

Annual Report for Assessment of Outcomes- World Languages (Russian)

(For Degree, Certificate or Core Outcomes)

To complete this Assessment Report, please address the questions below, and send to learningassessment@pcc.edu by **June 20, 2011**; subject line: REPORT Assessment [SAC]

1. Describe changes that have been implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes that resulted from outcome assessments carried out in the previous academic year.

(Information provided here may be referenced, inserted into or summarized in Program Review 2.C.iii (for Core Outcomes) or 6.B.iii (for CTE Degree and Certificate outcomes).

In 2010-2011 the World Languages SAC did not assess the core outcome for critical thinking, so we are doing this assessment this year.

2. Identify the outcomes assessed this year, and describe the methods used.
What were the results of the assessment (i.e., what did you learn about how well students are meeting the outcomes)?

This assessment is for the Critical Thinking Core Outcome

a. Describe the method(s) you used.

To assess the learning outcome of critical thinking, the World Language SAC chose to have second-year Russian students in Russian 201 complete a listening comprehension activity based on watching an episode from a video series and to then assess the results using a specially designed rubric to measure levels of critical thinking. The results showed that second year language students are using high levels of critical thinking in World Language classes.

Because World Language students are performing skills in a foreign language, we were not able to use the college-designed rubrics for outcomes assessment, as they assess student performance in their native language of English. To meet our unique needs, we designed our own rubric to assess critical thinking skills used by students in performing either listening comprehension or reading tasks. It focuses on a student's ability to synthesize material, make inferences, analyze material, make connections to previously learned material, summarize general points, and comprehend subtleties of language. The rubric for critical thinking is attached.

Activity design:

On November 1, 2010, twenty-four students in RUS 201 watched episode 8 of the Live from Moscow video series we watch every Monday in class (which is entirely in Russian, using native speakers who speak at a natural rate, with no English subtitles.) The episode has four scenes and students viewed each scene twice. After viewing a scene, students had 10-15 minutes to complete the critical thinking assessment for that scene in the video. This design required that students use only the information gained from that scene for comprehension. They did not have the advantage of seeing the entire video

first. Once students had watched the entire video and finished the video comprehension assessment, they had 15 minutes to do as much of the vocabulary analysis assessment as they could.

In order to assess critical thinking skills, a special assessment tool was created in English instead of in the target language. Having the activity in English allows students to express what they understand and to not be limited by their written proficiency in Russian.

The assessment tool for this task required students to write about a listening comprehension video at various levels. In order to assess the level of critical thinking used when analyzing and synthesizing listening material, students were asked to write general information, more detailed information and to then summarize the segment in a single sentence. To assess students' ability to make connections to previously learned material, they were asked to make inferences about situations in the video and to justify their responses. Students were also required to identify the level of formality of the language heard in different scenes in order to assess their ability to identify subtle conveyors of meaning. Finally, students completed a separate assessment that required them to guess the meaning of new words from lines in the video and to explain the reasoning process they followed when making their guesses.

Rubric for assessing Critical Thinking skills of World Language students during activities involving reading and listening comprehension

Mastering (4)

- Comprehends subtleties of meaning in the text/ listening passage, such as tone, style, etc.
- Analyzes text and makes insightful inferences about meaning
- Weighs connections and relationships within the text/ passage and is able to connect the passage to previously learned material
- Can identify what additional information is needed to comprehend some parts of text/ passage
- Synthesizes disparate elements of text to form a comprehensive understanding of the meaning.
- Can easily identify which parts of text/ passage are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Developing (3)

- Resists urge to translate individual words into native language. Looks for overall meaning instead.
- Begins to identify examples of subtle conveyors of meaning in the text/ listening passage, such as tone, style, etc. Also begins to comprehend how they might influence meaning.
- Comprehends the main idea(s) of the text/ passage and analyzes it to make straightforward or obvious inferences about meaning
- Can identify some straightforward connections and relationships within the text/ passage. Can identify examples of previously learned material within the text/ passage.
- Can identify which parts of text/ passage student struggles to comprehend.
- Can identify *some* parts of text/ passage that are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Developing (2)

- Focuses exclusively on the literal meaning of vocabulary words when attempting to decipher meaning of text/ passage (as opposed to tone, narrator, style, etc.). Attempts to translate text/ passage word-for-word into native language.
- Comprehends the main, salient ideas(s) of the text/ passage.
- Can identify *some* examples of previously learned material within the text/ passage
- Begins to identify which specific parts of text/ passage are causing difficulty in comprehending the idea(s) in the text/ passage.
- Begins to identify *some* parts of text/ passage that are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Emerging (1)

- Focuses exclusively on individual words within text/ passage.
- Surmises the general topic of the text/ passage.
- Can identify some familiar vocabulary within the text/ passage

b. Results: What did you learn?

Results:

The assessment showed that the majority of second-year Russian students are using high levels of critical thinking in listening comprehension tasks.

Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
7 students	15 students	2 students	0 students

When watching the video, the seven students scoring at level 4 were able to synthesize disparate elements to form a comprehensive understanding of the video; they successfully connected the language heard in the video to previously learned material; their comprehension of subtleties of meaning allowed them to correctly identify the level of formality in the language; they were also able to identify which parts of the video were not essential to understanding the central meaning. The 15 students at level three were also very successful at comprehending the video, but were limited in certain areas. While these students could understand the main ideas of the video, they missed the subtleties. Small details were lost, slight misunderstandings were evident, and these students were not able to consistently identify the register of language used by the actors. Of these 15 students, two actually performed at what I would rate a level of 3+/4-, as they displayed characteristics of both levels equally.

Only two students showed low levels of critical thinking, which did not come as a surprise, as both did very poorly in first-year Russian and are barely passing RUS 201. These two students were able to understand the main ideas of the plot, but misunderstood several important aspects and missed almost all of the details, even when some of them were obvious based on the actors' actions. They could identify some examples of previously learned material, but missed others. The subtle conveyors of meaning, such as level of formality, were almost completely lost to these students. It is also notable that where level 3 and 4 students answer questions using multiple sentences or short paragraphs, these students wrote single sentences for each question and took so long to complete the assessment that they had no time to move onto the vocabulary analysis assessment.

When analyzing new vocabulary and guessing meaning, students at both level 3 and 4 for critical thinking used a wide variety of strategies, including context, knowledge of roots, parts of speech, use of cognates and previous knowledge.

Strategy used	Level 4 students	Level 3 students
Context of word	61% of time	67% of time
Root of word	13% of time	5% of time
Part of speech	19% of time	17% of time

Cognate	3% of time	2.5% of time
Previous knowledge	4% of time	8.5% of time

Statistically, there is little difference between how often level 3 and 4 students employ the various strategies for guessing the meaning of an unknown word, with both groups relying most on the context of a word in the sentence. It is worth noting that level 4 students use their knowledge of roots and identification of a word's part of speech more often than level 3 students. These strategies, as well as their superior ability to analyze the context of a word, are most likely responsible for the increased success that level 4 students demonstrate in correctly guessing the meaning of a new word.

Critical thinking skills	Number of guesses about meaning	Numbers of words correct	Percent of words guessed correctly
Level 4	69	49	71%
Level 3	120	57	47.5%

The fact that level 3 and 4 students are using multiple strategies to decipher unknown words demonstrates high levels of critical thinking. Even if they are not correctly guessing the meanings, they are thinking critically and using their knowledge of the Russian language to help them navigate unknown territory. Their results are impressive with level 3 students correctly guessing new words 47.5% of the time and level 4 students correctly guessing 71% of the time. This significant increase in correct answers between levels shows how much stronger and effective critical thinking skills are at the highest level.

Based on the results of this assessment activity, it is clear that second year language students exhibit high levels of critical thinking when completing tasks for World Language classes. Since this activity was completed during fall quarter, the expectation is that with additional practice over two more quarters, most level 3 students will achieve level 4 on the Critical Thinking Rubric and that students already performing at level 4 will continue to improve and refine their critical thinking skills to become even more effective than they already are.

3. Identify any changes that should, as a result of this assessment, be implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes.

As a result of this assessment there are several changes that I plan to make to instruction to help students attain higher levels of critical thinking, especially students who did not score as high as they could or should have.

Inside the classroom, I plan to have students do more tasks that explicitly require students to think critically about readings or listening comprehension materials. I will include questions that require students to make inferences, interpret information and to draw conclusions. All students could use more direct instruction on strategies for how to assess the meaning of new words using context, cognates, roots, parts of speech and previous knowledge. This requires that students regularly do the types vocabulary assessment activities that they did for this assessment. Also, I plan to have students begin to do this type of vocabulary work in first year Russian, which has not been done in the past. This should lay the groundwork for high level work at the second year level.

In order to implement these instructional changes, I have received an IIP grant for summer 2011 to create a new reading comprehension package for RUS 201-second year Russian that focuses on critical thinking. (I have written my own textbooks for both First and Second year Russian to keep student textbook costs down, so I also create all supplemental materials for my texts.) This package will include one story with accompanying exercises for each chapter of the textbook, and a set of simpler reading texts and exercises that will be part of the daily homework. The Staff Development committee has asked me to reply for RUS 202 in the fall and then for RUS 203 in the winter, so that I can implement these changes for the full second year Russian sequence. I believe that these instructional changes will help all students achieve higher levels of critical thinking in my second year courses.

In terms of the design of this assessment, I was very happy with it. I think explaining to the students why this assessment was being done and what we were hoping to learn really helped students complete it. They understood the importance of explaining how they reached their conclusions, which provided us important information about the level of critical thinking they were using. I would not change anything about the design or implementation.

Examples of student responses from Critical Thinking Outcome Assessment by Second-year Russian students:

I. Summarizing main events of this scene:

Level 4

- Tanya had a meeting with her professor because she missed class and if she continues, she will lose her stipend.
- Tanya is called into the faculty office to discuss her progress in a class.
- Tanya meets with Elena Petrovna about her missing class.
- Tanya goes to meet a professor who talks to her about missing class.
- Tanya meets with Elena Petrovna, the faculty of her department, to discuss a serious matter in relation to her philosophy class.

Level 3

- Tanya goes into a school official's office for a meeting and is told that she's doing very poorly in philosophy class.
- Tanya is having a conference with a professor who is unhappy with her about something that happened in class.
- Tanya is not doing well, so the teacher needed to talk to her.
- Essentially, Tania talks to her professor about her status in philosophy class, which is not good.
- Tanya is in some kind of trouble for her schoolwork, but it's not because she's a bad student.

Level 2

- Tanya was talking with one of her professors about the class.
- Tanya has a very important meeting with a school official.

II. Giving detailed information about this scene:

Level 4

- When Tanya arrives, the professor asked her to close the door and sit down. Then she asked Tanya if she understands why she requested this meeting. She explains that Tanya has missed 5 classes and if she misses

more, she will lose her stipend. Tanya says that she won't do it again. The professor says Tanya is a good student and needs to study.

-Elena asks Tanya to close the door and sit down. Elena asks Tanya if she knows why she called her to her office. Elena tells her that she is a capable student and able to do well, but she can't miss class.

-Tanya goes to meet her teacher, who tells her to close the door and sit down. The teacher talks to Tanya about missing class and needing to learn well. Tanya says she understands and won't do it anymore. The teacher says Tanya is free to leave.

-Tanya is a philosophy major and has a meeting with one of her teachers. Tanya didn't know why she had to talk to her teacher. Tanya did poorly on the test, but her teacher either knows or thinks that she is a good student. She says, "Study well, do you understand?"

Level 3

-Tanya was called in on account of some kind of bad grade. I gathered that it's not because she's a bad student, however, because the faculty member said she was a good student. "Хорошо учиться". I think Tanya may have to make something up, perhaps a test, on Saturday.

-Tanya goes to the faculty office where the professor is working. Tanya asks about her status in class. The professor explains that she must study hard and Tanya agrees to study hard.

-Tanya meets her professor in the classroom. The professor tells her to close the door and sit down. They talk about Tanya's philosophy class. Tanya needs to study harder.

-I believe that the principal knows that Tanya can be a good student but her grades aren't reflecting that because she needs to study better.

-Tanya is taking philosophy. She wasn't in her lecture and the professor asked her why. I couldn't understand why. The professor said she needed to be a good student.

Level 2:

-Tanya found out that she didn't do well in a class from a faculty member Elena Petrovna and that in the future she should study harder.

-Tanya and the school official are discussing her philosophy class.

III. Analyzing subtleties of language- formality and tone

Level 4

-Tanya has a meeting with the faculty of a department. Judging by the tone and physical expression on both Tanya's and the woman's face, it would seem to be a serious matter they are discussing.

-Formal language is used throughout; formal greetings and departures, the formal “you” is used every time. Also a visual cue is that Tanya remains standing until the teacher tells her to sit down.

-Formal-First and patronymic names are used, as were the formal you “вы” conjugations of verbs.

-The level of formality is very high in this scene because of the formal words used. The words, “садитесь” “до свидания” “понимаете” and her formal name “Elena Petrovna.”

Level 3:

-Formal. “добрый день,” “здравствуйте” “до свидания” are all formal phrases.

-They are speaking on formal terms. The professor uses “вы” while talking to Tanya. Tanya uses a formal greeting and farewell.

-Tanya spoke to her teacher in a formal way because it is a respect thing to speak to elders, teachers and people with titles. And her teacher replied with “Здравствуйте, Таня!”

-Very formal. Both use formal greetings and Tanya addresses the professor with respect.

Level 2:

-Higher than speaking with ones peers.

-It was formal because Tanya was speaking with a professor.

Examples of vocabulary analysis strategies-both successful and unsuccessful

спешу – I'm in a hurry. (verb form)

новость – news (noun)

Dennis: –Excuse me, **I'm in a real hurry**. I've got a taxi waiting for me. I have good **news**; I've got the guarantee letter for Misha. Here's the letter. Excuse me, but I can't wait. (Lines from video given to students in Russian.)

спешу – I'm in a hurry.

-Based on the contextual surroundings, I take this word to mean “busy” or “in a hurry.” The word “очень” and “такси” imply that he has a taxi waiting and so he must be quick. He also says sorry and “Я не могу ждать,” which means that he has to go and is sorry.

-This seems like an adjective, because it's preceded by “очень”, but it looks more like a verb in form– like “я опаздываю”. It means something like “to be sorry” or “to be busy” or “to be in a hurry. ” Probably the later.

-I think it means to go or to leave. I don't know but I guessed that because the rest says, “I really_____. I have a taxi waiting. ” Basically, I just guessed what it would be based off of what a person would say in a situation like this.

-in a rush/hurry because he states (later) "I can't wait" and also, "excuse me" and "a taxi waits for me. "

-“Get going” – he took a taxi, so he needs to leave quickly to avoid having a large fare. It’s a verb.

-To be late or in a hurry; because he stresses about taking a taxi and can't wait. Since it ends in a –y, it seems to be conjugated. This, it may be a verb.

-to be in a hurry. I think it might be the above because Dennis talks about waiting for a taxi and how he can't wait any more. Definitely a verb in what is most likely the imperfective form.

-To be late. Dennis has a taxi waiting outside. He's in a hurry.

-hurry up. He's waiting for the cab.

-drunk/hungover? Dennis was kind of out of it.

новость – news (noun)

-Means “news”. Dennis has good news for Misha. I recognize this word from Internet news sites such as RIA novosti and from the word “новый” meaning new. You could also guess this word from the root “нов-”.

-This definitely is a noun. I think it must mean something like “task” from the context. He says his task is to deliver a letter.

-Means news, in relation to the word новый and the newspaper Новости.

-“News”. He says, “I have good news, a letter of guarantee from Misha.” I only just figured this out thinking about the phrase we learned before “Я обычно читаю новости и романы. ”

-He has good news and we already knew Misha and Dennis’s sister were making contacts. So if Dennis has a letter for Misha it must mean that новость means news/information.

-Dennis has a good новость – letter from Misha. Hmm... is Dennis jealous? But what is новость? Гарантия seems to be the object because it is feminine and хорошая describes something feminine. Not sure about новость though. A verb? Something that just arrives? He has it?

-It's a noun because it's follows an adjective. He's saying he a good [something... friend? person?] because he brought the letter. Maybe he's saying he's good for his word.

-news. It's an adjective. Dennis has a newsletter for Misha I take it. I believe he has news for him.

-news. I already knew this one.

Actual Critical Thinking Assessment Tool distributed to students

As part of PCC's accreditation process, we are gathering data that shows how World Language students use critical thinking skills when learning foreign languages. Your participation in this study will help demonstrate how second-year Russian students think critically when viewing and listening to a video.

We will view each scene in episode 7 twice. While viewing the scene, you will take notes that will help you answer each question. Then after we finish watching each scene, you will have time to write your answers on a separate sheet. You should answer each question to the best of your ability, in English, and in complete sentences. You may not consult with other students, use a dictionary or any other resource.

This assignment will not be graded or contribute to your grade in any way, but to show my appreciation for completing this task, you will receive 3 pts extra credit.

Use the notes you took during viewing the scene to answer these questions to the best of your ability, in English, and in complete sentences.

I. Scene 1-At the apartment:

1. What basic information did you get from this scene?
2. List the key words that helped you understand this scene?
3. What detailed information were you able to understand in this scene?
4. Why would this scene be considered a comedy of errors?
5. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in this scene? Justify your response.
6. Summarize the main idea of this scene in one sentence.

II. Scene 2-Tanya at the institute:

7. What basic information did you get from this scene?
8. List the key words that helped you understand this scene?
9. What detailed information were you able to understand in this scene?
10. Are any of the characters linked to previous episodes and if so how?
11. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in this scene? Justify your response.
12. Summarize the main idea of this scene in one sentence.

III. Scene 3-Tanya's meeting:

12. What basic information did you get from this scene?
13. List the key words that helped you understand this scene?

- 14. What detailed information were you able to understand in this scene?
- 15. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in this scene? Justify your response.
- 16. Summarize the main idea of this scene in one sentence.

IV. Scenes 4 and 5- Tour of the institute and end of video:

- 17. What basic information did you get from these scenes?
- 18. List the key words that helped you understand these scenes?
- 19. What detailed information were you able to understand in these scenes?
- 20. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in these scenes? Justify your response.
- 21. Why do you think Tanya did not go to class? Explain your reasoning?
- 22. Summarize the main idea of these scenes in one sentence each.

Vocabulary Assessment

Below you'll find lines from the video with certain words underlined. Tell me what you think the underlined words mean and how you reached this conclusion. What was your thought process and what information did you use to try to figure out the meaning of each word. Even if you can't figure out the word tell me what you think it might mean and why.

I.

_____ : _____ .

- _____ :

- _____ :

II.

_____ : _____ ?

_____ : **К**_____ . Да, _____. А что?

_____ : _____ ?

_____ :

-кажется:

-точно:

-конспекты:

(Students has three additional vocabulary sections to do.)

**World Languages SAC
Outcome Assessment for Critical Thinking
Listening Comprehension in Russian 201
Kristine Shmakov**

Assessment Overview:

To assess the learning outcome of critical thinking, the World Language SAC chose to have second-year Russian students in Russian 201 complete a listening comprehension activity based on watching an episode from a video series and to then assess the results using a specially designed rubric to measure levels of critical thinking. The results showed that second year language students are using high levels of critical thinking in World Language classes.

Rubric design:

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Activity design:

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The assessment tool for this task required students to write about a listening comprehension video at various levels. In order to assess the level of critical thinking used when analyzing and synthesizing listening material, students were asked to write general information, more detailed information and to then summarize the segment in a single sentence. To assess students' ability to make connections to previously learned material, they were asked to make inferences about situations in the video and to justify their responses. Students were also required to identify the level of formality of the language heard in different scenes in order to assess their ability to identify subtle

conveyors of meaning. Finally, students completed a separate assessment that required them to guess the meaning of new words from lines in the video and to explain the reasoning process they followed when making their guesses.

Results:

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Statistically, there is little difference between how often level 3 and 4 students employ the various strategies for guessing the meaning of an unknown word, with both groups relying most on the context of a word in the sentence. It is worth noting that level 4 students use their knowledge of roots and identification of a word's part of speech more often than level 3 students. These strategies, as well as their superior ability to analyze the context of a word, are most likely responsible for the increased success that level 4 students demonstrate in correctly guessing the meaning of a new word.

Critical thinking skills	Number of guesses about meaning	Numbers of words correct	Percent of words guessed correctly
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Based on the results of this assessment activity, it is clear that second year language students exhibit high levels of critical thinking when completing tasks for World Language classes. Since this activity was completed during fall quarter, the expectation is that with additional practice over two more quarters, most level 3 students will achieve level 4 on the Critical Thinking Rubric and that students already performing at level 4 will continue to improve and refine their critical thinking skills to become even more effective than they already are.

Rubric for assessing Critical Thinking skills of World Language students during activities involving reading and listening comprehension

Mastering (4)

- Comprehends subtleties of meaning in the text/ listening passage, such as tone, style, etc.
- Analyzes text and makes insightful inferences about meaning
- Weighs connections and relationships within the text/ passage and is able to connect the passage to previously learned material
- Can identify what additional information is needed to comprehend some parts of text/ passage
- Synthesizes disparate elements of text to form a comprehensive understanding of the meaning.
- Can easily identify which parts of text/ passage are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Developing (3)

- Resists urge to translate individual words into native language. Looks for overall meaning instead.
- Begins to identify examples of subtle conveyors of meaning in the text/ listening passage, such as tone, style, etc. Also begins to comprehend how they might influence meaning.
- Comprehends the main idea(s) of the text/ passage and analyzes it to make straightforward or obvious inferences about meaning
- Can identify some straightforward connections and relationships within the text/ passage. Can identify examples of previously learned material within the text/ passage.
- Can identify which parts of text/ passage student struggles to comprehend.
- Can identify *some* parts of text/ passage that are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Developing (2)

- Focuses exclusively on the literal meaning of vocabulary words when attempting to decipher meaning of text/ passage (as opposed to tone, narrator, style, etc.). Attempts to translate text/ passage word-for-word into native language.
- Comprehends the main, salient ideas(s) of the text/ passage.
- Can identify *some* examples of previously learned material within the text/ passage
- Begins to identify which specific parts of text/ passage are causing difficulty in comprehending the idea(s) in the text/ passage.
- Begins to identify *some* parts of text/ passage that are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Emerging (1)

- Focuses exclusively on individual words within text/ passage.
- Surmises the general topic of the text/ passage.
- Can identify some familiar vocabulary within the text/ passage

Live from Moscow, Episode 8, Scene three

Summary of story line and events:

Tanya, a university student, is called to Dean Elena Petrovna's office for a meeting. Elena Petrovna invites Tanya in, tells her to close the door and sit down. Elena Petrovna asks Tanya if she knows why she has been called to this meeting. Tanya responds that she thinks she knows why. Elena Petrovna tells Tanya that she has skipped 5 of her philosophy classes and that if she does not stop skipping class, she will lose her stipend for the coming year. Tanya apologizes and says that she promises to not miss any more class. Elena Petrovna tells Tanya she is a capable student and that she has the potential to do well in school, but she must study hard. She then dismisses Tanya.

Examples of student responses from Critical Thinking Outcome Assessment by Second-year Russian students:

I. Summarizing main events of this scene:

Level 4

- Tanya had a meeting with her professor because she missed class and if she continues, she will lose her stipend.
- Tanya is called into the faculty office to discuss her progress in a class.
- Tanya meets with Elena Petrovna about her missing class.
- Tanya goes to meet a professor who talks to her about missing class.
- Tanya meets with Elena Petrovna, the faculty of her department, to discuss a serious matter in relation to her philosophy class.

Level 3

- Tanya goes into a school official's office for a meeting and is told that she's doing very poorly in philosophy class.
- Tanya is having a conference with a professor who is unhappy with her about something that happened in class.
- Tanya is not doing well, so the teacher needed to talk to her.
- Essentially, Tania talks to her professor about her status in philosophy class, which is not good.
- Tanya is in some kind of trouble for her schoolwork, but it's not because she's a bad student.

Level 2

- Tanya was talking with one of her professors about the class.
- Tanya has a very important meeting with a school official.

II. Giving detailed information about this scene:

Level 4

- When Tanya arrives, the professor asked her to close the door and sit down. Then she asked Tanya if she understands why she requested this meeting. She explains that Tanya

has missed 5 classes and if she misses more, she will lose her stipend. Tanya says that she won't do it again. The professor says Tanya is a good student and needs to study.

-Elena asks Tanya to close the door and sit down. Elena asks Tanya if she knows why she called her to her office. Elena tells her that she is a capable student and able to do well, but she can't miss class.

-Tanya goes to meet her teacher, who tells her to close the door and sit down. The teacher talks to Tanya about missing class and needing to learn well. Tanya says she understands and won't do it anymore. The teacher says Tanya is free to leave.

-Tanya is a philosophy major and has a meeting with one of her teachers. Tanya didn't know why she had to talk to her teacher. Tanya did poorly on the test, but her teacher either knows or thinks that she is a good student. She says, "Study well, do you understand?"

Level 3

-Tanya was called in on account of some kind of bad grade. I gathered that it's not because she's a bad student, however, because the faculty member said she was a good student. "Хорошо учиться". I think Tanya may have to make something up, perhaps a test, on Saturday.

-Tanya goes to the faculty office where the professor is working. Tanya asks about her status in class. The professor explains that she must study hard and Tanya agrees to study hard.

-Tanya meets her professor in the classroom. The professor tells her to close the door and sit down. They talk about Tanya's philosophy class. Tanya needs to study harder.

-I believe that the principal knows that Tanya can be a good student but her grades aren't reflecting that because she needs to study better.

-Tanya is taking philosophy. She wasn't in her lecture and the professor asked her why. I couldn't understand why. The professor said she needed to be a good student.

Level 2:

-Tanya found out that she didn't do well in a class from a faculty member Elena Petrovna and that in the future she should study harder.

-Tanya and the school official are discussing her philosophy class.

III. Analyzing subtleties of language- formality and tone

Level 4

-Tanya has a meeting with the faculty of a department. Judging by the tone and physical expression on both Tanya's and the woman's face, it would seem to be a serious matter they are discussing.

-Formal language is used throughout; formal greetings and departures, the formal “you” is used every time. Also a visual cue is that Tanya remains standing until the teacher tells her to sit down.

-Formal-First and patronymic names are used, as were the formal you “вы” conjugations of verbs.

-The level of formality is very high in this scene because of the formal words used. The words, “садитесь” “до свидания” “понимаете” and her formal name “Elena Petrovna.”

Level 3:

-Formal. “добрый день,” “здравствуйте” “до свидания” are all formal phrases.

-They are speaking on formal terms. The professor uses “вы” while talking to Tanya. Tanya uses a formal greeting and farewell.

-Tanya spoke to her teacher in a formal way because it is a respect thing to speak to elders, teachers and people with titles. And her teacher replied with “Здравствуйте, Таня!”

-Very formal. Both use formal greetings and Tanya addresses the professor with respect.

Level 2:

-Higher than speaking with ones peers.

-It was formal because Tanya was speaking with a professor.

Examples of vocabulary analysis strategies-both successful and unsuccessful

спешу – I'm in a hurry. (verb form)

новость – news (noun)

Dennis: –Excuse me, **I'm in a real hurry**. I've got a taxi waiting for me. I have good **news**; I've got the guarantee letter for Misha. Here's the letter. Excuse me, but I can't wait. (Lines from video given to students in Russian.)

спешу – ***I'm in a hurry.***

-Based on the contextual surroundings, I take this word to mean “busy” or “in a hurry.” The word “очень” and “такси” imply that he has a taxi waiting and so he must be quick. He also says sorry and “Я не могу ждать,” which means that he has to go and is sorry.

-This seems like an adjective, because it's preceded by “очень”, but it looks more like a verb in form– like “я опаздываю”. It means something like “to be sorry” or “to be busy” or “to be in a hurry. ” Probably the later.

-I think it means to go or to leave. I don't know but I guessed that because the rest says, “I really_____. I have a taxi waiting. ” Basically, I just guessed what it would be based off of what a person would say in a situation like this.

-in a rush/hurry because he states (later) “I can't wait” and also, “excuse me” and “a taxi waits for me. ”

-“Get going” – he took a taxi, so he needs to leave quickly to avoid having a large fare. It's a verb.

-To be late or in a hurry; because he stresses about taking a taxi and can't wait. Since it ends in a –y, it seems to be conjugated. This, it may be a verb.

-to be in a hurry. I think it might be the above because Dennis talks about waiting for a taxi and how he can't wait any more. Definitely a verb in what is most likely the imperfective form.

-To be late. Dennis has a taxi waiting outside. He's in a hurry.

-hurry up. He's waiting for the cab.

-drunk/hungover? Dennis was kind of out of it.

новость – ***news (noun)***

-Means “news”. Dennis has good news for Misha. I recognize this word from Internet news sites such as RIA novosti and from the word “новый” meaning new. You could also guess this word from the root “нов-”.

-This definitely is a noun. I think it must mean something like “task” from the context. He says his task is to deliver a letter.

-Means news, in relation to the word новый and the newspaper Новости.

-“News”. He says, “I have good news, a letter of guarantee from Misha.” I only just figured this out thinking about the phrase we learned before “Я обычно читаю новости и романы. ”

-He has good news and we already knew Misha and Dennis’s sister were making contacts. So if Dennis has a letter for Misha it must mean that новость means news/information.

-Dennis has a good новость – letter from Misha. Hmm... is Dennis jealous? But what is новость? Гарантия seems to be the object because it is feminine and хорошая describes something feminine. Not sure about новость though. A verb? Something that just arrives? He has it?

-It's a noun because it's follows an adjective. He's saying he a good [something... friend? person?] because he brought the letter. Maybe he's saying he's good for his word.

-news. It's an adjective. Dennis has a newsletter for Misha I take it. I believe he has news for him.

-news. I already knew this one.

Actual Critical Thinking Assessment Tool distributed to students

As part of PCC's accreditation process, we are gathering data that shows how World Language students use critical thinking skills when learning foreign languages. Your participation in this study will help demonstrate how second-year Russian students think critically when viewing and listening to a video.

We will view each scene in episode 7 twice. While viewing the scene, you will take notes that will help you answer each question. Then after we finish watching each scene, you will have time to write your answers on a separate sheet. You should answer each question to the best of your ability, in English, and in complete sentences. You may not consult with other students, use a dictionary or any other resource.

This assignment will not be graded or contribute to your grade in any way, but to show my appreciation for completing this task, you will receive 3 pts extra credit.

Use the notes you took during viewing the scene to answer these questions to the best of your ability, in English, and in complete sentences.

I. Scene 1-At the apartment:

1. What basic information did you get from this scene?
2. List the key words that helped you understand this scene?
3. What detailed information were you able to understand in this scene?
4. Why would this scene be considered a comedy of errors?
5. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in this scene? Justify your response.
6. Summarize the main idea of this scene in one sentence.

II. Scene 2-Tanya at the institute:

7. What basic information did you get from this scene?
8. List the key words that helped you understand this scene?
9. What detailed information were you able to understand in this scene?
10. Are any of the characters linked to previous episodes and if so how?
11. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in this scene? Justify your response.

12. Summarize the main idea of this scene in one sentence.

III. Scene 3-Tanya's meeting:

12. What basic information did you get from this scene?

13. List the key words that helped you understand this scene?

14. What detailed information were you able to understand in this scene?

15. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in this scene? Justify your response.

16. Summarize the main idea of this scene in one sentence.

IV. Scenes 4 and 5- Tour of the institute and end of video:

17. What basic information did you get from these scenes?

18. List the key words that helped you understand these scenes?

19. What detailed information were you able to understand in these scenes?

20. What is the level of formality in the language spoken in these scenes? Justify your response.

21. Why do you think Tanya did not go to class? Explain your reasoning?

22. Summarize the main idea of these scenes in one sentence each.

Vocabulary Assessment

Below you'll find lines from the video with certain words underlined. Tell me what you think the underlined words mean and how you reached this conclusion. What was your thought process and what information did you use to try to figure out the meaning of each word. Even if you can't figure out the word tell me what you think it might mean and why.

I.

Дэ́нис: Изви́ни, я о́чень спешу́, меня́ ждёт такси́. У меня́ хоро́шая но́вость—письмо́-га́рантия для Ми́ши. Вот, письмо́. Изви́ни, я не могу́ ждать.

-спешу́:

-новость:

II.

Студентка: Привёт, Тánя! Слушай, какой у тебя пёрвый экзамен?

Тánя: **Кажется**, история кино. Да, **точно**. А что?

Студентка: Ты не можешь мне дать потом твой **конспекты**?

Тánя: Конечно.

-кажется:

-точно:

-конспекты:

III.

Елена Петровна: Вы опять **пропустили** лекцию по философии.

Тánя: Я всё понимаю, Елена Петровна.

Елена Петровна: Так **нельзя**. Вы **способная** студентка. Вы же можете хорошо учиться!

Тánя: Елена Петровна, я больше не буду. Я вам **обещаю**.

Елена Петровна: **Иначе** вы не получите **стипендию** на **будущий** год. Вы это понимаете?

-пропустили:

-нельзя:

-способная:

-обещаю:

-иначе:

-стипендию:

-будущий:

IV.

Елена Петровна: Тánя! Володина!

Тánя: Ой! Елена Петровна! Извините, пожалуйста.

Е.П.: Что это значит? Вы опять не были на лекции!

Прогуляли!

Тánя: Елена Петровна, извините меня. Я была...

Е.П. Я не понимаю, о чём вы думаете? Так вы экзамены не сдадите!

Тánя: Нет, **сдам**. У меня ещё есть время.

-прогуляли:
-сдам:

World Languages SAC
Outcome Assessment for Critical Thinking
Reading Comprehension in French 101
Stephanie Whitney-Bradley

Assessment Overview:

To assess the learning outcome of critical thinking, the World Language SAC chose to have first year French students in French 101 complete a reading comprehension activity based on reading a cultural document and then assess the results using a specially designed rubric to measure levels of critical thinking. The results showed that first year language students are using high levels of critical thinking in World Language classes.

Rubric design:

Because World Language students are performing skills in a foreign language, we were not able to use the college-designed rubrics for outcomes assessment, as they assess student performance in their native language of English. To meet our unique needs, we designed our own rubric to assess critical thinking skills used by students in performing either listening comprehension or reading tasks. It focuses on a student's ability to synthesize material, make inferences, analyze material, make connections to previously learned material, summarize general points, and comprehend subtleties of language. The rubric for critical thinking is located at the end of this document.

Activity design:

On October 28, 2010, twenty-one students in French 101 read a short document about Halloween in France. It is an authentic document taken from a French magazine and consists of three paragraphs and is typical of the types of short readings we start doing in first year French. Because our classes are conducted entirely in the target language, this activity was first completed as readings always are--entirely in French. Students were asked to identify the topic of the article based on the title and picture and then to read it silently. Students then worked in pairs to try and identify words they recognized and the important points in each paragraph. As a group, they gave me their feedback, and I confirmed or corrected their assumptions by referring to the text and by paraphrasing sentences or demonstrating vocabulary (via examples, synonyms or gestures) where necessary. We then discussed the overall message of the article.

In order to try to identify and assess the critical thinking strategies such an activity requires, I then gave the students 11 questions about the reading in English to complete at home and turn in the following class. Having the activity in English allows students to express what they understand and to not be limited by their written proficiency in French.

The assessment tool for this task required students to answer questions about the article at various levels of difficulty. In order to assess the level of critical thinking used when analyzing and synthesizing reading material, students were asked to not only answer questions about the reading but to explain how they came to that conclusion. The questions touched on the following: the source and topic of the article, identification of previously learned material and cognates, guessing the meaning of new vocabulary based on context alone, selecting key information in each paragraph, isolating words or

sentences that are impeding comprehension and developing strategies to determine meaning (without a dictionary), paraphrasing the main idea in each paragraph, searching the document for specific answers to questions about the historical and social importance of such a holiday, and determining the overall tone of the article regarding this American holiday in France.

Results:

The assessment showed that first-term, first year French students are beginning to actively develop their critical thinking skills in reading comprehension tasks as early as the 6th week of class and are consistently performing at a level 2, and in some areas are often performing at a level 3 (please refer to attached rubric at the end of this document).

21/21 students were functioning consistently at a level 2 in the following areas:

- identifying English cognates and some previously learned vocabulary
- comprehending the main ideas of each paragraph
- identifying some words that they did not understand
- ignoring parts of the text that were not central to overall understanding of the text

21/21 students were occasionally performing at a level 3 with respect to:

- avoiding translation (see notes below)

14/21 students were also able to function occasionally at a level 3 with respect to:

- identifying straightforward connections and relationships within the text/passage
- beginning to identify subtleties of meaning
- making inferences

Examples of level 2 performance:

The following observations were notable in determining that students were performing at a level 2 with respect to comprehension and textual analysis.

While students were able to surmise the general topic/main ideas of the text, the examples they selected from the text to support their assertions were often limited or non-existent. When paraphrasing, they were often accurate in a very general sense. They may have missed information that influenced the understanding of the overall message or made assumptions unsupported by the text.

For example, the second paragraph of the article discusses how US companies in France tried to present Halloween as a Celtic, European tradition but it just never caught on due to the fact that many French simply consider it a marketing ploy. A level 2 student expressed his comprehension of the fact that Halloween wasn't popular in France by stating "Halloween isn't very popular in France", but missed these other, important details. Another student made a false assumption about the first paragraph, which simply describes the tradition of Halloween in American and England, by stating that it spoke of "the psychological significance for children."

While students were able to identify some examples of previously learned material such as pronouns, verbs and vocabulary they have previously seen, they were drawing from very limited exposure to the language, and were, therefore, relying on the few sentences they could decipher to establish an overall understanding of the text. This is evident when considering the limited examples these students provided regarding familiar or unfamiliar vocabulary and when extracting important information from each paragraph. For example, one student stated "The few sentences I don't understand contain mostly words I've never seen before, so I cannot guess their meanings."

Examples of level 3 performance:

One area where all of the students were functioning at a level 3 was with respect to translation. Because of our immersion approach, students are so used to having to read for overall meaning and to use contextual clues that they are often less inclined to waste time translating. The fact that they could not use a dictionary on this exercise reinforced this. One student demonstrated her critical thinking skills when trying to determine what the word "l'engouement" meant. She explained:

I would guess that it means either "arrangement" or "situation".

This is because in the article they have been talking about the consumption of candy in France, and how 30 percent is consumed in October, and then they say "Mais l'engouement n'est pas le même qu'aux Etats-Unis."

I think this might mean "But the arrangement/situation is not the same in the United States. However, I just remembered that the word situation is a cognate, so it can't be that.

However, despite not relying heavily on translation, most students often skimmed over important sentences in the text that might impede their understanding and focused instead on isolated words they could easily identify as being difficult (as evident in the above comment where the student didn't even try to guess the meanings).

Many students were also able to identify relationships in the text, which is characteristic of level 3 functioning. For example, they were able to bring together disparate elements of the text and to surmise that it was American companies that brought Halloween to France and marketed it, but that the holiday is not as popular in France as it is in the U.S. Students were also able to refer to different parts of the article that explain Halloween's declining popularity among children while "it is much more popular for adult parties," citing specific examples from the text.

Many students also occasionally performed at a level 3 with respect to identifying subtle conveyors of meaning in the text. While all the students understood the overall implication in the article that the French are generally not supportive of the American holiday, many also understood the reason why—being that they do not embrace the capitalistic nature of using holidays as a money-making venture. For example, one student said “the locals reject the consumerist implications surrounding [this holiday], and another summarized that the “French attitude toward Halloween is fairly negative...They believe Halloween is just another way to make money off of candy and costumes.” One student even made inferences regarding the date of the article being written around the time of the American Presidential elections and the reference to “zombies pro-Obama”—questioning the implications of that terminology as pejorative or not.

Summary of results

Based on the results of this assessment activity, it is clear that first year language students exhibit beginning to moderate levels of critical thinking when completing reading tasks in World Language classes. Since this activity was completed mid-way through fall quarter, the expectation is that with additional practice over two more quarters, most level 2 students will achieve level 3 (and even some areas of level 4) by the end of first year, and that they will continue to improve and refine their critical thinking skills to become even more effective in second year language classes.

In assessing this exercise, it has become clear that World Language classes would benefit from incorporating more reading practice while establishing and discussing helpful strategies at the first-year level in order to fully develop critical thinking skills in this area. It is also essential that students be continually exposed to challenging and authentic materials that will put these strategies to the test so they are adequately prepared for higher level courses at 4-year institutions. Most 3rd and 4th year level courses, for example, require students to read and analyze literature, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, literary articles, etc. The more practice they have now refining these critical thinking strategies, the more successful they will be as transfer students.

Rubric for assessing Critical Thinking skills of World Language students during activities involving reading and listening (language comprehension)

Mastering (4)

- Comprehends subtleties of meaning in the text/ listening passage, such as tone, style, etc.
- Analyzes text and makes insightful inferences about meaning
- Weighs connections and relationships within the text/ passage and is able to connect the passage to previously learned material
- Can identify what additional information is needed to comprehend some parts of text/ passage
- Synthesizes disparate elements of text to form a comprehensive understanding of the meaning.
- Can easily identify which parts of text/ passage are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Developing (3)

- Resists urge to translate individual words into native language. Looks for overall meaning instead.
- Begins to identify examples of subtle conveyors of meaning in the text/ listening passage, such as tone, style, etc. Also begins to comprehend how they might influence meaning.
- Comprehends the main idea(s) of the text/ passage and analyzes it to make straightforward or obvious inferences about meaning
- Can identify some straightforward connections and relationships within the text/ passage. Can identify examples of previously learned material within the text/ passage.
- Can identify which parts of text/ passage student struggles to comprehend.
- Can identify some parts of text/ passage that are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Developing (2)

- Focuses exclusively on the literal meaning of vocabulary words when attempting to decipher meaning of text/ passage (as opposed to tone, narrator, style, etc.). Attempts to translate text/ passage word-for-word into native language.
- Comprehends the main, salient ideas(s) of the text/ passage.
- Can identify some examples of previously learned material within the text/ passage
- Begins to identify which specific parts of text/ passage are causing difficulty in comprehending the idea(s) in the text/ passage.
- Begins to identify some parts of text/ passage that are not essential to comprehending the central meaning of text.

Emerging (1)

- Focuses exclusively on individual words within text/ passage.
- Surmises the general topic of the text/ passage.
- Can identify some familiar vocabulary within the text/ passage

World Languages SAC Outcome Assessment for Cultural Awareness

Assessment Overview:

To assess the learning outcome of cultural awareness, the World Languages SAC chose to have second year Japanese students in one Japanese 202 class and one Japanese 203 class read two Japanese language articles about Japan's Valentine's Day. These articles were written in Japanese and come from authentic online sources. After reading, students completed a questionnaire in English on the content of these articles. -This questionnaire was assessed by the instructor using a specially designed rubric to measure students' levels of cultural awareness. -In World Languages, cultural awareness is an integral part of effective communication in another language and reading comprehension activities are used to assess cultural awareness in many of our courses across languages. -The materials were created and selected by the instructor to incorporate tasks appropriate to the course level.

Rubric Design:

Because World Language students are performing skills in a foreign language, we were not able to use the college-designed rubrics for outcomes assessment, as they assess student performance in their native language of English. -To meet our unique needs, we designed our own rubric to assess cultural awareness used by students communicating in a second language. -It focuses on students' overall cultural awareness, taking into account factual knowledge, intercultural skills, understanding of values and perspectives, and personal engagement.

The complete rubric is attached as Appendix 1; however the following is a sample descriptor of Level 4 level of attainment:

Evaluates the relationships of individuals and cultures to the history of events and ideas. -Uses more than one appropriate technique for exploring assumptions and expressing viewpoints. Formulates a theory of how ethical systems, worldviews, assumptions, and the theories about the self, and historical, cultural, economic, and social contexts impact individual and cultural relationships. -Evaluates different forms of creative and artistic expression and connects personal responses to broader contexts. -Modifies biased behaviors, practices and language.

Activity Design:

Students completed the cultural awareness activity individually with the instructor present. This assessment was carried out by 17 202 students in Winter 2010, and 15 203 students in Spring 2011. -A total of 32 students were assessed. -Students had one hour in which to read two articles in Japanese and answer comprehension questions in English using the questionnaire. The topic of the readings was chosen because though students are familiar with Valentine's Day in the US, they may not have been familiar with how the holiday is celebrated in Japan or its

history in Japanese culture before studying Japanese at PCC. -Though Valentine’s Day in both countries shares common features such as the holiday’s date and the giving of gifts, factors significant to Japanese culture such as reciprocity, obligation, and gender roles are vital parts of this cultural practice. The instructions and questionnaire were both in English rather than the target language because the activity was designed to assess cultural awareness through reading comprehension in the target language. -Because the readings selected were intended for a native Japanese audience, students were not expected to be able to understand the readings in their entirety, rather, they were asked to skim the readings for important details and incorporate their knowledge of Japanese culture gained in their study of Japanese in order to complete the questionnaire.

Given the authenticity level of the material selected for the assessment, it is worthwhile to note that students' cultural awareness ability would likely be lower on a task that was above their level. Our discipline follows national guidelines for communicative proficiency (ACTFL), which include 10 levels, each more progressively difficult to attain than the previous level. Along with Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Korean, Japanese language is placed at the highest difficulty level or category IV according to the official ACTFL OPI rating. Data from several higher institutions also indicate that in category IV languages, by the end of Second year, students most frequently are found to score in the range of Intermediate Low to Intermediate Mid within the framework of Superior, Advanced, Intermediate and Novice.

Results:

The assessment showed that in this sample of 32 students, 17 students in Japanese 202 and 15 students in Japanese 203, most students are holistically functioning at level 3 in cultural awareness tasks either appropriate to their level and slightly higher in the context of materials. Because the Japanese 202 assessment was carried out at the end of the course and the Japanese 203 assessment was carried out at the beginning of the course, the decision was made to consider the results of these two assessments together. The breakdown of scores is as follows, and a detailed account of scores is attached in Appendix 2.

Table 1: Overall score for Cultural Awareness core outcome

level 1	6% of students
level 2	22%
level 3	69%
level 4	3%

To determine any more specific need for improvement within our results, we tallied scores for each of the four sub-categories which comprise overall cultural awareness. Within these subcategories, factual knowledge and intercultural skills were the areas needing the most improvement.

*Table 2: scores for sub-category of **factual knowledge** within the overall outcome of Cultural Awareness*

level 1	0% of students
level 2	63%
level 3	15%
level 4	22%

*Table 3: scores for sub-category of **intercultural skills** within the overall outcome of Cultural Awareness*

level 1	7% of students
level 2	31%
level 3	28%
level 4	19%

*Table 4: scores for sub-category of **understanding values and perspectives** within the overall outcome of Cultural Awareness*

level 1	22% of students
level 2	19%
level 3	56%
level 4	3%

*Table 5: scores for sub-category of **personal engagement** within the overall outcomes of Cultural Awareness*

level 1	34% of students
level 2	22%
level 3	41%
level 4	3%

As a sampling of World Languages courses, these results indicate that our students are acquiring skills of cultural awareness with moderate success. Though this assessment shows need for improvement in all categories, the areas with the greatest need were factual knowledge and intercultural skills. Students demonstrated stronger abilities in the areas of understanding values and perspectives and personal engagement.

Based on these results and upon close examination of student answers to our questionnaire, our greatest concern is that though many students exhibited familiarity with important Japanese cultural values such as politeness, obligation, and reciprocity, most overlooked the crucial role that gender plays in Valentine's Day in Japan. Specifically, the societal expectations placed on Japanese women in terms of how they participate in this holiday. These gendered expectations are a fundamental reason that this particular model of the Valentine's Day custom functions in Japanese culture.

Since we have found that we cannot convey all levels of culture in our language classes in immersion, we allow ourselves in harder languages such as Japanese to take it up these issues in

English in culture courses. However, not all of our students are able to take these culture courses, thus a portion of our students may be missing vital information about Japanese culture. Our challenge going forward is finding ways to improve our student's understanding of Japanese culture in our Japanese language classes while teaching in an immersion setting.

APPENDIX 1: rubric used for assessment

	1 <i>(Description and identification)</i>	2 <i>(Comparison/contrast)</i>	3 <i>(Analysis)</i>	4 <i>(Evaluation and reflection)</i>
<i>Factual knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the cultural perspectives, values and assumptions of another culture - Describe the relationship of individuals and/or cultures to the history of events and/or ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare and contrast cultural values, assumptions and perspectives of one’s own culture with another - List examples of culturally biased behavior, practices and language 	Analyze how individuals in two or more cultural groups have been impacted by historical, cultural or economic events	Evaluate the relationships of individuals and cultures to the history of events and ideas
<i>Intercultural skills</i>	Give an example of one’s own cultural behavior, practices or language	Demonstrate an appropriate technique for exploring assumptions and expressing viewpoints	Analyze the relationships of individuals and cultures to the specific context of events and ideas	Use more than one appropriate technique for exploring assumptions and expressing viewpoints
<i>Understanding values and perspectives</i>	Demonstrate a method or technique for exploring the assumptions, perspectives and values of a cultural group	Compare and contrast one’s own cultural assumptions, perspectives and values with those of others	Describe the effects of prejudice on different groups	Formulate a theory of how various ethical systems, worldviews, assumptions and theories about the self, and historical, cultural, economic and social context impact individual and cultural relationships
<i>Personal engagement</i>	Identify one’s own cultural perspective, values and assumptions	Assess cultural perspectives different from one’s own	Support one’s own cultural assumption and explain those of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate different forms of creative and artistic expression, connecting personal responses to broader contexts - Modify biased behavior, practices and language

APPENDIX 2: complete table of assessment results

	1	2	3	4
<i>Factual knowledge</i>	0% (0 students)	62% (20 students)	15% (5 students)	22% (7 students)
<i>Intercultural skills</i>	22% (7 students)	31% (10 students)	28% (9 students)	19% (6 students)
<i>Understanding values and perspectives</i>	22% (7 students)	19% (6 students)	56% (18 students)	3% (1 student)
<i>Personal engagement</i>	34% (11 students)	22% (7 students)	41% (11 students)	3% (1 student)
<i>OVERALL</i>	6%	22%	69%	3%

World Languages SAC Outcome Assessment for Communication

Assessment Overview:

To assess the learning outcome of communication, the World Language SAC chose to have second-year Spanish students in two Spanish 201 classes complete a conversation activity in pairs for their oral midterm exam that would be assessed by the instructor using a specially designed rubric to measure their communication levels. In World Languages, communication is the primary focus of our courses and pair conversations such as this activity are regularly used to assess communication skills in many of our courses across languages. The conversation situations used in this activity were created by the instructor to incorporate tasks appropriate to the course level. The results showed that second year language students are communicating at high levels.

Rubric design:

Because World Language students are performing skills in a foreign language, we were not able to use the college-designed rubrics for outcomes assessment, as they assess student performance in their native language of English. To meet our unique needs, we designed our own rubric to assess communication skills used by students communicating in a second language. It focuses on a student's ability to communicate holistically, taking into account comprehensibility, text type, appropriateness of language for the stated task, content, technical accuracy, and overall fluidity.

The complete rubric is attached as Appendix 1, however the following is a sample descriptor of Level 4 level of attainment:

Only minimal technical errors (in grammar), and errors don't impede communication. Speaks in complete sentences when appropriate and comfortably asks and answers questions with elaboration and variety of form. Student contributes equally to the conversation and successfully initiates interactions. Speech includes abundant and varied vocabulary and grammar points relevant to the situation. Overall, has prolific language and seems to have ability to contribute to the conversation for over the minimum time. Student can fully participate in the conversation and expand on topics and rarely misunderstands questions or the message being conveyed. Demonstrates ample ability to create with the language and express original thoughts well beyond memorized phrases. Easily understood (albeit with minimal repetition and rephrasing) by native speakers not accustomed to non-native speakers. In general, speech is fluid with only a few natural pauses. Appears to be thinking in the target language and comfortably demonstrates a variety of communication strategies.

Activity design:

The communication activity, called a "Live Conversation", was done by students in pairs with only the instructor present to listen and assess the students using the above-mentioned rubric. With two 201 classes participating in this activity in Fall 2010, a total of 58 students were assessed in the live conversation. Students were given two conversation situations (see attached) with level-appropriate tasks and were asked to prepare for both situations, although they were randomly assigned only one situation at the time of the live conversation. Students were asked to prepare by studying relevant vocabulary and verb tenses appropriate to the task and by preparing various questions appropriate for each situation, yet students were also specifically instructed not to memorize a dialogue. Students were encouraged to carry on a natural conversation based on everyday situations that could arise in real life conversations. The instructions and conversation situations were given to the students in English rather than in the target language because the activity was designed to assess *communication* in the target language rather than reading comprehension in the target language.

The task given to the students for this assessment correlated with the Novice High proficiency level on the

ACTFL scale, which is the standard expectation for a Spanish 201 course. Our discipline follows national guidelines for communicative proficiency (ACTFL), which include 10 levels, each more progressively difficult to attain than the previous level. It is worthwhile to note that students' communication ability would likely be lower on a task that was above their level.

Results:

The assessment showed that in this sample of 58 students in Spanish 201, most students are holistically functioning at level 4 in communication on tasks appropriate to their level. The breakdown of scores is as follows, and a detailed account of scores is attached in Appendix 2.

Table 1: Overall score for Communication core outcome

level 4	78% of students
level 3	17%
level 2	3.5%
level 1	1%

To determine any need for improvement within our results, we tallied the scores for each of the 4 sub-categories which comprise overall ability in communication. Within these subcategories, technical accuracy was the area needing greatest improvement, as indicated by the breakdown of scores below. The other categories of communication were similarly strong.

Table 2: scores for sub-category of **technical accuracy** within the overall core outcome of Communication

level 4	58.5% of students
level 3	36%
level 2	4%
level 1	--

Table 3: scores for sub-category of **text type** within the overall core outcome of Communication

level 4	79.5% of students
level 3	15%
level 2	3%
level 1	2%

Table 4: scores for sub-category of **content** within the overall core outcome of Communication

level 4	84.5% of students
level 3	12%
level 2	0.5%
level 1	--

Table 5: scores for sub-category of **fluidity, communication strategy, and comprehensibility** within the overall core outcome of Communication

level 4	85% of students
level 3	10%
level 2	3.5%
level 1	--

As a sampling of World Languages courses, these results indicate that our students are successfully acquiring overall communication skills. Students' greatest strengths were fluidity, communication strategy, and

comprehensibility. Although students' overall ability fell into the mastery level, they showed greatest need for improvement within the sub category of technical accuracy. This is typical for a language course because students must learn to manipulate a variety of new grammatical concepts while simultaneously paying attention to text type, contents, fluidity, comprehensibility, etc. Furthermore, the expectation is that the additional practice over two more quarters (202 and 203) of grammar skills, students will improve their technical accuracy and thus a greater percentage of students will achieve level 4 in all categories on the Communication rubric. Nonetheless, the relative weakness of technical accuracy in comparison to the other sub-categories does indicate to our SAC that we should continue to emphasize grammatical accuracy in assignments and lessons, and will inform future decisions regarding textbook selection. Overall, we are pleased with the results demonstrating that our students are generally able to effectively apply their language knowledge to clearly communicate about a variety of task-appropriate ideas using effective strategies.

APPENDIX 1: rubric used for assessment

	4	3	2	1
<i>Technical accuracy</i>	Only minimal errors in grammar studied. Errors don't impede communication.	Some errors in the grammar studied. Errors usually don't impede communication.	Many errors in the grammar studied. Errors often impede communication.	Abundant errors in grammar studied. Errors frequently impede communication. Often unintelligible.
<i>Text type and function</i>	Speaks in complete sentences when appropriate. Comfortably asks and answers questions with elaboration and variety of form. Contributes equally to the conversation and successfully initiates interaction.	Speaks in complete sentences most of the time when appropriate. Is able to answer questions with some elaboration, and asks basic questions, but often with similar question format. Sometimes relies on partner to carry conversation. Sometimes initiates interaction successfully.	Speaks in complete sentences some of the time when appropriate. Answers questions, but with limited elaboration. Asks only a few formulaic questions. Relies heavily on partner to carry the conversation (eg. needs interlocutor to often repeat/rephrase.) Difficulty initiating interaction.	Rarely connects words into complete sentences when appropriate. Speaks in isolated words/ lists. Repetition of interlocutor's words. Does not ask questions, struggles to answer questions. Entirely dependant on partner to carry the conversation.
<i>Content</i>	Includes abundant and varied vocabulary and grammar points relevant to the situation. Has prolific language. Seems to have ability to contribute to the conversation for over the minimum time. Fully able to participate in the conversation and expand on topics. Rarely misunderstands questions or the message being conveyed.	Includes a sufficient amount of vocabulary and grammar points relevant to the situation. Has sufficient language to maintain the conversation for minimum time. Able to participate in the conversation beyond most immediate requirements. Occasionally misunderstands questions or the message being conveyed.	Includes some of the vocabulary and grammar points relevant to the situation. Struggles significantly to maintain the conversation for minimum time. Able to participate in the conversation to meet most immediate requirements of the situation. Often misunderstands questions or the message being conveyed.	Includes very few of the vocabulary and grammar points indicated in the situation. Frequently misunderstands questions or misunderstands message being conveyed. Is clearly unable to maintain the conversation for minimum time due to communication and language ability breakdown.
<i>Fluidity, communication strategies, and comprehensibility</i>	Speech is fluid, only a few natural pauses. Appears to be thinking in Spanish. Comfortably	Speech is generally fluid but there are still a few hesitations where student seems to be translating in his/her head.	Speech is halting with abundant hesitations. Relies heavily on native language and resorts to literal translation. Demonstrates limited communication	No fluidity to speech. Uses isolated words and memorized chunks of language. There are many

	demonstrates a variety of communication strategies. Demonstrates ample ability to create with the language and express original thoughts well beyond memorized phrases. Easily understood (albeit with minimal repetition and rephrasing) by <i>native speakers not accustomed to non-native speakers</i> .	Demonstrates some variety of communication strategies. Demonstrates some ability to create with the language and express original thoughts beyond memorized phrases. Understood (with some repetition and rephrasing) by <i>native speakers not accustomed to non-native speakers</i> .	strategies in moments of miscommunication. Relies heavily on memorized phrases and fragments of speech. Occasionally expands these phrases/fragments through simple recombinations of vocabulary and grammar in an attempt to create with the language and express original thoughts. Understood (with some repetition and rephrasing) by <i>native speakers accustomed to non-native speakers</i> .	moments of silence and pauses in conversation. Resorts to English. Difficult to understand, even with repetition, by <i>native speakers accustomed to non-native speakers</i> .
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APPENDIX 2: complete table of results of assessment:

	4	3	2	1
<i>Technical accuracy</i>	58% (34 students)	36% (21 students)	5% (3 students)	0
<i>Text type and function</i>	79% (46 students)	15% (9 students)	3% (2 students)	2% (1 student)
<i>Content</i>	84% (49 students)	12% (7 students)	2% (1 student)	2% (1 student)
<i>Fluidity, communication strategies, and comprehensibility</i>	86% (50 students)	9% (5 students)	3% (2 students)	2% (1 student)
OVERALL	78%	17%	3.5%	1%