts in which graduate students will be expected to function upon their entry into the profession. To help make this professional transition smooth, engagement with more real-life opportunities to communicate in the L2 at an academic discourse level, as well as a knowledge of how various speech events that draw on learning and teaching experiences can impact upon each other, are crucial.

## Conclusion

As we have attempted to illustrate throughout this paper, the acquisition of higher levels of foreign language use involves a long-term commitment on the part of both graduate students and faculty. Therefore, efforts towards this development should not be located in any one particular graduate course, but rather integrated into already established courses and FL graduate education as a whole. By implication, this insight means that the issue now takes on curricular implications and indeed should include the entire department in the decision-making process, involving notably graduate students themselves (Byrnes 2001). As the survey data have already indicated, graduate students *do* have opinions on matters concerning their language development and *are willing* to express their viewpoints and suggestions to those prepared to listen.

Finding fitting venues for students to voice their concerns, however, may well present a challenge. The questionnaire is a start. Nonetheless, it provides only part of the story. Analysis of the survey data gradually clarified to us that the monologic nature of the genre *questionnaire* allowed individual voices to be heard and certainly captured the state of affairs, but did not allow for further engagement with the topic (except for e-mail notes from a few participating graduate student respondents indicating their

interest in the topic as well as in the survey results). In other words, the static nature of this elicitation genre may itself have had consequences for the ways in which students conceptualized their language abilities and departmental support for them.

In contrast, as members of our department, we had earlier witnessed how this topic had been handled in a different textual mode with a different configuration of participants through the genre of *discussion*. In e-mail deliberations regarding three department-wide action research projects as part of the Spencer Foundation Grant awarded to the department (2000–2002), graduate students and faculty discussed for the first time in an open forum the need and desire for graduate students to develop advanced-level German language abilities, particularly in their graduate courses. In this e-mail dialogue, in part the impetus behind the very survey study we have presented here, the collaborative context enabled participants to present, respond to, and develop ideas about graduate education in a more “public” venue. The medium of electronic mail was instrumental in creating a public space for graduate students to voice issues and concerns that might not have otherwise been heard. Furthermore, this interactive dialogue between students and professors ultimately led to a jointly constructed knowledge base for participants to understand, articulate, and grapple with the issues of advanced-level academic language development. As others have noted (Schnell 2000; Dickerson 2000), collective letter writing in academic environments allows participants to create a space for themselves to try out new ideas, as well as personas, in their apprenticing discourse community. This certainly was the case in our situation, and graduate students welcomed the chance to discuss the matter even further in a departmental meeting devoted to the topic a year later.

As we have argued throughout this paper, the construct of genre offers FL graduate departments a useful conceptual framework for linking content and language to their social contexts, thereby providing a first step towards a needs analysis for the FL abilities of graduate students. While we have chosen the genre of *précis* in the representation of our two graduate experiences, we view the key to developing an advanced-level language repertoire not in the ability to use and expand upon this particular genre per se, but rather in showing how relevant connections between professional text types and tasks can be used in preparing students to become confident users of the genres required of them in their professional lives.

Finally, we close with some general recommendations to the FL field in conceptualizing and furthering advanced-level language use amongst graduate students. Some of these ideas will sound familiar in that they are adapted from the case studies above; others stem from recommendations put forth by our graduate student and faculty respondents from the survey. An emphasis on the opportunity to practice for “real-life” tasks of the profession runs through all of the suggestions, as do the students’ own academic interests.

- Have students present their coursework to their peers in the L2. Writing up abstracts and/or presentation handouts can act as preliminary or concluding stages to this exercise. Real-life textual models provide a basis of comparison for student texts and can lead to a discussion of text styles prevalent in academe. Explicit feedback on language features and content issues from instructors is crucial for students’ development.
- Offer courses in which graduate students take English-language scholarly work (if applicable) and adapt it for an L2 academic audience. As a variation, a text could be modified to fit another, academically appropriate genre of the FL field, such as an annotated bibliography, book review, or oral presentation. Levels of formality can be manipulated to create greater awareness of audience and communicative purpose.

- Offer opportunities to teach advanced-level courses, particularly text- and genre-oriented ones (see Byrnes, Crane, and Sprang 2002). Similarly, co-teaching opportunities between graduate students and faculty of upper-level courses can provide students with models and the chance to discuss and reflect on language and content issues of teaching with their teacher mentors.
- Create venues for graduate students in the department, such as department-wide conferences or research seminars, to present individual research in the L2.

In this paper, we have explored some of the issues that our survey respondents raised and have used them as a springboard for reflective dialogue regarding what it means to be an advanced-level L2 learner in FL graduate education. We hope that our discussion has shown that it is possible in an instructed setting, both from the standpoint of substance and from the standpoint of procedures and processes, for graduate students to develop higher level language abilities in their research and teaching, particularly through the awareness of genre. As we have argued, such success necessarily involves intense engagement with texts and a refined sensitivity to more sophisticated uses of language that challenge students both linguistically and intellectually. We believe that reaching this level is possible when a strong commitment on the part of both faculty and students exists. For this reason, opportunities for open discussion that lead to reflection and action must be present in individual departments and the profession as a whole and cannot be overstated.

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### Notes

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1. There are, of course, many FL graduate students whose native language is neither English nor the target language of the department, making their task of socializing into the professional community even more challenging.
2. Lists of relevant FL programs were obtained through the AAUSC.
3. For reasons of clarity to our respondents, we used the term "target language" (TL) in the survey.
4. Questions 5 and 7 in Section C as well as Question 1 in Section D of the graduate student questionnaire were modeled after Questions 7, 8, and 9 of Koike and Liskin-Gasparro's (1999) survey in which the notion of "near-native language proficiency" was investigated.
5. Because we relied on the FL coordinators and chairs to distribute the questionnaire, we do not know how many surveys actually reached the students. The low response rate may be attributed to the fact that we administered the questionnaire in late April, close to the end of the semester in most universities, when faculty and students are particularly pressed for time.
6. Further biographic information on graduate student respondents includes the following: nine are female, three are male; the mean age is 28 years old. In addition to the L2 studied in the language department, all participants have had varying experiences in learning other languages: between one and six (the majority of the participants have studied between one and three languages other than their L2 in the graduate program); listed in the order from most to least

frequently studied, these languages include French, Latin, Spanish, Polish, Italian, German, Czech, Greek, Dutch, Finnish, Russian, and Hungarian. Semesters in the Ph.D. program of participants range from 0 to 12, with a mean of 5.5 semesters, translating to the end of the third year in the graduate program.

7. We checked to see if, perhaps, the low self-ratings were provided by students who had just started the graduate program and therefore might not yet have had an opportunity to develop the language abilities necessary for graduate work. However, this turned out not to be the case. All students who rated themselves lower than “good” in any of the categories have spent between four to twelve semesters in their graduate programs (seven semesters on average).
8. If we count two students who simply reported having taught “undergraduate language courses,” which for many institutions means introductory and intermediate courses, nine graduate students have taught at the first two years of the undergraduate curriculum.
9. Recognizing the need for furthering their own linguistic development or sustaining their current abilities, the students polled in this survey have taken some steps—independent of their programs—to remedy the situation: they report independently seeking out possibilities for research or study in the target language countries, organizing coffee tables or reading groups to maintain language use in informal contexts, reading for pleasure in the L2, listening to the news, seeking help from faculty members with various aspects of language, and attending departmental events conducted in the L2.
10. Leaving the language-literature divide aside, such suggestions simultaneously carry with them pragmatic implications for programs. Separate stylistics courses, for example, may result in extended lengths of study in a graduate program and/or an increase in graduate student funding, which, as one of our language coordinator informants indicates, can prove to be financially unfeasible for FL departments.
11. Recent attempts have been made to breach the gap between the study of language and content in FL academic contexts. Chaput (2001), drawing on Canale and Swain’s (1980) model of language competences, for example, encourages graduate student teachers to conceptualize language study in terms of acquisition of four related competences: grammatical, socio-linguistic, discourse and cultural. Kramsch (2002) takes a more holistic perspective on language use, moving beyond theorizing about discrete components of language competence and emphasizing the inseparability of language, literature, and culture. Such a model is more in line with our conception of language as an interrelated framework that connects content, participants in discourse, and culture.
12. Shalom (1993), in her analysis of poster session discussions at academic conferences, shows how the *spoken research process genre* has evolved and developed recognizable features by its users. Similarly, Paltridge (2002) notes in his analysis of masters and doctoral theses that the *thesis genre* of certain academic disciplines has changed over the past ten years. As academia begins to explore further applications of technology, new genres will undoubtedly emerge.
13. Administrative tasks are omitted in this list, as they typically require the use of English, not the L2 of the department.
14. See Sprang’s description of this same oral task in Byrnes, Crane, and Sprang (2002) for a more detailed look at the cognitive processes involved.

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## Appendix 1

### Survey on Graduate Program Support of Advanced-Level Language Development

#### Foreign Language Coordinator and Department Chair Version

##### A. General program information

1. Name of Ph.D. granting institution:
2. Name of department:
3. Target language(s) studied in department:

4. Total number of Ph.D. track students in the program:
5. Number of native speaker students of the target language in the program:

**B. Target language abilities of graduate students**

1. If possible, think of 2-3 graduate students in your department, who are **non-native** speakers of the target language and whom you consider to have **near-native proficiency**. Specify what criteria in your mind make them near-native speakers.
  - (1)
  - (2)
  - (3)

**C. Departmental practices of target language support**

1. In which professional contexts do you expect the graduate students of your program to use the target language after completion of their studies?
2. Do you think that your department is providing graduate students with adequate support in developing their language abilities to meet the demands of the future professional field? Please explain.
3. To what extent do you believe language support should be considered a component of graduate education in a foreign language department?
4. Are there other ways or practices, independent of the graduate program, that students have used to improve or maintain their language abilities in the target language?

**D. Additional comments**

Please include any additional comments to the content or form of the survey as you see fit.

*Thank you very much for your time and effort in completing this survey!*

## Appendix 2

### Survey on Graduate Program Support of Advanced-Level Language Development

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**Graduate Student Version**

**A. General program information**

1. Name of Ph.D. granting institution:
2. Name of department:

**B. Participant information**

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Native language:
4. Target language studied in department:
5. Previous experience(s) with target language (please include nature and length of study and/or exposure to language):
6. Other languages studied (and for how long):
7. Number of semesters in doctoral program (including MA work):

**C. Self-perception of target language abilities**

1. Rate how frequently you use target language in the following contexts using the scale from 1 (very infrequently) to 5 (very frequently). Please place an X next to the most appropriate response.

	1 (very <u>infrequently</u> )	.....	5 (very frequently)		
graduate courses	1	2	3	4	5
teaching	1	2	3	4	5
conversations with friends	1	2	3	4	5
conversations with professors	1	2	3	4	5
e-mailing/letter writing	1	2	3	4	5
jobs in which target language is used	1	2	3	4	5
personal reading	1	2	3	4	5
professional reading	1	2	3	4	5

2. Describe your comfort level when speaking the target language. Place an X next to the most appropriate response.

- (1) ... in your graduate classes (which are conducted in the target language).
- (a) *very comfortable*
  - (b) *somewhat comfortable*
  - (c) *not very comfortable*
  - (d) *not applicable*
- (2) ... with professors.
- (a) *very comfortable*
  - (b) *somewhat comfortable*
  - (c) *not very comfortable*
  - (d) *not applicable*
- (3) .... with non-native students from your program. (For example, if you are in a French department and you are speaking with non-native students of French.)
- (a) *very comfortable*
  - (b) *somewhat comfortable*
  - (c) *not very comfortable*
  - (d) *not applicable*
- (4) .... with native students from your program. (For example, if you are in a French department and you are speaking with native French-speaking students.)
- (a) *very comfortable*
  - (b) *somewhat comfortable*
  - (c) *not very comfortable*
  - (d) *not applicable*

3. Indicate your relative strength in the four modalities of target language use. Place an "X" next to the response that best reflects your abilities.

Speaking:	<i>very strong</i>	<i>strong</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>weak</i>
Listening:	<i>very strong</i>	<i>strong</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>weak</i>
Writing:	<i>very strong</i>	<i>strong</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>weak</i>
Reading:	<i>very strong</i>	<i>strong</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>weak</i>

4. Assess the following aspects of your target language abilities. Place an X after the response that best reflects your abilities.

- (1) writing within academic and/or formal contexts (i.e., papers for coursework):
- (a) *very good*
  - (b) *good*
  - (c) *satisfactory*
  - (d) *needs improvement*
  - (e) *not applicable*

- (2) personal writing/writing to friends:
- (a) *very good*
  - (b) *good*
  - (c) *satisfactory*
  - (d) *needs improvement*
  - (e) *not applicable*
- (3) speaking within academic and/or formal contexts:
- (a) *very good*
  - (b) *good*
  - (c) *satisfactory*
  - (d) *needs improvement*
  - (e) *not applicable*
- (4) speaking with friends, colleagues in more informal settings:
- (a) *very good*
  - (b) *good*
  - (c) *satisfactory*
  - (d) *needs improvement*
  - (e) *not applicable*
- (5) reading in academic contexts (i.e., historical, literary, philosophical texts):
- (a) *very good*
  - (b) *good*
  - (c) *satisfactory*
  - (d) *needs improvement*
  - (e) *not applicable*
- (6) reading in nonacademic contexts, i.e., “reading for pleasure”:
- (a) *very good*
  - (b) *good*
  - (c) *satisfactory*
  - (d) *needs improvement*
  - (e) *not applicable*

5. If possible, think of 2–3 graduate students in your department, who are **non-native** speakers of the target language and whom you consider to have **near-native proficiency**. Specify what criteria in your mind make them near-native speakers.

(Student 1):

(Student 2):

(Student 3):

6. In turn, describe your own target language abilities.
7. In your opinion, have your language abilities in the target language changed since you began your graduate studies? In which ways? Why?

#### **D. Description of language programs:**

1. Describe common practices of target language use in your department.

For example:

Are native speakers always addressed in the target language?

What language do you use to speak with your professors outside of class, i.e., office hours, e-mail correspondence?

What language do you speak with fellow graduate students - both native and non-native speakers of the target language? Does this change according to topic or context of the conversation?

Feel free to add other practices not mentioned above.

2. In what language(s) have your graduate courses been conducted? Which ones have been conducted primarily in English, which ones in the target language? Can you discern a reason for different language choices?
3. In which language were you required to write papers? If no specification was given as to language use, in which language did you opt to write, and why?
4. Think about the last few papers that you have written in the target language. Were you given any specific instruction as to the language that was to be used? Were you given any models? What kind of feedback were you given? Was this helpful?
5. If you were asked to give oral presentations in class, in which language were these typically given? Were you given any language-specific guidance or feedback in these presentations?

**E. Departmental practices of target language support**

1. In which professional contexts do you expect to use the target language after completion of your program?
2. Do you think that your graduate department is providing you with adequate support in developing your language abilities to meet the demands of your future professional field? If so, how?
3. What kinds of support in terms of writing or speaking in the target language would you like to get from your program?
4. What courses, if any, have you taught in your program? Has teaching in the target language been helpful to the overall development of your target language abilities?
5. To what extent do you believe language support should be considered a component of graduate education in a foreign language department? Feel free to include personal experiences if necessary.
6. Are there other ways/practices, independent of your graduate program, that you have used or are planning to use to improve or maintain your language abilities in the target language?

Feel free to include any additional comments concerning the survey:

*Thank you very much for your time and effort in completing this survey!*