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Training Teachers of Slavic LCTLs: Student Profiles and Program Design

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"Teacher training," within the current framework of a typical graduate degree program in a Department of Slavic Languages in the United States, generally implies the coordinating, supervising and mentoring of a group of graduate students whose task is to teach classes on the first, second and occasionally third-year levels of the department's Russian language program. The departmental approach to "coordinating, supervising and mentoring" these graduate student-teachers may be as simple as one or two random classroom visits during an instructional term to gauge each teacher's performance, or as elaborate as a full program of pre-service and in-service classes and workshops on the latest theories and techniques in foreign language pedagogy, coupled with classroom visits and numerous in-service coordination meetings to make sure that the entire teaching program is running smoothly.

Regardless of the size and type of training program provided for Slavic department graduate student-teachers, one dimension is often overlooked. While

[1] I will use the standard acronym LCTL to refer to "less commonly taught languages" throughout this paper. Generally "less commonly taught languages" in the United States are considered, by loose definition, to be "all of the world's languages except English, French, German, and Spanish" (definition taken from the World Wide Web page: <http://carla.acad.umn.edu/lctl/lctl.html>, designed for the LCTL Project of the National Language Resource Center located at the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition). For the purposes of this paper I define *Slavic* LCTLs as all Slavic languages except Russian. My discussion will be limited to the training of graduate students in U.S. university "language and literature" departments to teach LCTLs in post-secondary educational institutions in the United States, but this does not necessarily exclude the validity of my comments for the training of other teachers for other LCTL program types and levels, and while my paper ultimately focuses on "less commonly taught *Slavic* languages," I consider that the issues raised here can be generalized, for the most part, to any LCTL. Lastly, it should be noted that my research data are restricted to Polish and Czech second-year classes and programs as representatives of Slavic LCTLs.

the customary focus of discussion and practical application in the training ses-
sions is understandably the larger Russian language program, the one or two
graduate student-teachers of Beginning *Polish* or Continuing *Czech* or Basic
Bulgarian are often left to adapt information from the Russian discussion for
application to their language programs. Naturally, the basic tenets of foreign
language pedagogical theory and the general foreign language teaching tech-
niques that have become standard instructional fare in many Slavic department
teacher training programs are applicable to the teaching of any Slavic language.
However, marked differences in both the student constituency and the basic
structure of most Slavic LCTL programs vis-à-vis their Russian counterparts
often necessitate differing implementation of pedagogical theory and teaching
techniques in the LCTL classroom and additional or different teacher training
not usually considered in programs established for training graduate student-
teachers of Russian. As stated by H.H. Stern, "If we intend to develop, change,
or evaluate LTE [language teacher education] in a given system of education,
we must first find out for what kind of language teaching situation the LTE
program is intended to prepare teachers. Some training programs are poor be-
cause they are out of whack with the demands of the teaching situations for
which they are supposed to prepare" (1983: 349). The differences between
Slavic LCTL and Russian "language teaching situations" in the areas of student
constituency and basic program structure, and the importance of considering
these differences in developing teacher training programs that include teachers
of Slavic LCTLs, are the focus of this paper. The intent is to bring to the fore
the necessity of training Slavic graduate student-teachers, especially those
teaching Slavic LCTLs, in skills beyond basic instructional techniques and daily
classroom management. This paper will emphasize how the realities of the typi-
cal Slavic LCTL program point to the need to train graduate student-teachers
in the additional skills of course/program development and design in order to
prepare them more adequately for their teaching tasks, and it is hoped that the
discussion here will kindle profession-wide interest in and further discussion of
this important issue.[2]

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[2] The general idea of training foreign language department graduate student-teachers in
the skills of course/program development and design is not a new one. See for example
Rivers (1983), where the author describes one component of the ideal teacher training
program as follows: "As the next step comes a wide-ranging course in methods of
teaching languages, literatures, and cultures, where students debate the theoretical un-
derpinnings, rationale, and practical application of many approaches and many aspects
of their task. Through a cooperative, supervised apprenticeship where they are involved
in course development, teaching, and testing, they prepare to try their wings in devel-
oping courses themselves to meet special interests of students at various levels. In this
they will have the helping hand and encouragement of the course head or coordinator"

As the title indicates, the general headings "student profiles" and "program design" will be used to guide discussion in this paper. "Student profiles" and "program design" will be considered in two different contexts. The first is an examination of the results of a Fall 1996 survey of second-year Polish and Czech students and instructors. In this context the following questions will be considered:

Student Profiles:

- What personal and scholarly experience pertaining to the language does the student of a Slavic LCTL bring to his/her study of the language?
- What are the needs, desires, expectations and goals of the Slavic LCTL student in learning the language?

Program Design:

- What is the structure and scope of the Slavic LCTL program and curriculum?

Through the analysis of the survey data in this first section, a general picture of Slavic LCTL students and programs will be sketched. This general description will then be used as the basis of the discussion of "student profiles" and "program design" in the second context, that of training teachers of Slavic LCTLs. There the two issues of student profiles and program design will be brought together in addressing the following question:

- Given the student profiles and basic structure of Slavic LCTL programs as attested in the survey data, what should the graduate student-teacher be taught that will help him/her better manage the LCTL teaching situation?

My personal experience in both learning and teaching Slavic LCTLs initially led me to the following impressions in answer to the first set of questions posed above:

Student Profiles:

- The students in Slavic LCTL classes come with incredibly diverse personal and scholarly backgrounds.

- The needs, desires, expectations and goals of the students in Slavic LCTL classes are as diverse as their backgrounds.

(1983: 332). However, in my experience it seems safe to say that such ideas have gone relatively unnoticed, and the point of this paper is to emphasize that the notion of providing training in course/program development to graduate student-teachers is not only a good idea, but perhaps even an essential one in the preparation of teachers of LCTLs.

Program Design:

- The structure and scope of Slavic LCTL programs are often quite limited.

Based on the comments and observations of colleagues in the field, it seems likely that the majority of instructors who have taught a Slavic (or any other) LCTL share these same, or similar, personal impressions and general views of the situation and consider this to be the status quo in the typical LCTL program. In order to provide empirical data to test such general views and impressions, I conducted a formal survey involving U.S. institutions of higher education offering instruction in second-year Polish and/or Czech during the fall academic term of 1996. The second-year level was chosen for the study since, in my experience, second year offers the most acute examples of the issues involved in the discussion here. Polish and Czech are appropriate as representatives of the Slavic LCTLs because they are, along with Serbian/Croatian and Ukrainian, the most commonly taught Slavic LCTLs in the United States[3], thus they are presumably taught under the best existing conditions for U.S. programs of Slavic LCTLs.[4] The survey ultimately included 11 second-year Polish and Czech classes at nine academic institutions with enrollments ranging from 3 to 10 students per class giving a total participation of 11 instructors and 53 students. The apparatus of the survey consisted of two questionnaires of two pages each—one questionnaire for the students and one for the instructors.[5] The student questionnaire was designed to gather information on the backgrounds, needs, desires, expectations and goals of students currently studying Polish and Czech at the post-secondary level, while the purpose of the instructor questionnaire was to gather basic information regarding the size and type of

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[3] According to the LCTL database compiled under the LCTL Project of the National Language Resource Center at the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (database available through the World Wide Web page of the LCTL Project: <http://carla.acad.umn.edu/lctl/lctl.html>), the number of U.S. post-secondary institutions offering instruction in Slavic LCTLs is as follows: Polish—87; Serbian/Croatian (also listed under "Serbian" and "Croatian")—46; Czech—45; Ukrainian—38; Bulgarian—21; Slovak—8; Slovene—7; Macedonian—5; Byelorussian—2; Wendish—1.

[4] The assumption is then that programs in other Slavic LCTLs exist in similar or worse conditions, with the possible exception of instances of individual departments that specialize in the study of one or another of the Slavic LCTLs and thus have more extensively developed programs.

[5] The appendix at the end of this paper lists the questions posed in the two survey questionnaires along with introductory comments regarding the design and structure of the questionnaires.

programs available to these students for carrying out this language study and the general foreign language teaching environment in which the programs exist.

In examining the results of the survey, I will start with the data from the student questionnaire, in order to determine if the general profile of Slavic LCTL students obtained from the survey matches the one that I put forth earlier in this paper: "the students in Slavic LCTL classes come with incredibly diverse personal and scholarly backgrounds," and "the needs, desires, expectations and goals of the students in Slavic LCTL classes are as diverse as their backgrounds."

1)   The Backgrounds of Students of Second-Year Slavic LCTLs

The data from sections I.A.1–3. of the survey show that there is indeed an academically diverse student population in second-year Polish and Czech courses. Eight of the 11 classes surveyed had a mixture of undergraduate and graduate students, and the three that did not have any graduate students had at least one non-traditional student (auditor, non-degree, post-doctoral) per class. The distribution within both the undergraduate and graduate categories shows this diversity of academic experience among the students in each class to be even greater, since there were never more than two students from any single academic level (1st-year undergraduate, 2nd-year undergraduate, etc.) in a given class. In addition to this diversity in years of study, the breadth represented in the data concerning fields of study clearly indicates that students come to the study of Slavic LCTLs from a wide spectrum of academic disciplines.

The data from sections I.A.4–5. demonstrate that the linguistic preparation of these students is also quite diverse. Slavic LCTL students certainly do not all arrive in the second-year classroom directly from "the first-year Polish course," or "two years of high school Czech," nor are their experiences in the language exclusively classroom experiences. Eighteen of the 53 students surveyed listed more than one year of previous exposure to the language, and ten of the 53 listed some in-country experience in their Polish/Czech learning already by the second-year level. Furthermore, Slavic LCTL students come to the classroom with a great variety of experience in general foreign language learning. Only 5 of the 53 students had had no language learning experience prior to studying Polish/Czech.

Sections I.B.1–3. show also a full range of *cultural* exposure to the target language. The data show: 1) students with varying degrees of Polish or Czech heritage, including heritage and native speakers, alongside those with absolutely no Polish or Czech heritage; 2) students with a variety of personal relationships to Poles or Czechs and those without any such relationships; 3) students with extensive in-country experience next to those with a hope of going some day. An interesting statistic compiled from all three sections (I.B.1–3.) is

that only 5 of the 53 students polled had had no cultural exposure at all to Polish/Czech through heritage, acquaintances or travel—so it would appear that a large number of Slavic LCTL students bring some sort of personalized cultural language experience to the classroom with them.

    2)   The Needs, Desires, Expectations and Goals of Students of Second-Year Slavic LCTLs

The responses recorded for section II.A. show clear diversity in the reasons that students take up study of Slavic LCTLs. While three reasons stand out rather clearly from the others in the data totals,[6] nonetheless, every reason listed on the questionnaire is represented by at least one student out of those surveyed, and that one student in any given category becomes a significant factor in a class of only three students (the smallest classes surveyed). Indeed, regardless of class size, every class surveyed registered four to five reasons (out of eight listed) for studying Polish/Czech.

    The data in section II.B.1. also show a full range of responses regarding the results that students are seeking from Slavic LCTL classes. It should be mentioned here that some students did not follow the instructions completely in this section, hence the data are slightly inaccurate if read strictly according to the survey instructions. However, the overall results still give an idea of where the students' priorities lie, and these priorities are fully distributed across the chart. Indeed, every category is clearly represented, thus demonstrating the diversity of goals that students bring into the second-year Polish/Czech classroom. As in section II.A., there are some fairly obvious preferences here.[7] However, the presence of as many as four clear preferences indicates that Slavic LCTL students are far from unified in their learning goals.

    Finally, the results in section II.B.2 indicate that not everyone in Slavic LCTL classes wishes to become the ideal interactive communicator, fully functional in all four language skills. Some students have quite specific skills that they wish to hone, while others (in this survey, 24 out of 53 students) are indeed looking for a well-rounded exposure to all aspects of the language.

    It is quite clear from the student survey data that the second-year Slavic LCTL classroom is marked by a high degree of diversity in student profiles. The survey shows that students have diverse scholastic, linguistic and cultural

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[6] "Potentially helpful skill for further work toward your degree in your major field of study," "potentially helpful skill for future employment in your field of interest," "personal interest."

[7] "Immediate further study of the language at your present school," "immediate further study of the language independently in Poland/Czech Republic," "research in your major field of study," "pleasure (travel, personal communication/correspondence, reading novels/newspapers, watching films/TV, etc.)."

backgrounds. Student diversity is also reflected in their varying reasons for studying the language, the results they desire and expect from the class, and the skills they need to acquire in their study of the LCTL. Of course, this type of student diversity can be found in any language program, including more commonly taught languages such as German or French. In larger classes and programs the wide diversity of student backgrounds, needs, desires, expectations and goals is often simply not as noticeable due to the much larger size of the student population throughout which the differences are dispersed. However, student diversity represents a major issue with special significance for the typical LCTL program not so much because of the smaller student population in the program, but more importantly because of the limited structure of the program itself. This issue will be developed in more detail in the following section on LCTL program design as well as in the discussion of teacher training for Slavic LCTLs in the second half of this paper.

Turning now to the instructor questionnaire and the issue of Slavic LCTL program design, I will consider the survey data to determine if they support or refute the general picture of Slavic LCTL programs that I sketched earlier: "the structure and scope of Slavic LCTL programs are often quite limited."

It is fully evident from the data in sections III and IV of the instructor questionnaire that the surveyed programs in Polish and Czech are generally limited in structure and scope. In section III the data show extreme limitations in degree offerings, with only two Polish/Czech B.A. degrees available in the 11 programs surveyed and only five instances of an institution offering a Polish/Czech emphasis in a different degree program (although I suspect from certain student responses that the M.A. and Ph.D. "emphasis" categories could have been filled in in more instances). Sections IV.1. and IV.6. indicate that Slavic LCTL program limitations extend far beyond a lack of degree possibilities in the language. Course offerings are highly limited in both depth and breadth. The maximum number of academic terms that Polish/Czech language instruction is available in a regular course sequence at the institutions surveyed is never higher than two years. Only five programs offer optional language study beyond the first two years, and only six of the 11 programs surveyed offer courses in areas other than the basic language sequence. Section IV.4. shows severe limitations in the size of the teaching staffs of Slavic LCTLs with an average of 1.7 instructors in the 11 surveyed Polish/Czech programs. Finally, section IV.2. reveals low current student enrollments in Polish/Czech programs at the time of the survey (with a low program enrollment of 3, a high of 22, and an average of 13 students per program), and section IV.3. shows historically low

enrollments[8] in specifically second-year Polish/Czech classes. Having operated all along with the notion that Polish and Czech are Slavic LCTLs, it was ultimately to be expected that the survey data would show certain limitations in program structure and scope, considering that the very designation, *less commonly taught* languages, implies limitations in the number of courses, teachers and students of these languages. The survey data have therefore effectively demonstrated that Polish and Czech, presumably along with the other non-Russian Slavic languages, are appropriately classified as Slavic LCTLs. However, the main contribution of the data has been to show certain specific domains in which the program limitations occur and also to demonstrate the nature and degree of the limitations in program structure and scope associated with the classification "LCTL."[9]

Having established that teachers of Slavic LCTLs (as exemplified by Polish and Czech), are in fact working with limited time, course offerings, and human resources in an environment of high student diversity, I would like to discuss the ramifications of these factors for the process of training graduate student-teachers of Slavic LCTLs. Restated in terms of the question posed at the beginning of this paper: Given the diverse student profiles and limited basic structure of Slavic LCTL programs as attested in the survey data, what should the graduate student-teacher be taught that will help him/her better manage the LCTL teaching situation? The three primary limitations in program structure that were listed above (limited time, course offerings and human resources) together with the issue of student diversity will be the major focal points in the consideration of this question in the remainder of this paper.

Within the structure of the typical foreign language program at the post-secondary level in the United States, it is fairly standard that the *entire first two years* of instruction are devoted to the acquisition of the basic structures and communicative processes of the given language. This is especially true of the

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[8] It is actually difficult to judge the historical enrollment figures gathered by the survey given the lack of data for various reasons here. However, one reason for the lack of data is in itself indicative of historically small enrollments in the programs surveyed—some of the programs offer first and second-year Polish/Czech courses in alternating years, thus maintaining a sequence of courses while at the same time ensuring sufficient enrollment to keep the sequence running by only restarting with first-year instruction every other year. In fact, several Polish/Czech programs that were contacted for the survey were unable to participate because they were in the first-year portion of the cycle and thus did not have a current second-year class for the survey.

[9] It should be noted that my small data sample is by no means the only evidence for the limited structure and scope of Slavic LCTL programs. In Leonard Polakiewicz's (1996) national survey of Polish programs and enrollments recently published in *The Polish Review*, we find large-scale evidence of these same program limitations.

more commonly taught languages, French, German and Spanish, and may also apply in some instances to the "more common" less commonly taught languages such as Russian and Japanese. Such programs generally offer additional structured language courses beyond the second-year level, as well as specialized or individualized courses (linguistic, literary and cultural surveys) beginning with the third year of study. These programs usually offer a full four-year range of courses that lead to an undergraduate degree or certificate of some type and generally operate with a centralized or standardized curriculum. Thus, during the first two years of these full-length programs, differences can be leveled out among students who enter with highly diverse backgrounds through a consistent presentation and review of "the basics" of the language. When these students move on to the third-year level, they all have essentially the same common core of knowledge on which to build. Using the additional course offerings at the third and fourth-year levels, they can advance their proficiency in the language and individualize their learning experiences to fulfill their diverse language goals during those final two years of the program. The students that enter such language programs are aware of this general program structure, and they are able to plan their individual language needs, desires, expectations and goals around this standard structure.

The situation with LCTLs is quite different. As seen in the discussion of the survey data, LCTL programs usually do not have the luxury of offering a full four-year range of courses and are often restricted to two years of language instruction, sometimes accompanied by an eclectic collection of higher level courses offered sporadically and generally only when student demand allows. In addition, there is often a lack of any sort of centralized or standardized curriculum for the program. It has been my experience that the restriction of an LCTL program to only two guaranteed years of instruction coupled with the lack of a centralized curriculum can lead a teacher to a conscious or unconscious acceleration of the four-year program design, in an attempt to make as much of it as possible fit into the two years of the LCTL program. In addition, it has been my experience that the students themselves are, to greater or lesser degrees, also aware of the time restrictions inherent in LCTL programs and the vagaries of LCTL course offerings beyond the second-year level. Because there is often no readily apparent continuation of the LCTL program beyond the second-year level, the students enter the program with mixed conceptions, or no conception, of course design and content. Because there is often no continuation of the LCTL program *at all* beyond the second-year level, each student has different expectations of the program and different goals to fulfill by the end of that second year.

Added to these limitations of time and course offerings in an LCTL program is the element of limited human resources. The survey data show that 4 of

the 11 Polish/Czech programs have only one teacher and 6 of the 11 have only
two teachers. Given this information, it is clear that graduate student-teachers
working in such LCTL programs are either completely on their own or are
paired with only one other instructor of the language, who may also be a gradu-
ate student-teacher. Even if there are two instructors of the LCTL in a single
program, they are often not teaching parallel sections of the same course, but
rather they are teaching the language on two different levels. Hence, each one
of them is still essentially functioning alone in performing his/her specific teach-
ing duties and bears full responsibility for the effectiveness of the language
program at his/her specific level (often, as noted above, without an established,
centralized curriculum). This isolation and responsibility of the typical Slavic
LCTL graduate student-teacher as an independent instructor or the only in-
structor at a specific instructional level of the language, the need of the LCTL
teacher to accommodate a diverse student constituency within the structural
limitations of the program in which he/she is teaching, and the lack of a stan-
dardized curricular framework for that structurally limited program point to
the one skill area that I believe should not be ignored in the training of gradu-
ate student-teachers of Slavic LCTLs—the skills of *course/program develop-
ment and design*. A graduate student-teacher of Czech upon hearing a presenta-
tion of the results of my survey remarked: "[your presentation] certainly helped
me realize why I'm finding my second-year Czech class so much more difficult
to structure than a first-year class!". This statement concisely illustrates the
need both to inform graduate student-teachers about the special circumstances
of an LCTL program and, more importantly, to train them in the skills neces-
sary for developing and designing their language classes and structuring their
programs to deal with those circumstances.

In discussing the need to involve teachers in curriculum research and de-
velopment in their own classrooms, David Nunan states that "[a] consequence
of this [unsuitability of a centralised, imposed curriculum] is that classroom
practitioners need to play a central role in curriculum development, including
monitoring and evaluation. To this end, it is crucial that teachers develop a
range of skills in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own professional
activities" (1990: 62). In the case that Nunan cites, it is the heterogeneous na-
ture of a large teaching group that causes a "centralised, imposed curriculum"
to be unsuitable and requires that each teacher be maximally self-sufficient in
matters of curriculum development. In our instance it is the isolation and inde-
pendence of an extremely small teaching group (often as small as one person)
that demands the same level of curriculum self-sufficiency from the teacher, in
a situation where a "centralised, imposed curriculum" often simply does not
exist. Graduate student-teachers will have an opportunity to begin to develop
the skills that Nunan describes if sessions on course/program development and

design are included in teacher training programs.[10] The incorporation of such sessions into a teacher training program to help prepare LCTL graduate student-teachers for their classrooms does not mean that the teacher trainer must develop fluency in the language, a detailed knowledge of the available materials, and tighter supervisory control for every LCTL under his/her jurisdiction. On the contrary, if the teacher trainer provides *language-independent* training in the *general* skills of course/program development and design, he/she will be equipping the graduate student-teachers of the LCTLs to more successfully manage their LCTL courses and programs on their own. Fortunately there is a growing body of literature on the subject of course design and curriculum development in foreign language education that can aid in the implementing of these topics into the teacher training program.[11]

Kathleen Graves, in a recent article (1996) on course development, sets up a useful "framework of components" that I will follow in the remainder of this paper to examine the skills involved in course/program development and design that should be taught to graduate student-teachers of Slavic LCTLs to help

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[10] Nunan states this repeatedly: "If teachers are to be the principal agents of curriculum development, they need to develop a range of skills which go beyond classroom management and instruction. Curriculum development will therefore be largely a matter of *appropriate staff development*" (1988: 171; emphasis added). "With teachers as the principal agents of curriculum development, such development itself becomes largely a matter of *appropriate teacher development*" ("~~Action Research~~" 65; emphasis added).   *1990:*

[11] See Dubin and Olshtain (1986), Graves (1996), Johnson (~~1998~~), Nunan (1988), *1989* Richards (1990), Stern (~~1987~~), and Yalden (1987) for recent examples of complete works *1992* or major chapters of works devoted to foreign language course design and program development. These works differ from each other in approach, emphasis and presentation, but they all include both theoretical and practical discussions of the issues involved in course/program development that could be helpful in teacher training sessions on the subject (the proportion of theory to practice varying considerably from work to work). Although some of the cited works are written specifically for the growing field of Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language, the basic content of those works is also highly applicable to the broader field of general foreign language teaching.

Interestingly, Stern makes a brief observation directly supporting the thoughts put forth in this paper on the necessity of preparing specifically LCTL teachers for tasks of course/program design and development. In discussing the level at which curriculum development is likely to occur, he states that "... in the teaching of *rarely taught languages*, the teacher may find that no ready-made curriculum exists, and there may even be no readily available teaching materials. In these circumstances the teacher is completely on his own. He must design his own curriculum, make or find his own materials, and teach his curriculum to the class. In this situation the development of the curriculum and its implementation in the classroom are carried out by one and the same person, the teacher himself" (1992: 42; emphasis added).

them deal with the complexities of their LCTL teaching situations.[12] The components are as follows: "1) Needs assessment, 2) Determining goals and objectives, 3) Conceptualizing content, 4) Selecting and developing materials and activities, 5) Organization of content and activities, 6) Evaluation, 7) Consideration of resources and constraints" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1).

1) "Needs assessment: What are my students' needs? How can I assess them so that I can address them?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

The purpose of this course development component in the teacher training program is not only to call attention to the fact that different students have different needs and that this should be taken into consideration in designing a course. This component should also teach the graduate student-teacher various ways of conceptualizing students' needs and various assessment tools and methods that can be used to determine those needs (Graves 1996: 12–16). The examination of the survey data regarding Polish/Czech students' needs and desires pointed out the wide diversity of the Slavic LCTL student constituency. Because of the limited time available in an LCTL program to help students fulfill their widely diverse language-learning needs, it is necessary that teachers of Slavic LCTLs be equipped to assess student needs in their classes and to develop a course design based on a solid assessment of those needs.

2) "Determining goals and objectives: What are the purposes and intended outcomes of the course? What will my students need to do or learn to achieve these goals?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

Given the limited time frame of the typical LCTL program that was seen in the survey, the LCTL teacher must have a clear idea of "what" and "how much" the students are to learn within the time available in the program. As I stated earlier, the restriction of an LCTL program to only two guaranteed years of instruction and the lack of a centralized curriculum can lead a teacher to a conscious or unconscious acceleration of the typical four-year program design, in an attempt to make as much of it as possible fit into the two years of the LCTL program. Providing teacher training regarding the determination of goals and objectives in course development can help to discourage this tendency toward

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[12] Graves' components will be considered in this paper in direct connection with the profile of LCTL programs and students found in the survey data. This consideration is intended to demonstrate the utility of providing training in course/program development to graduate student-teachers of Slavic LCTLs. It is not, however, intended to provide an overview of Graves' component system in full detail, as a full discussion of the system would go beyond the scope of this paper. A complete presentation of the different aspects of each component and of the general importance of each component in a full plan of course/program development would, of course, be essential when incorporating this or similar course development frameworks into actual teacher training sessions.

compression of a four-year curriculum into two years. As stated by Graves, "Setting goals and objectives provides a sense of direction and a coherent framework for the teacher in planning her course" ("~~A Framework~~" 17). As *1996:* regards choosing those goals and objectives she continues, "To arrive at the goals, one asks the question, 'What are the purposes and intended outcomes of the course?' The answer may be influenced by an analysis of students' needs ... among other factors" (17). This is especially true in an LCTL program where the limited time available to help students achieve their expectations and goals increases the importance of including a student needs assessment in the process of determining course goals and objectives.

3) "Conceptualizing content: What will be the backbone of what I teach? What will I include in my syllabus?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

This component of course development is tightly connected with the two previous components, "needs assessment" and "determining goals and objectives." It was argued above that student needs should significantly influence the goals and objectives of an LCTL curriculum, and it is quite clear that the goals and objectives of the curriculum should determine the content of the courses. However, there is a danger inherent in this type of thinking—the danger of overdiversification of content. It has been emphasized throughout this paper that the diversity of the student population in an LCTL class must constantly be kept in mind because of the limited time available to the teacher to satisfy the diverse goals of the group. There are limits, however, to how much individual academic attention can be paid to each student's needs, before the course loses all semblance of coherence due to overdiversification of content. The graduate student-teacher should therefore be guided by the teacher trainer in constructing an LCTL syllabus that strikes a balance between overly strict standardization and overly free individualization of content.

4) "Selecting and developing materials and activities: How and with what will I teach the course? What is my role? What are my students' roles?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

The previous component, "conceptualizing content" and the present one "selecting and developing materials and activities," often go hand-in-hand in the process of course development. As Graves states, "For many teachers, the material they use forms the backbone of the course. It is something concrete that students use, and it provides a focus for the class" (1996: 26). It was argued in the previous section that course content should be determined to a reasonable degree by student needs. Given that course content and course materials are directly tied to each other, it follows that the course materials chosen by an LCTL instructor should also reflect the needs of the students in the course.

This brings up an issue that has not yet been touched upon in this paper—the issue of availability and suitability of published LCTL instructional materials.

For a variety of fairly obvious reasons (market size and profitability being major ones), published LCTL instructional materials are not nearly as abundant as materials for teaching the more common languages. It is unlikely that numerous competing textbooks will be available for any given LCTL at any one time, and the rate at which new textbooks are introduced is determined to a certain degree by the rate at which the older ones become unavailable. With relatively few textbooks available, it follows that there is not a large degree of diversity in content and presentation among the published materials from which the LCTL teacher can choose. Thus, depending upon the assessed students' needs and the chosen goals and objectives for the course, the teacher of an LCTL may be unable to locate suitable published materials and thus be compelled to develop his/her own materials for the course or adapt the unsuitable materials that are available.[13] This need to develop or adapt materials for LCTL instruction is reflected in the responses to section IV.5. of the instructor questionnaire where numerous respondents reported the use of self-designed or other unpublished instructional materials at various levels of the language programs surveyed. However, Graves correctly warns that "[d]eveloping new materials and activities for using them requires time and a clear sense of why they will be used, how, and by whom" ("A Framework" 1996: 26). Including a component on materials development in the LCTL teacher training program would provide graduate student-teachers of LCTLs the time they need to develop new materials, as well as the guidance necessary to help them gain a clear sense of why, how and by whom the self-designed materials would be used.

5) "Organization of content and activities: How will I organize the content and activities? What systems will I develop?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

In the section on "conceptualizing content" it was suggested that the LCTL syllabus should strike a balance between standardization and individualization of content in order to account for diverse student needs without threatening the coherence of the course. The same balanced consideration of student needs and course coherence is required when planning the organization of the course content. An overly rigid organization that allows for little or no flexibility in the presentation of course content allows for consideration of individual student

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[13] A recent example of self-designed Slavic LCTL course materials developed to be responsive to a wide range of student needs is the set of World Wide Web Czech materials developed by Petr Bílek, David Kanig and Masako Fidler at Brown University. For a presentation of these materials see the article by Bílek, Kanig and Fidler in the present volume.

needs only on a very limited basis. However, a completely relaxed organization of course content, flexible nearly to the point of formlessness, can quickly lead to course chaos without constant vigilance on the part of the teacher. The guidance of a teacher trainer in this organizational aspect of course development would help the graduate student-teacher to discover the level of content organization that he/she needs in order to allow for necessary flexibility in course flow without losing complete control.

6) "Evaluation: How will I assess what students have learned? How will I assess the effectiveness of the course?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

The evaluation of student progress is an important part of any teaching program, and the subject of "testing" generally receives a fair amount of discussion in teacher training sessions. There is another type of evaluation, however, that should also be discussed in connection with teacher training in the skills of course/program development and design—evaluation of the course itself, its design and its effectiveness. "What can be evaluated? Any part of the process of course development can be evaluated, including the assumptions about and analysis of students' needs or backgrounds, goals and objectives, materials and activities, means of assessing students' progress, student participation, student roles, and the teacher's role. Thus each element of the framework [of course development components] is itself subject to evaluation" (Graves 1996: 31).

Within the structure of an LCTL teacher training program it would be helpful to encourage the graduate student-teachers to carry out some form of evaluation of the courses they are teaching on multiple occasions during the courses as well as after their completion. This would provide them with the opportunity to try out different evaluation devices and techniques and to evaluate different aspects of the course development process under the guidance of the teacher trainer. It would also give them the chance to gauge the effectiveness of their course design and teaching and make modifications or adjustments while the course is still in progress, to better ensure that they are matching their teaching efforts to the learning needs of their students. "Teachers must become familiar with the various purposes and types of testing, but they must also devise their own systems and areas of inquiry. As with needs assessment, teachers must experiment with different methods of evaluation and monitor the success of each so as to maximize the effectiveness of their courses" (Graves,1996: 32).

7) "Consideration of resources and constraints: What are the givens of my situation?" (Graves 1996: 13, Table 1)

"Resources and constraints are two ways of looking at the same thing. A required course book may be a constraint for one teacher and a resource for another. A class of fewer than ten students may be a resource for one teacher and

a constraint for another" (Graves 1996: 32). As seen repeatedly in the survey data and discussed throughout this paper, the two major features of the typical Slavic LCTL program are the diversity of student backgrounds, needs, desires, expectations and goals (diverse "student profiles") and the limitations of structure and scope in the program itself (limited "program design"). As Graves states, these features may be viewed as either resources or constraints. Diversity of student needs may bring out the best in a teacher with equally diverse interests, but may cause frustration in a teacher who is more comfortable in a classroom with a highly focused goal. The lack of a standardized curricular framework may perplex some teachers who have never been faced with such an "unstructured" situation, but it may also inspire those teachers who have at times felt restricted by the "inflexible" structure of an externally imposed syllabus.

"Though these givens [given resources and constraints] may seem secondary to the processes [of course development] just described, in fact they play a primary role in the development of a course because it is in considering the givens that a teacher begins to make sense of processes such as needs assessment and material selection" (Graves 1996: 32–33). Thus this final component of Graves' course development framework actually brings the present discussion full circle. Whether the "givens" of student diversity and limited program structure are viewed as resources or constraints for the LCTL program, the fact remains that, "they play a primary role in the development of a course" and must be taken into consideration in the development and design of LCTL courses and programs. However, the one or two graduate student-teachers of Beginning Polish or Continuing Czech or Basic Bulgarian who often constitute the entire teaching staff of the typical Slavic LCTL program are generally not equipped to handle this task without training and/or experience. It is therefore vital that teacher trainers provide the opportunity for graduate student-teachers to develop and refine the skills of course/program development and design. As stated by Dubin and Olshtain, "At various times during their careers, professionals in the field of language teaching find themselves involved in tasks quite removed from actual classroom instruction. Among these non-teaching assignments are the planning of courses and the writing of materials. Both require specialized background of a kind which is commonly glossed over lightly or benignly ignored in too many university programs in applied linguistics, English language teaching and teacher training. Yet, graduates of such programs are often called upon to fulfill course design tasks without having received the proper training to do so" (1986: 1). Teachers of LCTLs are "called upon to fulfill course design tasks" from the first days of their careers as graduate student-teachers. Therefore any skills in course/program development and design that the teacher trainer can provide graduate student-teachers of LCTLs

in the early stages of their careers will be of both immediate as well as long-lasting benefit to the LCTL teachers and the programs they teach in.

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Appendix: The Survey Apparatus[14]

1) The Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire is divided into two major sections, one seeking information on the student's background, and the other—information on the student's study of second-year Polish/Czech. In section I-A, the academic background information is intended to give an idea of both the student's academic training and level and the student's language training in both the target language (Polish or Czech) and in other languages. In section I-B, the cultural background information is designed to provide an idea of the student's informal, non-academic exposure to the target language. In section II, the information on second-year Polish/Czech study is meant to give an idea of the student's individual needs, desires, expectations and goals in taking a second year of the language.

2) The Instructor Questionnaire

The instructor questionnaire is divided into five major sections. The first section asks for class enrollments for the purpose of computing the percentage of

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[14] I have included only the Polish version of the questionnaires here. The Czech questionnaires were identical to the Polish ones in both form and content except that the words "Czech" and "the Czech Republic" were listed in the place of "Polish" and "Poland" respectively throughout the questionnaires.

enrolled students who completed the study. Section II solicits information on the general requirements and various opportunities for language study that exist at the institutions surveyed. Sections III and IV gather information on the depth and breadth of opportunities for study of the target language at the institutions. Finally, Section V seeks to determine if there is a ready-made population base from which the target language program could hope to draw a steady flow of students and interest. As stated in the text of this paper, the instructor questionnaire is designed to provide a profile of the general type of program in which the students surveyed are studying Polish or Czech.

The exact text of the two survey questionnaires is provided in this appendix but without the answer blanks and page formatting of the original questionnaires. Where a question was accompanied by specific response categories on the original questionnaire, those response categories are included here directly after the question to which they correspond.

Student Questionnaire on Second-Year Polish Language Study

I.   Background

A. Academic

1. Check the one blank that most accurately describes your present level in school:
   __ 1st year undergraduate; 2nd year undergraduate; 3rd year undergraduate; 4th year undergraduate; 5th year undergraduate
   __ 1st year graduate; 2nd year graduate; 3rd year graduate; 4th year graduate; 5th year graduate
   __ other

2. Check the one blank that most accurately indicates the degree that you are presently working on:
   __ B.A.; B.S.; M.A.; Ph.D.; other

3. List your present major field of study. Be as precise as possible. (for example: European History, Nuclear Engineering, German Literature, etc.):

4. List the amount of time that you have been studying Polish and where you have studied it (do not include the class in which you are presently enrolled):

5. List any other languages you have studied, the amount of time of study for each language and where you have studied these languages (up to 3 additional languages):

B. Cultural

1. Do you have Polish cultural heritage?   Yes; No

If "Yes," check the one blank that most accurately indicates the nature of this heritage:

__ born in Poland; Polish-born parent(s); Polish-born grandparent(s); other

2. Do you have Polish relatives, friends or acquaintances here or in Poland?

   Here: Yes; No   In Poland: Yes; No

3. Have you ever visited Poland?   Yes; No

   If "Yes," how many times?

   If "Yes," check all of the blanks that most accurately indicate the nature of the visit(s):

   __ vacation; study abroad; work abroad; other

   If "Yes," would you like to visit Poland again?   Yes; No

4. If you have never visited Poland, would you like to?   Yes; No

II. Second-Year Polish Language Study

A. Reasons

Check the two blanks that most accurately indicate your present reason for studying specifically **2nd-year** Polish (check no more than <u>two</u> (2) blanks):

   __ fulfills general foreign language requirement for your school
   __ fulfills field-specific foreign language requirement for your major field of study
   __ potentially helpful skill for further work toward your degree in your major field of study
   __ necessary skill for further work toward your degree in your major field of study
   __ potentially helpful skill for future employment in your field of interest
   __ necessary skill for future employment in your field of interest
   __ personal interest
   __ other

B. Desired Result

1. Check the one blank (from choices a, b, c, d) that most accurately indicates the desired result of your study of specifically **2nd-year** Polish (check only <u>one</u> (1) blank):

   a. sufficient Polish language skills for immediate further study of the language

   If you checked this selection, which one of the following options most accurately indicates your present plans for further study of Polish (check only <u>one</u> (1) blank):

   __ immediate further study of the language <u>at your present school</u>

___ immediate further study of the language <u>independently at home</u>
___ immediate further study of the language <u>in a program in Poland</u>
___ immediate further study of the language <u>independently in Poland</u>
___ other

b.   sufficient Polish language skills for immediate use of the language <u>without further language study</u>

If you checked this selection, which one of the following options most accurately indicates your present plans for immediate use of Polish (check only <u>one</u> (1) blank):

___ research in your major field of study
___ pleasure (travel, personal communication/correspondence, reading novels/newspapers, watching films/TV, etc.)
___ employment in your field of interest
___ other

c.   sufficient Polish language skills for <u>both</u> immediate further study <u>and</u> immediate use of the language (please go back and also check one blank in each of the subsections under choices a. <u>and</u> b. above as instructed there)

d.   sufficient Polish language course work to fulfill a language requirement

2. Check the blanks that indicate which language skill(s) you wish to develop the most for the purpose (a, b, c, d) that you listed above (check all blanks that apply to you):

___ reading; speaking; writing; listening

Teacher Questionnaire on Polish Language Instruction

I.   Technical Information

What is the total number of students enrolled in the class where this questionnaire is being distributed?

II. General Language Study at Your Institution

1. Does your institution have a general minimum foreign language requirement?

For undergrad. students: Yes; No   For grad. students: Yes; No

If "Yes" for either level, which schools/colleges of your institution have such a requirement and how many semesters/quarters?

ex.: School of Business—two semesters
ex.: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences—four semesters

2. What languages are offered at your institution and how many years of study for each? (count only language instruction, <u>not</u> literature, linguistics, culture, etc.)

III.   Polish Degree Options

1. Does your institution grant any degrees <u>in Polish</u> or only degrees with an official Polish <u>emphasis/minor</u>? (e.g., B.A. in Polish lang. & lit. *vs.* B.A. in another foreign lang. & lit. with a Polish minor; M.A. in Polish Studies *vs.* M.A. in East European Studies with Polish emphasis) **Check all appropriate blanks:**

    Degree in Polish: none; B.A.; M.A.; Ph.D.; other
    Emphasis in Polish: none; B.A.; M.A.; Ph.D.; other

2. If you checked any of the blanks in the section "Emphasis in Polish," list the major fields of study where an official Polish emphasis/minor is possible and the level(s) of study at which it is possible:

    ex.: History—B.A.; M.A.

IV.   Polish Language Program

1. How many semesters/quarters of Polish language instruction are currently offered in your Polish language program? (count only language instruction, <u>not</u> literature, linguistics, culture, etc.)

2. What is the current enrollment in all levels of your Polish language program? (count only language instruction, <u>not</u> literature, linguistics, culture, etc.)

    ___ 1st-year; 2nd-year; 3rd-year; 4th-year; independent study; evening courses; other

3. What have been the enrollments in the <u>final</u> quarter/semester of your <u>2nd-year</u> Polish language class(es) in the past three years?

    ___ 2nd-Year Polish Spring 1994; 2nd-Year Polish Spring 1995; 2nd-Year Polish Spring 1996

4. How many instructors presently teach Polish language classes in your program? (include Graduate Teaching Assistants)

5. List the textbook(s) currently used in each level of Polish language classes taught at your institution:

    ___ 1st-year; 2nd-year; 3rd-year; 4th-year; evening classes; other

6. Are Polish classes offered in areas other than the language instruction sequence and at what level(s)? (e.g., specialized language (business, translation, other), culture, linguistics, literature, etc.)
    ex.: Polish for Business—3rd-year, 4th-year
    ex.: Introduction to Polish Literature—4th-year

V. Demographics

Is there a large ethnic Polish population in your community/region?   Yes; No