

Research Issues and Language Program Direction

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THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS: A CASE STUDY OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF LECTURERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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Introduction

The Berkeley Language Center (BLC) was established in July 1994 as a resource center for language teachers at the University of California, Berkeley. In addition to its general mission of improving and strengthening language instruction on the Berkeley campus, one of its primary mandates as set forth by the Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences has been the professionalization of approximately fifty-five lecturers engaged in language teaching, language program direction, and the supervision of TAs.¹ As might be expected, the task of interpreting what the term professionalization should mean was no simple matter. Far from being innocent or univalent, the term professionalization carries with it distinctly different interpretations and agendas depending on the perspective of the speaker. For a dean, for example, professionalization may be driven by institutional and budgetary needs for stricter assessment procedures for rehiring, promotion, and downsizing. From the perspective of the directors of such centers, more often than not faculty whose research specialties are applied linguistics and/or second language acquisition, professionalization entails professional and intellectual

development in regard to both the theory and practice of foreign language teaching and learning. Because decisions to professionalize language teachers generally come from above, with lecturers as the object rather than the initiators of the move to greater professionalization, the voices of the very constituency that will be affected by such undertakings are often overlooked or left out of the equation altogether. Thus, in order to hear first-hand from those it was asked to professionalize, the BLC conducted a comprehensive survey of lecturers teaching foreign languages in Spring 1997. The purpose of the survey was to gather information on how the BLC could assist language teachers in their work and to draw up initial recommendations as to how the BLC could respond to the professional development needs of lecturers.

Though emanating from the experiences of language teachers on one particular campus, the survey results brought to light issues and questions concerning teaching, research, and professional development that are of potential interest to language teachers and language program coordinators on a wider scale. In the following, we will give an overview of the major outcomes of the survey, with emphasis on issues pertaining to the professional development needs reported by lecturers. We will then conclude by describing a framework for the professional development of lecturers that is being developed at UC Berkeley and which may be of use to other universities as well.

The Survey

The survey (Appendix 1) was mailed to 55 people and was completed by 37, a return rate of 67%. We eliminated one of the surveys, as the respondent was not a lecturer. Thus, the data in this report are based on the responses of 36 lecturers who teach languages at UC Berkeley. The respondents came from eleven different departments or programs and, all combined, taught 29 different languages (Appendix 2).

The survey consisted of eight major sections, each of which asked in-depth questions about a specific area: General information on employment; Background information on education and training; Teaching; Professional Activities; Supervision of TAs; Berkeley Language Center resources; Language Media Center; and Suggestions for future support from the BLC. The numeric answers were quantified, and basic descriptive statistics were compiled. Non-numeric data were coded as consistently as possi-

ble in order to obtain uniformity in reporting. A draft of the survey report was presented to the lecturers in September 1997, which yielded useful feedback on the data and provided a check on the accuracy of the data.

For the purpose of this article we will focus on those sections of the survey which shed light on the issue of the professionalization of lecturers. Thus, the major findings on such issues as academic preparation of lecturers, teaching and research, and TA supervision, have been included, but some of the less relevant—or campus-specific data—have been omitted.

Lecturer Profile

Of the thirty-six lecturers who responded to the survey, more than a quarter (10) were language program directors. The number of years that the lecturers had been teaching at UC Berkeley ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of thirty-two years, with an average of ten. This suggests a high degree of stability and professional commitment. In terms of types of contracts, 21 (66%) were employed 100% time, 7 (22%) were employed in the 90–99% range, and 4 (13%) in the 33–67% time range. Seventeen, or half of the lecturers, had one-year renewable contracts, 14 (41%) had three-year renewable positions, and 2 (6%) had “Security of Employment”, i.e., tenure for lecturers, a rank no longer attainable for lecturers at UC Berkeley.

In regard to educational background, more than half of the lecturers responding (23 or 62%) listed a Master’s Degree as the highest degree level attained. One third (12) had Ph.D.s; and two held B.A.s. Almost two-thirds of the respondents stated that they had completed either a Master’s or Ph.D. program with a focus on linguistics (10) and/or applied linguistics/pedagogy (12), while one-third (12) indicated course work mostly in literature. A small subset of the respondents had done course work primarily in the literature/linguistics of a language other than the one they currently teach or in a different subject matter altogether. As we will discuss in greater detail later in this chapter, the fact that a full two-thirds of the lecturers did not complete a degree that involved a major research project such as a dissertation points to the need to provide a well-structured forum in which lecturers can both articulate a research project and become versed in research methodologies. Finally in regard to the profile of lecturers, the overwhelming majority of those who responded were native speakers of the languages they taught (30 or 81%).

Teaching

One section of the survey dealt with the teaching methodologies and classroom activities employed in the language classes on the Berkeley campus. The responses to these questions indicated that most of the language programs were communicatively oriented. Methodological preferences are listed below in order of frequency of response.

Table 1
Teaching Approaches

Communicative approach	25	(67%)*
Grammar-based approaches	15	(40%)
Eclecticism	15	(40%)
Natural approach	7	(18%)
Audiolingualism	6	(16%)
Other	2	(5%)

*In some cases, more than one answer was given

Classroom activities were rated on a scale of 4.0 (very important) to 1.0 (not at all important). In descending order of importance, the activities were ranked as indicated in Table 2.

In general, the more communicatively oriented activities (e.g., conversation or group work) were favored over the more traditional activities, such

Table 2
Perceived Importance of Classroom Activities

Type of Activity	Mean Score; 4.0 = most important
Conversation	3.7
Group/pair work	3.5
Analyzing texts	2.9
Problem-solving	2.8
Reading aloud	2.1
Lecture	1.9
Reciting poems	1.8
Choral response	1.7
Rote memorization	1.7
Dialog memorization	1.6

as rote memorization and choral response. However, not all activity types appeared to be clearly understood within the context of communicative methodology. Problem-solving, for example, was misinterpreted by some as not relevant to language teaching and as such was not recognized as a communicative activity. Additional activities that were not listed in the survey choices but that were mentioned in the survey answers were oral presentations, role-play, videos, and translation.

Although the communicative approach was the most frequently mentioned approach and seemed generally well integrated into the language teaching programs, some of the responses suggested that the concept of communicative language teaching might be unclear. Several responses, for instance, indicated a contrasting mixture of methodologies, such as communicative language teaching and grammar-translation method, or communicative and audiolingual methods. In some cases, this was due to the fact that classical or “dead” languages were taught, but in other responses methodological choices were less clear. Appropriate techniques and activities, for example, were not consistently identified in the survey. It appears, then, that the majority of the language programs has embraced the communicative method, but that the concept of communicative language teaching is apparently not always theoretically meaningful.

The lecturers were asked to indicate those areas in which they felt they did well and those areas where they felt they needed improvement (thus more than one area could be checked off on their form). Table 3 lists the

Table 3
Aspects of Teaching that Instructors Thought They Did Well

	# of affirmative responses (%)	
Teaching culture	31	(86%)
Motivating students	31	(86%)
Teaching grammar	29	(80%)
Group work	26	(72%)
Working with literary texts	23	(64%)
Helping students write better	23	(64%)
Teaching pronunciation	22	(61%)
Classroom time management	22	(61%)
Grading students' work	17	(47%)
Using computers in teaching	7	(19%)

aspects of teaching with which instructors felt comfortable in descending order of frequency of response.

The aspects of teaching that lecturers wished to improve are listed in Table 4 in descending order of frequency of response.

Table 4
Aspects of Teaching that Instructors Wished to Improve

	# of responses (%)	
Using computers in teaching	23	(64%)
Helping students write better	12	(33%)
Group work	10	(28%)
Working with literary texts	8	(22%)
Grading students' work	7	(19%)
Teaching pronunciation	6	(17%)
Teaching culture	6	(17%)
Motivating students	6	(17%)
Classroom time management	4	(11%)
Teaching grammar	2	(6%)

It is not surprising that responses which scored low in Table 3 generally scored high in Table 4 and vice versa, but this was not always the case. Lecturers clearly wished to learn more about using computers in language instruction but did not consider technology to be one of their strengths in teaching. We will discuss this in greater detail below. Writing and group work were also areas in which the instructors felt they needed improvement. In contrast, most felt that they did well with grammar and culture and motivating students, with only a small percentage of respondents indicating that these were aspects of their teaching that they would like to improve. The fact that group work was listed *both* as something the respondents felt they did well *and* as an aspect of teaching that needed improvement points to one of several contradictions in the survey results. It may suggest that instructors consider group work to be an important aspect of the communicative classroom and would like to continue to develop this skill or that group work has become an icon or ideal that lecturers feel they must identify with and support.

Research

Another section of the survey, entitled "Professional Activities," asked specific questions about various aspects of professional development: subscriptions to professional journals, membership in professional organizations, and involvement in research. The survey indicated that the lecturers read and/or subscribed to an average of 2.3 professional journals in the area of language teaching. However, this number actually represents less than half of the lecturers who responded to the survey, as twenty of the lecturers responded "none" or gave no response. The respondents most frequently mentioned language-specific journals (40%) (e.g., the *French Review*, *Al'Arabiyya*, *Korean Language in America*), while other journals that were mentioned repeatedly were *The Modern Language Journal*, *Foreign Language Annals*, and *TESOL Quarterly*. The majority of the lecturers (59%) belonged to a language-specific organization (e.g., the American Association of Teachers of German, the Association for Asian Studies, Association of Teachers of Japanese), while a small percentage belonged to national organizations such as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (21%) or the Modern Language Association (16%).

Fourteen people reported being engaged in research on the teaching of foreign languages (38%). Their work included articles and conference presentations, textbook chapters, video projects, and technology-related teaching materials. An equal number of lecturers was not engaged in any kind of research, while nine gave no response to this question. Fifteen of the people who reported not doing research or who did not answer the question indicated that they would be interested in doing research in the future. Twenty-one people did not respond to this question. It appears, then, that a significant number of the lecturers (41%) would be interested in pursuing research, but are not currently so engaged.

A number of factors appear to play a role in keeping lecturers from seeking a more active role in research. The most frequently cited factor in the survey was that of time constraints. Course loads for full-time lecturers are higher than for tenure-track faculty and average three courses per semester. Lecturer salaries are, however, generally lower, which is one of the reasons that many lecturers teach during the summer as well. Table 5 provides an overview of the teaching load per semester for the lecturers surveyed.

Some of the lecturers were involved in team-teaching, which accounts for the course loads exceeding the three-course maximum per semester.

Table 5
Course Loads for Lecturers per Semester

	Fall		Spring		Summer	
	# (%) of lecturers n = 36		# (%) of lecturers n = 36		# (%) of lecturers n = 36	
5 courses:	1	(3%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)
4 courses:	0	(0%)	1	(3%)	0	(0%)
3 courses:	14	(39%)	13	(36%)	1	(3%)
2 courses:	12	(33%)	14	(39%)	2	(5%)
1 course:	6	(17%)	6	(17%)	13	(36%)
No answer:	3	(8%)	2	(5%)	20	(55%)

Language coordinators at UC Berkeley generally receive half a course to one course per semester release time for program coordination and supervision of graduate student instructors (GSIs). Therefore the 36% of the lecturers who reported a two-course teaching load were most likely the language coordinators in the survey. Though lecturers are not generally required to serve on departmental or university committees, a significant percentage (43%) reported committee service, with the majority reporting committee service related to TA issues. Only two individuals (6%) reported service on Ph.D. or M.A. committees.

Language program coordinators, as a group, cited departmental duties as another major time constraint, as they were expected to be involved in a large number of activities including student placement, supervision of TAs, curriculum development, administrative tasks, and committee work.

A second factor which appeared to limit research initiatives was lack of funding for research-related expenses and lack of release time to conduct research. Departmental funding is generally not available for lecturers for travel to conferences and meetings, although limited travel funds are available from several entities on campus, such as the Berkeley Language Center or the Center for Western European Studies, and may be applied for on a competitive basis. As lecturers are expected to be primarily engaged in teaching, research is not considered central to their duties and is not financially supported within departments.² Therefore, no course release time is available for lecturers to conduct research, nor is financial or administrative assistance offered for research projects. Limited funding is

available, however, outside the department in the form of research fellowships or instructional grants.

The position of the lecturers within the academic hierarchy, then, is a third factor which affects the role that research plays in professional lives. Lecturer appointments and evaluations are based upon satisfactory teaching performance and on instruction-related matters, such as TA supervision and program coordination. Thus, there is little incentive for lecturers to engage in research efforts which will most likely not be taken into account in re-appointment or retention decisions. The distinction between lecturers and tenure-track faculty is not simply a matter of academic rank, but also clearly divides the tasks of teaching versus research as noted previously by Patrikis (1995).

The survey raised some serious questions about what constitutes research and about how research should be perceived. Several of the respondents who answered that they were not engaged in research nevertheless reported being involved in a variety of exciting and innovative projects, such as production of videos or CD-ROMs, textbook writing, workshops, and so forth. This suggests that the notion of "research" appears to be rather narrowly defined and perhaps restricted to more theoretical topics, while more practical topics are not counted as "real" research. A less rigid and traditional view of research is therefore necessary in order for lecturers and language program coordinators to recognize and value their contributions as research and to capitalize on their expertise in the areas of teaching and classroom-related issues. It may be useful to explore both the development of knowledge of the field and ways of conducting research as elements which comprise the domain of classroom research.

An important first step in approaching research is familiarity with the literature of the field and awareness of the theoretical and methodological advances in second language acquisition research. It was disappointing to note that more than fifty percent of the respondents in our survey gave no indication of reading professional journals. This was even more striking, since our respondents can be presumed to be a more engaged group of lecturers given that they had taken the initiative to fill out the questionnaire. Based on the fact that a large number of respondents indicated that they would be interested in doing research, the reading of professional journals would seem a logical place to start. A useful model in this respect is that provided by Johnson (1992, pp. 6–7), who argues against the "consumer" model of research in which teachers passively read information and then

attempt to apply the research in the classroom. She notes that “[i]t is more productive to take the attitude that research provides an impetus that encourages us to reflect continually on language use and learning processes, to rethink practice, and to take action to improve practice.” Johnson proposes an alternate model which views applying research as “re-seeing learning” and which focuses on the insights gained from reading research.

A second step is that of conducting one’s own research. As suggested earlier, a number of the lecturers were already engaged in various projects but did not necessarily consider this research. It is necessary that teachers become aware of their own expertise and their opportunities to contribute to the field. There has been ample debate on, for example, the role of research in teaching and on the cross-fertilization of teaching practice and research (see, for instance, Clarke 1994; Pica 1994). Johnson and Chen note:

In addition to teachers’ roles as active constructors of knowledge from the research they read and hear reported, many researchers, teachers, and teacher-researchers alike advocate new and expanding roles for teachers in the research process. These roles include teachers initiating and conducting research themselves, participating in teacher inquiry groups, or collaborating with university professors in joint projects. (1992, p. 214)

The interest in such an approach to research and practice was evident in our survey, as the respondents expressed an interest in workshops or lectures on practical topics which focus on classroom and teaching practice in addition to the current lecture series on theoretical topics. This appears to dovetail with the outcome of the self-evaluation of teaching practice (see Tables 1-4), which indicated a need for continued professional development in areas that instructors considered central to their teaching methodology and to their future direction in language teaching.

Computers

The questions in the survey pertaining to computer use in teaching brought forth valuable information about the extent to which lecturers used computers in teaching and the extent to which lecturers were interested in improving their skills in this area.

The majority of lecturers indicated that they use computers to one extent or another in their teaching. However, about one-third of the

lecturers who responded seemed to have interpreted the question “Do you use computers in teaching or to supplement teaching?” to mean using computers as a word-processing tool, whereas the other two-thirds interpreted the question in regard to using computers in an “interactive way,” i.e., using a computer as a writing-enhancing tool. Most lecturers reported that they used computers in order to create hand-outs and extra teaching materials for their classes. About one-third reported that they had created class Web sites and used computers during class time to teach their respective languages. This latter type of use took place in a computer lab with a frequency ranging from once a week to never. As to the value computer use has had for students, twenty-four of the twenty-six lecturers responding to this section indicated “somewhat helpful” to “very helpful,” although no indication was given as to how they came to this overall assessment. It is probably safe to conclude that students seem to be benefiting from the use of computer—whether as a result of receiving a hand-out, using a CD-ROM multimedia program in the language lab, checking the class Web site for homework, or sending e-mail messages to a class discussion list or to the instructor.

The reason most lecturers gave for not using computers at all is clear. Either there was no appropriate material available for their language or what was available was on a platform that until recently was not extensively supported by the Berkeley’s Language Media Center (LMC). The recent opening of a new twenty-six-position computer lab will thus address a need clearly stated by respondents to this survey.

The problems generally encountered by the lecturers who used computers included limited lab accessibility, not enough computers, and the need for “better” software. The first two of these issues are related to budgetary constraints, and will most likely be eased by the addition of the new lab this fall. The need for “better” software is, however, a two-pronged issue which seems to suggest the need not only for more programs, but also for more relevant programs in general. Interestingly enough, there was no discussion of the pedagogical framework for using what are considered relevant programs. This lack of commentary on pedagogy is, however, consistent with the general discourse on the use of technology in the classroom and points to the need for a forum in which to critically discuss the pedagogical integration of technology.

For the lecturers who would like to but are not at present taking advantage of the new technology, most suggest that the LMC could assist them

by providing more computers in both platforms, conducting workshops demonstrating how various programs work, and offering basic tech-support with creating Web pages and setting up a class e-mail account. In addition, a large number of lecturers (28) stated that they would be interested in pursuing software development if technical and financial support (i.e., course release time) were available. There was an almost unanimous call for "one-stop shopping" so that lecturers could go to one place/person to address their technology needs.

TA Supervision

More than half of the lecturers who responded to the survey (20) indicated that they were involved in the pedagogical preparation of TAs. These twenty lecturers represented twelve of the thirteen different language programs on the Berkeley campus. The number of TAs under the supervision of any given lecturer varied from a high of twenty to a low of one, with the average being five. It should be noted that various arrangements exist from department to department at Berkeley as to how supervision is organized. In some departments, there may be different supervisors for different levels of language courses while in other departments, one lecturer may be responsible for overseeing all TAs.

As might be expected, TAs at Berkeley are primarily responsible for teaching or assisting in first- and second-year language courses, although there are some exceptions to this as TAs advance in their graduate programs. For example, in at least three departments, experienced TAs may teach courses that fulfill the university-wide Reading and Composition course required of first-year students. In several departments, advanced TAs may teach upper-division conversation and writing courses. In still other situations, TAs assist in faculty-taught courses and may be discussion-section leaders for courses in literature and cultural studies. Advanced TAs may also have the opportunity to teach courses for graduate students on developing a reading knowledge of the language for research purposes.

Pre-semester Orientations

As has been described in previous volumes in this series (Fox 1992; Pons 1993), departments of foreign languages and literature have a long-standing tradition of TA preparation programs. As has also been noted, however, most of the preparation that is given to TAs falls in the category of pre-service orientations and pedagogy seminars generally given in the first

semester or year that TAs teach. Berkeley is no exception to this. Of the twenty respondents, sixteen indicated that they offer a pre-semester orientation ranging from two hours to three days, and covering topics such as introduction to the departmental language program and course structure, introduction to the textbook and to basic teaching methodologies, the basics for getting started, and preparing for the first day. In addition to the departmental orientation, the Graduate Division's centralized office for TA development offers a three-hour workshop for TAs in foreign languages which complements the departmental programs.

While the adequacy of a department's pre-semester orientation can only be accurately evaluated in tandem with the ongoing preparation that TAs receive once they begin teaching, it does seem to be the case that the orientations cover logistics and pedagogy with emphasis on the former.

Based on these findings, one of the recommendations emanating from the survey is to explore the possibility of organizing and conducting a week-long orientation program at the beginning of the fall semester for all new TAs teaching foreign languages. TAs would meet together in the morning for general sessions and then in the afternoon with language program directors in their own departments for hands-on practical preparation such as lesson plan design and practice teaching. Significant to this endeavor and the process of professionalization would be the exchange of ideas among lecturers in preparation for the program. In the process of offering a more thorough orientation, this model would tap into and develop the expertise of the many different teachers on campus and would contribute to building an intellectual community while honoring the differences that exist from department to department in terms of pedagogical methodologies and philosophies.

Pedagogy Seminars

Of the twelve language programs represented in the survey, two-thirds offer semester-long pedagogy seminars for TAs ranging from one to three hours per week. In one of the cases where there is no pedagogy seminar, a course is being designed for Fall 1998. Of the eight language programs that offer pedagogy seminars, there is variation as to the number of semesters that these seminars are required of TAs, ranging from one semester to four, with half of the departments reporting that TAs take a pedagogy seminar in each semester they teach. With the exception of one department, these pedagogy seminars are taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis, most

likely reflecting the commonly held attitude in many departments of language and literature that language teaching and the preparation of TAs for teaching careers lacks a scholarly basis and should therefore not be considered on a par with other aspects of the graduate academic program. The course requirements of these seminars may also reflect prevalent attitudes of departments or of lecturers themselves regarding the intellectual rigor that can be required of graduate students in these courses. In only three of the eight departments, for example, are TAs required to write a research paper as part of the course, something that would be almost unheard of in other graduate seminars.

The finding that half of the departments require TAs to participate in pedagogy seminars in each semester of teaching raises questions about the nature and definition of pedagogy seminars. In many cases, a pedagogy seminar is limited to practical training, where TAs meet weekly with the program coordinator to discuss teaching methods for any particular part of a chapter. In other cases, a pedagogy seminar is one that discusses pedagogical theory in tandem with its day-to-day application. In yet other cases, a pedagogy seminar is one that attempts to go beyond pedagogical theory or methodologies to address issues in the field of second language acquisition theory. In order to understand the differences that exist, we collected syllabi from the various language programs to analyze where these programs fall along this continuum. What we came to see is that most of the courses covered varying combinations of theory and practical application, with some programs teaching professional skills such as textbook analysis and classroom observation techniques that will serve the TAs well in their careers as language teachers. Based on the fact that different pedagogical approaches and practical expertise (e.g., working with literary texts, working with written essays) are needed in each level of teaching, the model that seems the most useful is to offer TAs a pedagogy course over several semesters to coincide with the progression of courses from beginning to advanced that a TA might teach. This model would incorporate a weekly discussion both of pedagogical theory and day-by-day teaching over the course of four semesters.

Because these departmentally-based pedagogy seminars do not allow time to discuss in much detail broader issues of second language acquisition theory, a course addressing these issues can be developed. For example the BLC currently offers such a course which is intended for

graduate student instructors who are entering the job market and need to be familiar with recent developments in second language acquisition theory, applied linguistics, and language pedagogy. The course is also open to lecturers from all foreign language programs. It is offered as a variable credit course (two to four units) with the option of taking it on a pass/fail basis. One way for this cross-departmental SLA course to contribute to the further professional and intellectual development of lecturers would be to rotate its teaching among qualified lecturers. Lecturers who teach the course could be encouraged to create a course portfolio that would include metacritical commentary on their course syllabus, materials, assignments, and teaching methodologies that would be of use to other lecturers planning to teach the course in the future.

Classroom Observation and Videotaping of TAs

Three-fourths of the lecturers involved in the supervision of TAs reported conducting classroom observations and/or videotaping of TAs. The frequency of the observations ranged from one to five times per semester, with most respondents indicating that they conduct two classroom observations. One interesting point was that the highest frequency of classroom observation was in those programs that lacked a pedagogy seminar. This suggested to us that a more frequent one-on-one coaching/mentoring structure might partially compensate for the absence of a weekly group meeting. It is also important to note that the situations in which there was no classroom observation of TAs involved lecturers supervising advanced TAs. In other words, classroom observation and videotaping are most commonly used to foster the pedagogical development of TAs new to language teaching. Given recent research on the developmental stages of TAs (Nyquist and Sprague 1992), it would seem useful to consider the progressively different needs of TAs at various levels of experience.

When asked about the procedures used for classroom observation, there was substantial variation among respondents regarding preparatory and follow-up procedures. Approximately half of those who conducted classroom observations engaged in a pre-observation discussion, while all followed up the observation by a discussion with the TA. In addition, roughly one half of the TA supervisors who conducted classroom observations provided written feedback, either directly to the TA, for their individual use, or to a departmental file.

In more than a third of the language programs at Berkeley, faculty other than the TA supervisor or language program coordinator were reported to be involved in classroom observations of TAs. The procedures for these observations were not discussed in the survey as thoroughly as were those of the supervising coordinators, and these visitations raise questions as to how they are conducted and for what purposes. In some departments, faculty who do not teach language courses may wish to keep themselves apprised of what is transpiring in the language courses that prepare undergraduates for advanced courses taught by faculty. Where this is the case, faculty may learn a great deal from observing classes. If, on the other hand, classroom observation is used for the purpose of evaluation, it is unlikely that the faculty visiting the class will be in a position to accurately assess the pedagogical issues involved. Most senior faculty have not had the opportunity to stay abreast of the research in pedagogy and in second language acquisition theory and therefore may make recommendations that are in opposition to those of the language program coordinator, creating a predicament for the TA who is being given divergent messages and feedback. Language program coordinators can play a significant role in avoiding this scenario by holding a workshop for faculty and TAs on how best to conduct classroom observations. This should, of course, be based on an approach that views observation as a process of mutual exchange and learning (Wilkerson 1988).

One additional form of classroom observation that is gaining in popularity across the disciplines at Berkeley is that of peer observation. About one-third of the language programs at Berkeley require TAs to participate in a peer observation program with two other programs strongly encouraging TAs to do so. It is interesting to note that pre- and post-observation discussions are far less common when TAs visit each other than when supervisors observe TAs. Similar to the recommendation for faculty who participate in classroom observations but are not otherwise involved in the language program, the peer observation programs could be enhanced by the introduction of specific procedures that could turn the observations into a more rigorous mutual exchange. One way in which the BLC could assist language program coordinators, faculty observers, and TAs alike would be to organize a discussion and research group on the theory and practice of classroom observation using, for example, the volume *Face to Face* (Lewis 1988) as a text.

Future Changes

When asked what types of changes they would like to make to their programs in order to prepare TAs for teaching, lecturers offered the following suggestions, all of which can be viewed as integral facets of a comprehensive TA development program. Several lecturers would like to offer additional, more extensive, or improved pedagogy seminars. Three respondents would like to have a more comprehensive pre-semester orientation; one respondent indicated that s/he felt that a more graded/apprenticeship model of teaching would be desirable, i.e., that students in the first semester should grade papers, monitor language lab exercises, and so forth, and should then start teaching only in the second semester. Another person indicated that TAs should have comprehensive training before beginning to teach, not concurrent with the first semester. Others stated that they would like to add more theoretical readings to the pedagogy seminars or would like to be able to offer a seminar in each of the four semesters of beginning and intermediate language teaching. One respondent also noted that s/he would like to improve the pedagogy seminar in the area of professional development.

The suggestions that the respondents made point to the need to rethink the space and importance we grant to the preparation of future faculty in our graduate programs. When one considers that most graduate students will be employed in faculty positions where often the majority of what they will be teaching are language courses, the need to expand the training of graduate students in areas such as applied linguistics, pedagogical methods, and second language acquisition theory becomes apparent.

Creating a Framework for Professional Development

In this section we would like to describe a framework being constructed at UC Berkeley for the professional development of lecturers. This framework includes opportunities for research (BLC Fellowships, research interest groups), exchange of ideas among peers (e-mail lists, *BLC Newsletter*, syllabus exchange, peer observation and videotaping, town meetings), technical support (Language Media Center), and development of theoretical and practical knowledge of the field (BLC workshops, courses).

Three recently established programs which show particular potential for addressing the research and professional development interests of lecturers are the BLC Fellowship program, research interest groups, and a professional development workshop series.

BLC Fellows

Initiated prior to the survey in the 1996-97 academic year, this program provides financial support to a limited number of lecturers and graduate students for research on instructional development projects. The fellows meet weekly with the Director and the Associate Director of the BLC as a research team to discuss their projects, and they present their projects at a BLC workshop at the end of the fellowship semester or year. Fellows are also encouraged to submit their project to professional journals for publication. Projects have included developing a training program for Chinese character conversion on CD-ROM, designing a CD-ROM for teaching Latin-American culture, creating a discourse-based curriculum for third-semester German, the introduction of Francophone texts into the second-year French curriculum, and developing a curriculum in Afrikaans.

Research Groups

In response to the interest expressed in the survey for greater focus on non-Western languages and for the provision of opportunities for lecturers to meet with peers to exchange ideas on specific topics, a research interest group on heritage languages has been established. This group, which includes participants from a variety of languages, such as Tagalog, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Spanish, will explore, for instance, what the specific needs of heritage language speakers are within each department and how departments can develop or adapt language curricula for native speakers.

Professional Development Workshops

Based on feedback received from the survey, the BLC has offered a professional development workshop series for lecturers on the topic of developing a teaching portfolio. Six lecturers from five different language programs and one international exchange student took part. The series consisted of four sessions held once a month for two hours. A syllabus was designed to enable participants to move step-by-step through reflective activities to construct a portfolio. Over the course of the semester,

participants developed and received peer feedback on statements of teaching philosophy. They also took part in a peer observation program, conducted and reflected upon mid-course evaluations, and kept teaching journals. A listserv, which will be extended to all lecturers in fall semester 1998, was also developed. One of the positive outcomes of the series was that the lecturers were highly interested and engaged in the process of reflecting on teaching which is at the heart of portfolio construction, rather than simply focusing on the outcome of producing a portfolio to use in the review process. Based on feedback from the participants, additional professional development workshops and activities are being considered for the future.

Implications

The institutional practice of hiring language teaching professionals without carefully formulating a structure for professional and intellectual development that would address the differences that exist among lecturers in terms of educational background and expertise is one that needs to be carefully analyzed by the profession. In addition, the almost exclusive identification of lecturers with teaching institutionally sanctions the all-too-familiar divide between language teaching on the one hand and literature and theory on the other and blatantly withholds from the project of second language acquisition and the teaching of foreign languages the rigorous scholarly expectations, standards, and respect which characterize all other aspects of departments of modern languages and literature.

Given the fact that lecturers currently employed at U.S. institutions are generally not hired with the understanding that they will be evaluated on anything but teaching, one needs to be particularly sensitive about changing the game rules mid-stream. What the survey at Berkeley tells us, however, is that in many instances, the desire to conduct research and to participate in professional and intellectual development exists but that the conditions that would foster these endeavors do not. Thus, language centers such as the BLC have a central role to play in creating a context in which the research and professional development interests that lecturers express can evolve and be institutionally acknowledged. While the jury is still out as to whether or not all of the lecturers, given the opportunity, will take their stated research and professionalization desires and convert them into actual projects, constructing a framework that would allow this to happen is imperative.

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Notes

1. At the University of California, Berkeley teaching assistants are called Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs). Within the University of California system, the titles of 'Lecturer' and 'Senior Lecturer,' with or without 'Potential Security of Employment,' fall under the Non-Senate Instructional Unit.
2. It should be noted that differences may exist from department to department in the interpretation of the guidelines set forth for lecturers in their Union contract.

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Appendix 1

Berkeley Language Center Survey of Language Lecturers at the University of California at Berkeley

The Berkeley Language Center (BLC) is currently in the process of gathering information from language teachers on campus to determine the direction of BLC programs and how it can best serve the needs of language teachers on the Berkeley campus. Please take the time to fill out this questionnaire and return it to the BLC office, B-40 Dwinelle Hall, #2640 by *April 11, 1997*. Feel free to add comments on a separate page if you need more space.

General Information

Name

Title(s) (e.g., lecturer, tutor, language program coordinator—list all that apply)

Percentage employed

Type of contract (e.g., one-year renewable, three-year renewable, SOE, etc.)

Number of years teaching at Berkeley

Department

Address

Phone

E-mail address

Background Information—Education and Training

Educational degrees or U.S. equivalent:

B.A./B.S.

M.A./M.S.

Ph.D.

Other

Please describe as specifically as possible the training you received to become a language teacher prior to coming to Berkeley.

Course work/dissertation mostly in (Please check one):

Literature of the language you teach

Linguistics of the language you teach

- Applied Linguistics/pedagogy
 Literature/linguistics of a language other than the one you teach
 Different subject matter: _____

Teaching

Language(s) you teach

Are you a native speaker of the language(s) you teach?

Please indicate the courses you teach, including those you currently teach and those you teach on a regular basis.

Please indicate how many hours per week these classes meet.

How many students on average do you have in each one of these classes?

How many courses do you teach in the fall, in the spring and in the summer?

If you are a language program coordinator, how much release time do you get for this activity?

Are you satisfied with the textbooks and ancillary materials you are now using? If not, what are the chief drawbacks?

How would you describe your method of teaching?

1. Is it influenced by particular methodological approaches or techniques?

- Communicative approach
 Grammar-based
 Audio-lingual method
 Natural approach
 Eclectic
 Other

2. Please rate the importance of the following activities in your teaching on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 = not at all important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = important, and 4 = very important.

- Pattern drills
 Conversation
 Lecture
 Dictation
 Group/pair work
 Choral response

- Rote memorization
- Problem-solving
- Memorization of dialogue
- Reading aloud
- Reciting poems
- Analyzing texts
- Other

What aspects of teaching do you think you do well? Check all that apply:

- Working with literary texts
- Teaching grammar
- Group work
- Teaching culture
- Using computers in teaching
- Grading students' work
- Helping students write better
- Motivating students
- Classroom time management
- Teaching pronunciation
- Other: _____

What aspects of your teaching would you like to improve? Check all that apply:

- Working with literary texts
- Teaching grammar
- Group work
- Teaching culture
- Using computers in teaching
- Grading students' work
- Helping students write better
- Motivating students
- Classroom time management
- Teaching pronunciation
- Other: _____

Describe the ways you use literary texts in the various levels of your courses by placing a check next to each rubric that applies, where B = beginning classes, I = intermediate classes, and A = advanced classes:

B I A

- ___ ___ ___ As a means for practicing pronunciation
 ___ ___ ___ As a means to practice grammar
 ___ ___ ___ As a point of departure for student compositions
 ___ ___ ___ As a basis for communicative activities
 ___ ___ ___ As part of teaching culture

How do you deal with grammar in the various levels of your courses? Please place a check next to each rubric that applies, where B = beginning classes, I = intermediate classes, and A = advanced classes:

B I A

- ___ ___ ___ Students read grammar explanations at home and we practice in class.
 ___ ___ ___ I use communicative activities to practice grammar.
 ___ ___ ___ I use drills to practice grammar.
 ___ ___ ___ I teach grammar inductively.
 ___ ___ ___ I teach grammar deductively.
 ___ ___ ___ I don't teach grammar explicitly.
 ___ ___ ___ Other: _____

DO YOU USE COMPUTERS IN TEACHING OR TO SUPPLEMENT TEACHING?

1. Describe how you have used them.
2. How often during the semester?
3. To what extent do you believe this has been of value to the students?
4. What problems—if any—did you encounter?
5. If you choose not to use computers, why not?
6. If you do not use computers, but would like to, how could the BLC's Language Media Center (formerly known as the Language Laboratory) assist you?
7. Do you have access to a computer in your department? Does it meet your needs?
8. Do you have an e-mail account? If not, why?

DO YOU USE VIDEOS IN YOUR TEACHING?

1. How often during the semester?
2. If so, please describe how you have worked with videos and whether this has been of value to your students.
3. If you choose not to use videos, please explain why.

BEYOND TEACHING THE COURSES YOU LISTED ABOVE, HOW DO YOU CONTRIBUTE TO SHAPING THE LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN YOUR DEPARTMENT?

1. What is the structure of governance in your department regarding your language program?
2. How are language teaching decisions made? (e.g., textbook selection, who teaches what course, supervision of GSIs, development of the language program)
3. What voice do you have in these decisions?
4. Do you think greater input on your part in these areas would benefit the language program?
5. Do you serve on departmental committees? If yes, which ones?

Professional Activities

What journals do you currently read and/or subscribe to pertaining to language teaching? Indicate which ones you find most useful:

Are you engaged in research on teaching foreign languages? Please feel free to attach a copy of your C.V.

If you have not given papers or published articles, would you be interested in doing so in the future?

What professional organizations do you belong to? (Please write out full title.)

Supervision of GSIs (Please skip this section if you do not supervise GSIs.)

How many GSIs do you supervise?

What courses do they teach?

WHAT DO YOU CURRENTLY DO TO PREPARE YOUR GSIs FOR TEACHING? PLEASE GIVE AS MUCH DETAILED INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE:

1. Pre-semester orientation. Please indicate length and content.

2. 300-level pedagogy seminar(s) (Please attach a course syllabus if there is one.)
3. What do you cover?
4. How often and for how many hours per week does the class meet?
5. How many semesters are the GSIs required to participate in a 300-level pedagogy seminar? Please do not include so-called "shadow courses," where students enroll for empty credits.
6. How many credits do GSIs receive?
7. Are these courses taken S/U or for a grade?
8. What are the course requirements?

VIDEOTAPING AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATION:

1. Are GSIs observed or taped during the semester? If yes, how many times?
2. Please describe the procedures you use, i.e., pre-observation discussion, videotaping, follow-up meeting, written summary, other.
3. Are other faculty in the department involved in classroom observations of GSIs?
4. Are GSIs required to observe other GSIs and, if so, are there formal procedures they are recommended to follow?

EVALUATION OF GSI PREPARATION PROGRAM:

1. Do you ask GSIs to evaluate the program they participate in to prepare them for teaching? Please describe what format you use to get feedback. (Midterm evaluation, end-of-semester, informal, verbal, etc.)
2. What aspects of the program do they find most useful?
3. Are there any changes you would like to make to improve the current program you have for preparing GSIs?
4. In what areas do you feel GSIs need more guidance than they are currently receiving?

THE GSI TEACHING AND RESOURCE CENTER:

1. Do you and/or your GSIs take part in the programs offered by the GSI Teaching and Resource Center? (e.g., orientation, grant programs,

workshops, individual consultations, seminar for faculty teaching with GSIs).

2. Are there any ways in which the GSI Teaching and Resource Center could be of greater assistance to you?

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU HAVE INPUT INTO:

1. The selection of GSIs?
2. The assignment of GSIs to particular courses?
3. Determining whether GSIs should be rehired?

Berkeley Language Center (BLC) Resources

How many of the 6–7 annual BLC teacher training workshops do you attend?

Reasons for not attending the others:

What topics would you like to see addressed at these workshops?

Do you prefer hands-on, practical topics, theoretical topics, or both?

Do you have a preference as to the format of the workshops: lecture, interactive workshop, or do you like a combination of both?

Do you use the BLC reading room? Are there resources that would make you use the reading room more if available?

The Language Media Center (LMC)

Which of the following currently available services of the Language Media Center (LMC) are used by your classes or your students (F = Frequently, O = Often, S = Seldom, N = Never)?

F O S N

1. ___ ___ ___ ___ Audio tape drop-in listening facilities
2. ___ ___ ___ ___ Audio tape check-out for home use
3. ___ ___ ___ ___ Audio tape laboratory (for class listening in Rm. 33)
4. ___ ___ ___ ___ Purchase of audio tapes
5. ___ ___ ___ ___ Video tape viewing facilities (class and individual)
6. ___ ___ ___ ___ SCOLA viewing facilities
7. ___ ___ ___ ___ High-8 video cameras
8. ___ ___ ___ ___ 16mm film
9. ___ ___ ___ ___ Macintosh computer lab
10. ___ ___ ___ ___ Portable equipment (overhead projectors, tape players, slide projectors, etc.)

Which of the following services currently under development by the LMC would you and/or your students be interested in using (Y = Yes, P = Probably, U = Unlikely, N = No)?

Y P U N

1. ___ ___ ___ ___ A drop-in computer lab for F.L. resource software (encyclopedias, dictionaries, word processors)
2. ___ ___ ___ ___ A drop-in computer lab for F.L. instruction software (commercial or locally developed language instruction software)
3. ___ ___ ___ ___ Multimedia development lab for digitizing materials and creating software
4. ___ ___ ___ ___ Check out laptop computers for presentations
5. ___ ___ ___ ___ Check out laptop computers for software development

If available, would you use a high-tech classroom with access to unobtrusive networked computers, computer and video projection on large screen, and modular seating?

___ Yes ___ Maybe ___ No

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH COMPUTERS:

1. Which computer environment do you currently use?
___ Macintosh ___ Windows ___ Other ___ None
2. Which computer environment dominates in your language area, i.e., most available software for your language is on which platform?
___ Macintosh ___ Windows ___ Both
3. Is there sufficient support (financial, release time, training, reward for success) for you to pursue software development, if you so desire?
___ Yes, sufficient support
___ Insufficient support
___ No support
4. If there were financial incentives and technical support available, would you pursue development of software for foreign language instruction?
___ Yes
___ Probably

___ Unlikely

___ No

5. Please indicate the kind of technical support you would like to see the LMC offer.

Are there other ways the LMC could better serve you?

How can the BLC support you further in your work?

To what extent do you currently have a dialog about teaching with other lecturers/language coordinators in your department or those in other departments?

Would you find it useful to meet regularly with other lecturers and/or language program coordinators?

If so, what topics would you like to discuss at these meetings (e.g., developing a teaching portfolio, assessing teaching and learning, developing communicative activities, teaching literary texts, etc.)?

Would you be interested in participating in a peer observation program with a colleague or in having yourself videotaped in the classroom?

Do you subscribe to the BLC e-mail list? If so, is there any function that this list could serve that it is not currently serving?

Would you be interested in being on an e-mail discussion list for lecturers in foreign languages and/or language coordinators and/or GSI supervisors?

What suggestions do you have for how the BLC can assist you further in your teaching?

Please feel free to add any comments on teaching foreign languages at Berkeley that you would like to bring to our attention.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

Appendix 2

Languages Reported in BLC Survey

Afrikaans, Arabic, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Pali, Prakrit, Punjabi, Russian, Sanskrit, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu, Veda, Vietnamese, Welsh