

**College of
Arts & Sciences**
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

**Directed Independent Language Study
(DILS)**

Program Information

UM DILS Program Information

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DILS Program Information

Overview of the Program and its Purpose

The Directed Independent Language Study (DILS) program, inspired initially by NASILP (National Association of Less Commonly Taught Languages), allows students at the University of Miami to pursue the study of languages not offered through formal courses at the institution. In this program, students work independently during the week using materials identified by the Director of DILS; students then meet with a native-speaker of the target language (called Language Partner or LP) for two 60 minute Practice Sessions in order to practice and further develop their newly acquired skills. Students are tested at the end of the semester by an outside examiner .

The purpose of DILS is to create a favorable environment for students to learn to function as comfortably as possible in the target language and the corresponding culture. By enabling students to develop a certain level of linguistic and intercultural competence to be effective communicators, the program creates a language learning ambience that, inspires students to pursue study and work a in them the desire to continue to study the target language in their future academic and professional endeavors by allowing them to develop strong foundations in the idiosyncratic characteristics of the language.

DILS is learner centered, based on an interactive system. It is dialogical, using a variety of techniques and interactive situations with idiomatic and cultural content. Program activities include conversing one-on-one and in small groups (2 to 5 students), preparing and performing oral skits, performing spontaneous role play, giving interviews, pursuing task-based conversations, and periodically using multi-media materials.

Language learning in DILS takes place in the target language. This helps participating students to develop the habit of *thinking in the language* they study rather than translate from their dominant language. Students are expected to learn hands on; they are asked to *use only the target language* as they engage in dialogues, ask questions, do role play; this allows them to learn to manipulate the structures of the language, to experiment, to be creative. Students in DILS have the opportunity to suggest topics that relate to their field. The goal is for students to

eventually acquire proficiency in the target language such that they can communicate comfortably in a broad range of contexts.

Language Partners are not teachers of the language, although some do have teaching or tutoring background. Practice Sessions are not meant to resemble the traditional classroom setting, and Language Partners are not expected to ‘teach’ the rules of the language to students. Rather, Language Partners are expected to provide opportunities for *practice* with the language in the many forms it might take. Practice Sessions, therefore, can include free conversation and discussion of a variety of subjects - short texts, films, newscasts - all in the target language; Practice Sessions can include repetition of vocabulary and idioms in order to practice pronunciation; role-play activities to practice phrases and communicative functions in context, as well as numerous other activities that facilitate the use of the language in an authentic way: the purpose of all Practice Session activities is to provide students with the greatest number of opportunities possible within a 60 minute time-frame to *use* the target language.

Outside examiners are on the faculty of other post-secondary academic institutions teaching the target language. In some cases, the examiner is also a trained and certified proficiency evaluator. The outside examiner serves as resource person in addition to being an evaluator. The DILS examiner is sympathetic to the goals of directed independent language study. Working together with the DILS Director, he/she helps to set the pace for the DILS study module, helps select materials, evaluate the Language Partner, and answer questions that come up in the course of the semester.

Practice Sessions follow the required study materials. In addition, Language Partners and students are encouraged to incorporate technology whenever possible; to use resources on the Internet that put students in direct contact with the target language and culture, in order to increase opportunities for engaging in on-line and face-to-face interactions, understand authentic materials and apprehend cultural differences. Practice Sessions are privileged moments when students acquire not only communicative skills in the language they are learning but beyond that, they acquire cultural information transmitted implicitly through the language. Through their interaction with their Language Partners, through observation, implication, deduction, students will gain insights into another culture.

Only those applications receive final approval for which adequate materials, Language Partner and testing can be arranged. The DILS Program Director is responsible for identifying and securing appropriate curricular materials, native speaker Language Partners and qualified Examiners for students whose applications are seriously considered.

Students do not receive a grade or course credit for their participation in the program. However, a notation is made on their transcript that they completed language study in DILS. Upon request, they may also obtain an information letter from the DILS Director about their language study in DILS.

The DILS program is selective and therefore, students must complete an application in order to be considered for language study. Students must have serious academic or professional reasons in order to be accepted. The program requires dedication and serious commitment. Since much of the ‘teaching’ and learning is self-directed, students must be self-motivated and self-disciplined.

The DILS program requires dedication and serious commitment. Since much of the ‘teaching’ and learning is self-directed, students in the program must be highly motivated and self-disciplined. They must (1) be certain that they want to study a language outside the traditional classroom setting, without a ‘real’ teacher, who ‘explains’ grammar; (2) understand that the responsibility of learning the language rests entirely on them; (3) understand that DILS is an add-on to all their other commitments and responsibilities, be they academic, social, professional, extra-curricular; (4) remember that their own motivation is at the basis of the success of their language study; (5) realize that they will have to work hard, not because they are concerned with receiving a good grade, but because they really want to/need to acquire the language for which they applied.

In order to assure significant progress in the language learning process, students need to commit to 10 to 12 hours of language study each week.

It is expected that students become involved in activities related to the language and culture of their study (e.g. establish conversation groups, attend films, plays, exhibits, special events, use

the internet). They are urged to create activities where the target language is used, such as taped conversations and videotaped skits.

Students attend a mandatory Orientation meeting at the beginning of each semester. The mechanics of the program, academic expectations, policies and evaluation procedures are reviewed. Students sign a Learning Contract at this time, which constitutes their Registration into the program.

While DILS is less formal than the traditional classroom environment, it receives consistent guidance and support from the DILS Director over the course of the semester. The collaborative efforts of Language Partners and examiners further ensure the academic strength of the program. DILS students who were tested last semester using the ACTFL proficiency-testing format (see p. 25) demonstrated impressive outcomes as a result of their participation in DILS in the course of only one semester study.

Most importantly, since students can request to study any language they need provided it is not included in the formal UM curriculum, DILS provides them with the flexibility to design individual programs of study in pursuit of their particular academic interests and professional goals, including studying languages for special-purpose needs. In addition, DILS gives students the necessary linguistic and cultural preparation to continue their on-campus language study with study abroad, field experience, internships and other work opportunities that can eventually lead to life-long learning. To give students the opportunity to study any language they need has potentially very broad based ramifications. There could be far reaching consequences for the students who will gain in personal enrichment well beyond the pragmatic motives we require of them in order to be accepted in the program.

DILS Program Information

Who Participates in DILS?

For its first 5 semesters at UM – from spring 2009 through spring 2011 -- DILS accepted 241 students to study the following languages: Cantonese, Catalan, Czech, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Irish, Levantine Arabic, Modern Greek, Moroccan Arabic, Persian, Punjabi, Russian, Swahili, Swedish and Turkish. Students came from a diverse range of fields and majors, representing International Studies, Communication, Geography & Regional Studies, Political Science, Chemistry, Biology, Nursing, Psychology, Computer Science, Sociology and Philosophy, Business, International Business Administration.

The majority of the students who applied to DILS had no previous experience with the language they requested, with the exception of a few students of Haitian Creole and Hindi heritage who came with some, albeit limited linguistic levels of competency owing to their family backgrounds.

The majority of the students took the final exam*; a small percentage of students opted not to take it: they were primarily interested in acquiring a certain level of competency in the language of their study and were not looking for formal confirmation of their proficiency level. (Students who do not take the final exam will not receive a notification on their Transcripts).

The students who took the final exam did remarkably well. After only a semester of studying in DILS, the majority was rated at the Novice-High level, some were at the Novice-Mid level, a few reached the Intermediate range.

61 new students applied for the fall 2011 semester. 4 students withdrew before the beginning of the semester. Of the remaining 57, 44 new students were accepted. 13 students are continuing from the spring 2011 semester. Of the total number of 57 seven students 29 are graduate students and 28 are undergraduates. Both graduate and undergraduate students represent once again, a broad range of fields.

The following new languages were added this semester: Egyptian Arabic, Korean, Tagalog, and two indigenous languages: Nahuatl (Mexico) and Quichua (Ecuador). This brings us to a total of 20 languages that have been studied since Spring 2009.

Enrollments have increased in Levantine Arabic, Persian and Russian. Several of the new languages have high enrollments as well, with the maximum level of 5 per language group.

The answer to the question ‘who participates in DILS’ is a complex one. Students seem to apply to DILS because they have compelling reasons for studying a language they would otherwise be unable to. When students are asked why they want to study languages, they seem baffled why anyone should ask a somewhat absurd question. The answer seems obvious for students with majors in International Studies, Political Science, or International Business. But even science, engineering and math majors find it obvious that in a global society they will need the use of languages (in both social and professional settings) and must gain insight into cultures other than their own.

DILS Language Partners are also a diverse group. The majority of LPs are graduate or professional students, coming primarily from the sciences, engineering, medicine, law, a few from the humanities. Several Language Partners are from the Miami area. Wherever Language Partners come from, all seem to derive a great deal of satisfaction from sharing their language and culture with UM students.

*Students in DILS are tested following the ACTFL scale (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

DILS Program Information

Criteria Considered for Acceptance in DILS

- **Purpose of language study:**
 - Does the student express academic interests and/or professional plans related to DILS language study (i.e. major, field of specialization, research, study abroad, work abroad, plans for graduate or professional studies?)?
- **Clarity of purpose and plan:**
 - Does the student articulate clearly what he or she would like to gain from participating in DILS, by referencing, for example, particular skills or kinds of language he or she would like to learn (e.g. language for a profession), or specific texts he or she would like to be able to work with?
- **Appropriateness of proposed language study:**
 - Is the student applying for a language that is already taught at UM? (in which case, the application is automatically inappropriate)?
 - Is the student at beginner or intermediate level?
 - Does the student already have significant linguistic proficiency in the requested language, due to prior experience with the language (through family background, travel, study or work abroad)?
- **Commitment and Academic Assessment:**
 - Does the student demonstrate seriousness and commitment to complete the proposed language study, and an ability to sustain independent study as an additional responsibility in the student's overall schedule?
- **Timing:**
 - At what point on the continuum of tenure at UM is the student applying for language study in DILS? Why is it essential the student study *now* in DILS?
- **Overall strength of the application:**
 - Taking all the criteria listed above into account, is this student's application for language study through DILS one that should be supported?
- **Other factors:**
 - Is there an opening in an existing program? That is, if a new applicant is seeking to study a language that will be repeated from the previous semester and is at the same level of proficiency as the language program for the coming semester, the application can be approved and the student will be accepted, provided he or she fulfills the above criteria.

DILS Program Information

IV. DILS Fall 2011 Semester

UMDILS Academic Calendar Fall 2011

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| • Aug 24 Wed | DILS Orientation Meeting |
| • Week of Aug 29 | DILS Practice Sessions begin meeting |
| • Sept 5 Mon | Labor Day |
| • Oct 14 Fri | Fall Recess |
| • <i>Nov 7 Mon</i> | <i>Registration for 2012 UM Spring courses</i> |
| • Nov 21 – 23 | Last week of DILS Sessions |
| • Nov 24 - 27 Thurs-Sun | Thanksgiving Recess |
| • Week of Nov 28 | DILS students review on their own |
| • Nov 30 Wednesday | DILS APPLICATION DEADLINE |
| • Dec 2 Friday | All UM Classes end |
| • Dec 3 Sat – 6 Tue | DILS ORAL EXAMS (UM Reading Days) |
| • <i>Dec 7 - 14 Wed-Wed</i> | <i>UM final exams</i> |
-

Orientation Meeting

DILS is a twelve-week semester program. The semester always begins with a required Orientation Meeting for all students and Language Partners in the program.

Language Partners are invited to arrive first. They participate in a 30-minute orientation (PowerPoint presentation and time for questions)

Students arrive 30 minutes later. LPs and students are introduced. After a brief PowerPoint presentation the meeting is open for questions. Continuing LPs and students might be asked to share their experiences with newcomers (what kinds of activities have worked well in practice sessions or in independent study, Etc).

The group can use this time to confirm the schedule of their Practice Sessions. This is also a good time to begin discussing what students would like to achieve during the semester. The Orientation meeting should be thought of as an ideal opportunity to raise questions about all concerns: logistics, study materials, the process and methodology of language study in DILS, etc.

THE SEMESTER - Quick Overview

Practice Session meetings and Syllabi

The following the Orientation Meeting, language groups begin their Practice Sessions: the Fall 2011 semester, the week of August 29. LPs and student must keep the DILS Director informed from the very beginning if concerns and issues come up. She will begin visiting the language sessions by the second week of the DILS program.

Every Language group will be given a provisional syllabus, prepared usually in consultation with the examiners; the syllabus is to be seen as a guide, which can be adjusted during the semester to best respond to the students' needs.

Planning and Process.

a. Language Partners' Weekly Plan.

In addition to the syllabus, Language Partners will be asked to establish weekly plans that will include, in addition to the chapters of the texts being used, language features they want students to study, topics to discuss that are of particular interest to students, etc. (The DILS Director will be happy guide LPs in this process, if necessary). Even if a particular group does not end up following the semester plan to the letter, plan helps to bring some structure to the programs right from the star. It will also assist both LPs and students to plan productively their own, individual weekly goals.

b. Student's Self-Evaluation Process

The activity of self-evaluation is usually of great benefit to students. It forces them to become acquainted with, and be aware of their study methods and habits. The development of self-reflection in language study is a critical tool in developing fruitful self-assessment skills. It is widely accepted that self-assessment is a key **learning** strategy for autonomous and independent **language learning**, enabling students to monitor their progress and relate **learning** to individual needs. Students can become somewhat passive **in** their approach to language **learning after the enthusiasm of an initial start** and may become discouraged if they cannot see clear or rapid progress. Self-assessment usually motivates students to be proactive and more focused. Eventually, they will be better placed to assess their progress **in communicating with fluent speakers of the target language**. Self-evaluation and self-reflection are also excellent tools for students to be prepared for on-going language learning beyond academia.

The process is useful for LPs as well. It allows them to closely monitor students and respond quickly to language learning issues that may occur during the week. It also supports the exchange of ideas between LPs and students and establishes a dialogical environment, so essential in language learning.

c. Goal setting

Students are asked to evaluate their goals at least every other week and possibly set new goals if desirable. Weekly or bi-weekly goal setting allows them to evaluate their progress more clearly

since they have targets against which to measure their performance. Students' motivation to learn usually increases when they have self-defined learning goals.

d. Students' and Language Partners' Reports

Both LPs and students are required to submit a bi-weekly report to the DILS Director. The students' report serves the purpose of self-evaluation; the LPs' report, in addition to being an evaluation of student performance, is meant to assist them in rethinking and adjusting their practice session activities. The report should reflect first, the language study objectives established for the week and the strategies to achieve the objectives; and second, the report should inform at the end of the week if the objectives were achieved; if not, students and LPs should try to discern the reasons, and attempt to make changes in the strategies. (For student and LP report Forms see pp. 15 & 17). Neither students nor LPs should ever feel disheartened if a plan or goal does not work out exactly as hoped. Keep in mind that no single set of strategies is appropriate for all language learners or for all language performance tasks. There is room for experimentation. While it is important to maintain a basic schedule and structure, it is wise to be sensitive to the need of having to make adjustments to the process.

e. End-of-semester

Final exams:

Once practice sessions are well under way, it is time to give the end-of-semester exams some thought. DILS exams are always scheduled during UM Reading days. Examiners are informed of these dates and they inform us of their availability within this time frame. In DILS, we use the ACTFL guidelines (American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages – see p. for details) and the ACTFL's Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) assessment instrument. Our examiners, language instructors teaching the target languages at other Colleges and Universities and who are invited to test students in DILS, are asked to carry out the OPI-like assessment. Several of the DILS examiners are certified OPI testers: in such cases, they are asked to provide an official proficiency rating; examiners who are not certified testers, are asked to provide an unofficial proficiency rating for the students they test. All DILS examiners receive detailed information and instruction concerning the ACTFL guidelines.

Review:

As in all language study, it is critical to develop and to maintain the habit of repeated review. Students and LPs should set aside a brief period at the beginning of every practice session (a few minutes suffice) to review the materials covered in the previous session. In addition, after the 12-week DILS semester, a few days are set aside for students to do their review (Week of Nov 28). DILS exams will take place during UM Reading Days, between Sat December 3 – Tue December 6)

Students are informed of the result of their final exam as soon as the DILS office receives the information from the examiners.

f. Attendance requirement

Attendance in DILS is required. Students may be absent for valid reasons such as medical, family or other emergencies. If students know that they will have to miss a practice session, they must notify their Language Partner ahead of time.

g. Student evaluations of DILS

All DILS students will be asked to complete two program evaluations: a brief evaluation at mid-semester, and a longer, more substantial evaluation at the end of the semester (see p.). Since we want to continually shape the program to best meet student needs, we value student input and appreciate student collaboration.

h. Re-application for the Spring 2012 semester.

All current students in DILS are required to re-apply for the following semester. DILS is a selective and competitive program. Since we receive increasingly large numbers of new applications every semester, it is important to know for the planning process how many current students expect to continue with their language study. Students should not take it for granted that they will be automatically accepted for a subsequent semester: they have to demonstrate that they are serious about their language study and they need proficiency in the target language.

The application deadline for Spring 2012 study is Wednesday, November 30

The Application form can be downloaded from the DILS site: DILS@miami.edu

Students in DILS sign a Learner Contract at the beginning of the semester – during Orientation.

INFORMATION & SUGGESTIONS

to Help You Get Ready For the DILS Final Oral Exam

Categories for which students are tested in an oral exam:

- **Interpersonal Communication**
- **Interpretive: Listening**
- **Presentational: Speaking**

The oral exam:

- It cannot really be ‘prepared’ the way you prepare for a test that measures specific items or information you studied from week to week in a course;
- It measures *what you can do* with the language;
- It is given in a conversational / interview format;
- It may require *you to ask questions*;
- It may require you *to describe*, perhaps *to compare*;
- It may include a *role-play situation*;
- It is (usually) taped by the examiner in order to assess an accurate rating;

How CAN you best prepare for the final oral exam:

It is helpful to read the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* in order to be familiar with the functions and accuracy features of the various levels (speaking, listening, interacting). *Refer to the DILS Program Information for that: you will find it as a PDF on the DILS website.*

It is essential that *you speak as much as you can in the target test language during the semester*, practicing the functions that you will need to demonstrate during the interview (i.e., *answering questions about yourself, giving descriptions, telling stories, sometimes asking questions*: see below for details).

How is the interview structured?

The oral exam is structured to elicit the best sample of real, *communicative language* you can produce.

Don't be surprised if your *examiner should stretch your language abilities, and push you to your limits in the language*: the purpose is not to be mean to you, but to establish your level. e.g. if your responses indicate that you can function comfortably at the Novice High level, your examiner might ask you questions that are appropriate for the Intermediate (Low or Mid) level in order to determine if you are at that level rather than Novice High.

What happens during the interview?

Through a conversational format, you will be asked to *talk about yourself, your interests, your daily routine, etc.*

The examiner may ask you for information, descriptions, narrations, or opinions on a familiar subject.

The examiner may ask you questions about a variety of *topics that are of interest to you.*

The examiner may also ask you to take part in a role-play situation, intended to find out how well you may be able to handle a real-life situation.

What should you do if you cannot remember a particular word or idiom?

If you do not know a specific term, try to *describe or paraphrase* what you want to say in the language. *Definitely avoid using English (or another language), or making up words.*

If you do use another language or a made-up term, do not be surprised if the examiner asks you to describe what that word means in the language for which you are testing.

What are a few strategies for success on the oral exam:

Listen carefully to the questions asked by the examiner before answering. When answering, give as detailed a response as possible. Saying little to avoid making mistakes will not improve your rating. *Avoid responding with a simple 'yes' or 'no'!* Your *participation* in the exam interview is very important in order to demonstrate your language proficiency at its best, whatever the level.

Remember to relax and fully engage in the conversation!

More Tips for the Oral Exam

- Try to warm up in the language you are studying before you arrive for your interview. Talk to yourself or to someone else. *Think what you might say in response to questions about yourself.*
- Arrive a bit early so you have time to compose yourself. If you have to wait because the previous exam is running late, *take the time to think about the things you can say about yourself in the language.*
- Be sure to greet the examiner back when you are greeted.
- If you start out poorly or make some stupid mistakes (you'd never do that...) , *don't get all frazzled*, such a state of mind will likely have an undesirable impact on your performance. Try to relax: you will get used to the examiner's speaking style. Examiners know you may be nervous and will try to make you feel at ease so you can do your best.
- Choose your own speaking speed which is comfortable for you. If you know you make more mistakes when you speak too fast, slow down. If you are a slow speaker by nature,

that's okay; but you may want to make an effort not to speak more slowly than you usually do.

- Don't be embarrassed by pauses. The examiner knows you have to pause sometimes to formulate your answer and will let you do so unless it seems you really can't go on. But do try to answer as directly and spontaneously as possible. Don't stop to think about every answer. Try to keep your end of the conversation going as naturally as possible.
- *Keep talking. Don't stop the conversation by saying simply "yes" or "no".* Explain your point. Develop your thoughts. Make comparisons. Ask questions. *Any device that demonstrates that you can carry a topic through, will help your performance.* Even if you are not a talkative person by nature, try to make an extra effort for the exam.
- *Don't get hung up on a word.* Avoid words you are uncertain of. Often students will rack their brains for a particular word they feel they must use and they paralyze the sentence. If you do get stuck, *find a simple substitute or paraphrase and go on with the conversation.*
- *Avoid English at all costs.* The premise of the oral exam is that the examiner speaks and understands only the target language. If you ask the examiner for a translation of an English word, you won't get a response. *Try to work around the word you don't know by describing the concept.*
- Don't avoid grammar points: if you are asked what you would do if you were the US President, the examiner is probably trying to make you use a specific grammatical structure. If you can handle it, comply. If you cannot use a somewhat more complex structure, *describe or paraphrase the best you can. You can also say, in the target language, that you are not able to respond to the question:* the examiner will rephrase his or her question.
- *Don't get rattled* because of the mistakes you know you have made. Isolated mistakes do not necessarily affect your rating.
- *Show what you can do with what you know, mistakes and all.* When you are engaged in a free conversation, a lot of the grammar and vocabulary that you know will break down. The examiner knows this and is more interested in finding out how well you can function despite your mistakes.

WHAT TO DO IF...

- *If you think you understood what was asked but are not quite sure,* act on what you think you understood. Chances are, you have. Don't request unnecessarily that the questions be repeated. If you have misunderstood and the question is important, the examiner will come back to it in another form.
- *If you make a mistake:* if you know you made a mistake, correct it and go on. You do that even in your own language. Correcting your own mistake in no way detracts from your performance; it can work to your advantage.

- *Avoid long, excessively complex sentences: If you are hopelessly lost in a long sentence, STOP. Collect yourself. Say something like, "Let me tell you again – or, let me try again." Then try it again. Break it into shorter sentences and carry it through. Don't worry about what happened: no one expects you to speak without mistakes. Chances are, worrying over a mistake reduces your efficiency, jeopardizing the rest of the test.*
- *If you draw a blank: if you draw a momentary blank, give an approximately appropriate answer. For instance, if the examiner asks you how long you have been living in the area and you can't remember how to say "one and a half", say "one year."*
- *If you become nervous during the exam: the examiner will sense it and will try to help you. You are entitled to stop for a few seconds and regain control if you have a sudden panic attack... Relax. Admit that you are nervous. Often this alone can make you feel comfortable again.*
- *If something is interfering with your ability to perform: if there is any ambient noise that bothers you, say so. If you can't hear the examiner say so. You're entitled to the best possible testing conditions.*
- *If you are asked a question about which you know nothing: admit it; but try to explain (in the language) why you don't know. Or slide to another subject about which you have something to say. The examiner is more interested in how you use the language than what you know or what you think.*
- If you feel uncomfortable or embarrassed by a question because it is too personal, feel free to tell the examiner that you would rather not talk about it.
- *If you feel things are really getting tough, it is normal. In order to establish your level and to give you a valid rating, the examiner will push you to a level where you can't function comfortably in order to establish what you cannot do in the language. Not being able to go on is expected. It does not mean you have 'failed' in some way.*

Language Tasks expected at the Novice (Mid and High) level:

- understand simple questions
- respond with simple, memorized words and phrases
- ask and answer simple questions
- give directions or simple instructions
- deal with simple study or work related situations

Language Tasks expected at the Intermediate levels

- give simple explanations
- describe people, places and things in simple terms
- narrate events in the past, present and future
- deal with somewhat complex study or work related situations
- maintain a conversation over a range of familiar topics such as:
 - family and friends
 - home, school and leisure time activities

- school, classes, sports
- town, neighborhood and services
- employment
- travel and survival situations

Language Tasks expected at the Advanced levels

- give detailed explanations with precision
- deal with hypothetical issues
- defend an opinion, convey a point of view or justify an action
- give advice and counsel
- deal with complex work related situations

END OF SEMESTER FINAL LANGUAGE EVALUATION

Guidelines for Examiners

This document explains the guidelines for the DILS end of semester language evaluation. Please remember that students are not receiving a grade or course credit for their language study through DILS. *Final evaluations are used solely to provide students with clear information about their skills so that they can better approach any future study of the language.*

Exam Format

Each DILS final evaluation will consist of an individual oral assessment. You should evaluate students by drawing on the descriptors that ACTFL has developed as part of its proficiency scales. Details regarding these descriptors are found below. Please read them in full before evaluating students.

The oral evaluation is always individual (one student at a time) and should last about 25 – 30 minutes. The evaluation should be as natural as possible, involving realistic situations and role-plays. It is advisable to begin with more routine and concrete questions and/or role-plays and to then move to more elaborate and abstract questions and discussion. You can prepare your oral exam by looking to the materials the student has covered as well as the ACTFL descriptors and by then planning your questions and role-plays accordingly. Because the evaluation should be carried out with knowledge of what material the student has covered while participating in DILS, this will be communicated to you before the evaluation.

In preparation for the oral exam, please use the evaluation sheet you have been provided to write down a set of potential questions you might ask, notes on role-play situations you might use and particular structures or functions that will be appropriate to evaluate given what the student has covered in DILS. During the exam, please take as many notes as you can while maintaining natural conversation with the student. Immediately following the exam, please write up a brief explanation of your decision to rate the student at a particular level. In this explanation, *please cite any specific strengths or weaknesses that led you to this conclusion.*

Your notes from the exam and your final decision on the student's level should all be included on the evaluation sheet you have received, and the sheet should then be returned to the DILS Director.

Summary of ACTFL Descriptors - Sent to External Examiners

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed a set of levels that correspond to varying degrees of language proficiency. In evaluating students of the DILS program, please use the ACTFL proficiency levels described below.

ACTFL divides proficiency into four overall categories (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Superior), then into levels within each category (low, mid, high). For example speakers can be a Novice-Mid, an Intermediate-Low, or an Advanced-High).

Most DILS students seem to fall in the Novice and Intermediate ranges since they have just begun their language study.

OVERALL CATEGORIES

NOVICE-level speakers can communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, & phrases.

INTERMEDIATE-level speakers can create with language, ask and answer simple questions on familiar topics, and handle a simple situation or transaction.

ADVANCED-level speakers can narrate and describe in all major time frames, and handle a situation with a complication.

SUPERIOR-level speakers can support opinion, hypothesize, discuss topics concretely and abstractly, and handle a linguistically unfamiliar situation.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

The NOVICE level is categorized by the speaker's ability to communicate minimally with learned material.

Novice-Low

Speakers have no real functional ability; because of their pronunciation, they may be difficult to understand. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they may be able to exchange greetings, give their identity, and name a number of familiar objects from their immediate environment. They cannot participate in a true conversational exchange. Oral production consists of isolated words and perhaps a few high-frequency phrases.

Novice-Mid

Speakers communicate minimally and with difficulty; they use isolated words and memorized **phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned. When responding to direct questions, they may utter only very few words at a time, or give an occasional stock answer.**

Novice-High

Speakers are able to manage a number of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to a few of the predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture, such as basic personal information, a limited number of activities, preferences and immediate needs. They can respond to simple, direct questions or request for information; they are able to express personal meaning by relying heavily on learned phrases; they have difficulty sustaining conversation especially on topics not covered during their study.

The INTERMEDIATE level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- Create with the language by combining and recombining learned elements, though primarily in a reactive mode.
- Initiate, minimally sustain, and close in a simple way basic communicative tasks.
- Ask and answer questions.

Intermediate-Low

Speakers are able to handle a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language/culture. These topics relate to basic personal information such as self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, to some immediate needs such as ordering food and making simple purchases.

Intermediate-Mid

Speakers are able to handle a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture, such as personal information covering self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, physical and social needs such as food, shopping, travel lodging; they are often able to convey personal meaning by creating with the language, by combining and recombining conversational input to maintain conversation.

Intermediate-High

Speakers are usually able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with most routine tasks and social situations. They are able to handle successfully many uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to work, school, recreation, and particular interest. With some consistency, speakers at the intermediate High level can narrate and describe in major time frames using connected discourse of even paragraph length. However, they often fail to maintain the narration or description for longer periods of time in the appropriate major time frame.

The ADVANCED level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- Converse in a clearly participatory fashion.
- Initiate, sustain, and bring to closure a wide variety of communicative tasks, including

those that require an increased ability to convey meaning with diverse language strategies due to a complication or an unforeseen turn of events.

- Satisfy the requirements of school and work situations.
- Narrate and describe with paragraph-length connected discourse.

Advanced-Low

Speakers participate actively in most informal and a limited number of formal conversations on activities related to school, home, and leisure activities and, to a lesser degree, those related to events of work, current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance; they demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in all major time frames (past, present and future) in paragraph length discourse; they can often handle appropriately the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation; in such instances they resort to communicative strategies such as paraphrasing and circumlocution. In their narrations and descriptions, they are able to combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length; they can often convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion.

Advanced-Mid

Speakers can handle with ease a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance; they can narrate and describe in all major time frames (past, present, and future); they can handle with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation; they usually employ circumlocution or paraphrasing for this purpose; their vocabulary can be fairly extensive, particularly in the case of an area of specialization or interest.

Advanced-High

Speakers perform all advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence and competence. They are able to consistently explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. They can provide a structured argument to support their opinions. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise; they use with ease communicative strategies such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration.

UM Directed Independent Language Study College of Arts & Sciences

FACT SHEET

LANGUAGE: RUSSIAN
Beginner - Novice

Spring 2011

I. STUDY MATERIALS

A. REQUIRED:

(a)GOLOSA: A Basic Course in Russian Fourth edition: Textbook.

By Richard Robin, Karen Evans-Romaine, Galina Shatalina, Joanna Robin; published by Prentice Hall.

“Golosa is a communicative program designed to introduce students to Russian language and culture and help them reach an intermediate level of language skill. Components of the program include two textbooks (Book 1 and Book 2), an accompanying workbook/lab manual for each, an extensive audio program, and a robust companion website featuring interactive practice activities, authentic video, authentic readings, links to authentic Russian sites, access to the complete audio program, an Instructor’s Resource Manual, and more”. (Can be ordered on Amazon.com)

You can check these materials in greater detail at <http://www.prenhall.com/golosa/>

The textbook is available in the UM Bookstore!

(b) Russian Grammar: purchase one of the Grammar books listed below:

1. **Russian Grammar**, by James S. Levine, Ph.D; Schaum’s Outline Series, McGraww Hill

2. **Introductory Russian Grammar"** by *Galina Stilman; Leon Stilman; William E. Harkins.*

Publisher : Wiley (2nd Edition)

B. Recommended:

The Big Silver Book of Russian Verbs: 555 Fully Conjugated Verbs (Big Book of Verbs Series);

By [Jack Franke](#)

II. USEFUL LINKS

Russian Webcasts

<http://nclrc.org/webcasts/russian/index.html>

Listen to Russian Pronunciation

<http://listen2russian.com/>

Translation site that allows you to listen to any translated phrase

<http://translation2.paralink.com/>

III. STAFF

EXAMINER

Irina Dolgova, Senior Lectur II
Official ACTFL OPI/ILR Russian Tester
Language Program Director of Slavic Languages
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Yale University

irina.dolgova@yale.edu

LANGUAGE PARTNERS

Lilya Arakelyan, M.A. in Russian; Ph.D. student, INS

l.arakelyan@umiami.edu

and

Zayana Dzhimbinova, M.A. Linguistics
Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University, Pyatigorsk, Russia
Specialty: foreign language acquisition
Florida Translators & Interpreters Association

z.dzhimbinova@gmail.com

IV. STUDENTS

Corry Morrow, Graduate Student, School of Business
crymorrow@yahoo.com

Dana Hatic, Undergraduate 2012, School of Communication, Journalism
dehatic@bellsouth.net

JYOTHI Dhuguru, Graduate Student 2015, Chemistry
j.dhuguru@umiami.edu

Mark Jacobs, Undergraduate 2012, Biology/Chemistry, Health Sector Management
m.jacobs5@umiami.edu

Paul Bousquet, Undergraduate 2012, Business School, International Finance/Marketing
paulb826@gmail.com

DILS IS A COLLABORATIVE ENTERPRISE: ON YOUR OWN, YOU SHOULD

search the Internet

explore documentaries

watch broadcasts

BRING WHAT YOU HAVE FOUND TO YOUR GROUP

BE WILLING SHARE

! Have a Great Time Studying Russian in DILS !

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI Directed Independent Language Study
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

UMDILS

Spring 2011

HIINDI

Provisional Syllabus*

REQUIRED Materials

- 1. Teach Yourself Beginner's Hindi;** 2003 edition; paperback and two 60 minute CDs; by Rupert Snell; Contemporary Books of McGraw Hill Companies; be sure to get the version with CD audio
- 2. Teach Yourself Hindi Conversation;** 3 CDs and Guide; by Rupert Snell
- 3. Teach Yourself Hindi Dictionary;** by Rupert Snell

OBJECTIVES:

Develop the student's competence in understanding and speaking, possibly reading, in a supportive, communicative environment; students are expected to learn to *use* the language with ease and to *communicate* appropriately in a variety of contexts; to function comfortably in new linguistic and corresponding cultural environments ; *students' individual objectives* should be part of the overall program objectives.

PROCESS :

In addition to the basic required texts/audio, the Program will use a variety of strategies: dialogue, repetition, imitation, memorization, role-play, interview, task-based exercises, skits, on-line activities, use of the Internet, etc. The Practice Sessions are *participatory* and a *collaborative* endeavor. Students are highly encouraged to *contribute ideas and suggestions that reflect their interests; to get involved in co-curricular activities using the language they are studying*, seek out other speakers of the language, attend cultural events, watch movies, get involved with target language communities, record conversations with native speakers. Additional materials will supplement the basic text/audio. Students will have the opportunity to record themselves and to upload materials they will have created in the language of their study.

ATTENDANCE policy: Students are expected to attend Practice Sessions regularly. If a student has to be absent, he/she is expected to contact the Language Partner 24 hours ahead of time. Medical treatment or personal or family crises are grounds for an excused absence.

Practice Session meetings:

Week of January 24, wk 1	Session 1: The Hindi Script & Sounds,viii; Session 2: start lesson 1
Week of January 31, wk 2	Work on Lesson 1; look at and assign Lesson 2
Week of February 7, wk 3	Review/work with Lesson 2; assign Lesson 3

Week of February 14, wk 4	Review/work with Lesson 3; assign Lesson 4
Week of February 21, wk 5	Review/work with Lesson 4; assign Lesson 5
Week of February 28, wk 6	Review/work with Lesson 5; assign Lesson 6
Week of March 7, wk 7	Review/work on Lesson 6; assign Lesson 7
March 12 – March 20	SPRING RECESS
Week of March 21, wk 8	Review/work with Lesson 7; assign Lesson 8
Week of March 28, wk 9	Review/work with Lesson 8; assign Lesson 9
Week of April 4, wk 10	Review/work with Lesson 9; assign Lesson 10
Week of April 11, wk 11 review	Review/work with Lesson 10; can begin general
Week of April 18, wk 12	General in-class Review with Language Partners
Week of April 25, wk 13	Students review on their own
Sat April 30 – Tue May 3	DILS Oral Exams (UM Reading Days)
Fri May 6	Application Deadline for Fall 2011 language study in DILS

* The Syllabus is flexible and can be adjusted as it best suits the needs of the students in the Practice Session. Adjustments and changes in the Syllabus are made at the discretion of the Language Partner and with the approval of the DILS Program Director

SEMESTER PLAN FORM

Semester: Fall _____ Spring _____ Year _____

Language: _____

Students' Proficiency Level: novice _novice to intermediate ____ intermediate _____

	Week of	Session 1	Session 2
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			

SAMPLE SEMESTER PLAN

Semester: Fall _____ Spring _____ 2010 _____

Language: Moroccan Arabic

Language Partner: Sanaa Mrabet

Students' Proficiency Level: novice novice to intermediate X ; intermediate _____

	Week of	Session 1	Session 2
1	Feb 5	Intro: Review goals with student; assign chapter on terminology (environment, places, job and work)	Review words and put them in phrases
2	Feb 8	Words pronunciation and how to use them in phrases. Assign review future, present and past tense.	Continue practicing the new terminology, WH dialogue. Assign political terminology, colors, shopping & family
3	Feb 15	Review pronunciation of words assigned	Dialogue & practicing phrases on the same terminology. Assign terminology food/bad words.
4	Feb 22	Reviewing pronunciation of words assigned	Practice using multiple verb use with the words assigned. Assign terminology at the doctor's office, religious term.
5	Mar 1	Review terminology assigned	Role play using new terminology in conversation
6	Mar 8	Review past progressive, past habitual tense	Practice using word lists by subject. Assign past perfect, telling time.
7	Mar 15	Review past perfect, and prepositions	Dialogue using list of words, telling time and past perfect. Assign movie
8	Mar 22	Review present perfect progressive and discuss movie	Further discussion of movie and practice of present perfect progressive. Assign future perfect
9	Mar 29	Review future perfect. Assign story in the future perfect	Role play the story. Assign conditional tense/ conjunctions
10	Apr 5	Review conditional tense	Practice conditional tense.
11	Apr 12	Review passive voice, causative case	Free style conversation using terms learned so far.
12	Apr 19	Review verb particles/ question words	Student is asked to come up with four (role-play) scenarios to sum up what we did so far.
13	Apr 26	An overall review	An overall practice
14	May	DILS Final Exams	DILS Final Exams

Student Bi-Weekly Report Form

Name:

Language:

Date:

Beginning of the 2 weeks:

What are some of your goals for improving your language skills the next 2 weeks? How will you attempt to achieve these aims?

What you did *on your own* during the two weeks

What language features did you study this week (grammar points, pronunciation, particular functions like making requests, ordering food, greeting, etc.)?

What other content did you study this week (certain vocabulary, idioms, cultural patterns)?

Approximately how much time *total* did you spend studying each week?

Check each of the target language study activities you engaged in this week:

_____ reading/working with the textbook

_____ reading other materials

_____ listening to audio materials

_____ using the internet

_____ repeating language out loud

_____ writing in some form

_____ using a dictionary

_____ other (please explain)

_____ studying grammar

What strategies for learning the language did you employ this week (*repeating what you heard, reading grammar explanations, reading to reinforce vocabulary learning, practicing with another learner of the language, etc.*)? Which were most useful? Least useful?

Describe what you did *in your practice sessions*:

Briefly describe what you did in your practice sessions during the two weeks.

On a scale of 0-10, with 10 being the highest rating, how would you rate your...

pronunciation? _____

accuracy in using the grammar you studied this week? _____

ability to use socially and culturally appropriate language? _____

overall ability to communicate your intended meaning? _____

language partner's feedback and correction in the session? _____

What do you believe are your strengths at this point? What do you feel you can work on to make improvements in your language abilities?

Any other thoughts concerning your language study during the two weeks?

Language Partner Bi-Weekly Report Form

Name:

Language:

Date:

1) To be completed *before* the week's sessions:

a) What are the language forms -- i.e. grammar or grammar-related -- your students are expected to study on their own this week?

b) What content are your students expected to study on their own this week?
What communicative situations are they expected to study?

c) How do you envision each session? How will the language topics students are studying fit into natural conversation or particular tasks and activities? What do you plan to do with your students (practice phrases & patterns; question-answer; free discussion; role-play; discussion of a text; practicing certain situations; complete tasks; other)?

Session 1:

Session 2:

2) To be completed *after* your two sessions this week:

Give a *brief* description of what you accomplished during your practice sessions (regardless of "the plan").

On a scale of 0-10, with 10 being the highest rating (e.g. most prepared, best pronunciation, etc.),...

how prepared were your students for the session? _____

how precise was their pronunciation? _____

how accurate was their grammar usage? _____

how socially and culturally appropriate was their language? _____

how successful were they overall in communicating their message? _____

In your view, what were your students' strengths during your sessions this week?

What kinds of corrections did you provide for your students during the sessions?

In your opinion, what should your students work on in order to improve?

Learner Contract

I will follow the program of study as outlined by the DILS Director, in the following

Language: _____

Semester: Fall _____ Spring _____

I will adhere to the program policies as outlined:

I will study the specified material on my own on a daily basis.

I will take full responsibility for my progress in the acquisition of skills in the language I am studying.

I agree to speak only the language I am studying at each session and to avoid the use of English.

I will meet with the native speaker Language Partner (LP) twice a week at the established time and place. I will not attempt to change the schedule unless I have received permission in advance from the DILS Director.

I agree to be fully prepared for each session with the LP. I am aware that the LP will submit to the DILS Director periodic evaluations of my performance.

I agree to adhere to the attendance policy established by the DILS Director at the beginning of the program.

I will turn in my Self Assessment/Progress Reports as required.

I agree to be evaluated by an outside Examiner at the end of the program. I understand that there will be no make-up final evaluation if I miss the one scheduled for me.

I understand and agree to adhere to my obligations as a participant in the DILS program.

Name (please print): _____

Current Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Current Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

School: (Undergrad; Grad School): _____

Year of Graduation: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Language Level: Beginner _____ Intermediate _____ Advance _____

I will meet with students in the DILS program for two 60-minute Practice Sessions per week for a total of 12 weeks during the regular academic semester. I agree to adhere to the purpose of the program, namely, to practice with students their weekly work in the language for which I am hired.

I commit to 2 hours of preparation per week for the weekly Practice Sessions. Preparation might include the reviewing of the textbook materials studied by the student(s) that week, development of discussion questions and/or short activities, research on the internet to find appropriate sites or texts to read together, etc. Filling out weekly reports is also part of this preparation.

After speaking with the student(s) either at the Orientation meeting or at the first Practice Session, I will submit to the DILS Director a plan for the semester that outlines a proposed focus for the Practice Sessions. This plan may incorporate elements of the provisional Syllabus established by the DILS Director and the examiner, and will outline the general topics and/or language features that will be integrated into the Sessions.

I will submit bi-weekly reports to the DILS Director. Reports should be submitted at the end of every two weeks.

I agree to use the target language only during practice session and to reduce grammar explanations to the minimum and only when it is absolutely necessary; I will limit explanations to the end of the Practice Session; I will engage in more communicative and natural practice during the greater part of the Practice Session.

I agree to return course materials to the DILS Director at the conclusion of each semester.

I accept for my services as Language Partner the remuneration of \$960.00 per semester, to be paid in three installments.

Name: _____

Current Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip Code: _____

Current Phone Number (indicate if it is cell or home): _____

E-mail: _____

UM Affiliation:

Grad/Prof Student: School & Year of Graduation: _____

Staff or Faculty _____

Employee/Department: _____

Not Affiliated with UM: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

LANGUAGE for which you are the LANGUAGE PARTNER: _____

DILS PROGRAM LANGUAGE PARTNER APPLICATION

Please complete all relevant fields of the application. When completed, please send your application to the DILS director at: mkosinski@miami.edu

DATE of application: _____

LANGUAGE for which you would like to be a Language Partner: _____

PART I: BASIC INFORMATION:

NAME: _____

C #: (if UM affiliated) _____ **Social Security # if not UM affil:** _____

Can you provide proof if hired, that you are eligible to work in the US?

Yes _____ **No** _____

ADDRESS: (a) Current/Local: _____

_____ (b) Permanent/other, if different from above: _____

E-MAIL (in case you have several, the most frequently used)

TELEPHONE # (home) _____ **(cell/other)** _____

EDUCATION: **B.A.** _____ **M.A.** _____ **Ph.D.** _____

Other _____ **(please specify)** _____

University of Miami affiliation:

Graduate Student/Department: _____ Year of completion: _____

Staff/Faculty: _____

Employee: _____ Department: _____

If you are not University of Miami affiliated:

Do you currently work? Yes _____ No _____

If you work, please state the place of your employment: _____

Have you worked at UM before: yes _____ No _____

If YES please indicate the department & in what capacity: _____

PART II. REFERENCES:

Please provide the names and contact information for two References:

References cannot be personal friends or family members

*References may include a Department Chair, Graduate Program Director
or Program Advisor*

Name of Reference 1: _____

Telephone #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Name of Reference 2: _____

Telephone #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

=====

PART III. Language Background:

What is your background in the target/native language (how did you learn the language)?

1) Family: _____

2) Education/Travel: _____

3) Work experience using the target language: _____

PART IV. Motivation for Applying:

Please explain briefly why you are interested in becoming a Language Partner.

Language Learning Related

Suggestions for self-monitoring

Semester goals – let your goals guide you

Remember *what are your reasons for language study*, what (level, skills) are you trying to attain, for what purpose (short and long term):

- To use/apply the language in your studies
- To prepare for future jobs
- To prepare for study/work abroad
- For future research
- For graduate school
- For travel
- To communicate with relatives in the US; in the target country
- Other

Think about and discuss with your Language Partner and/others in you group *what are reasonable goals for the semester*

- new vocabulary acquisition; pronunciation improvements; understanding specific grammar points;
- ability to ask and answer questions;
- ability to participate in class discussions;
- communicate with family members; with friends
- prepare yourself for study abroad
- prepare for research
- Other

How do you expect to achieve your goals

- What will you do every day or week to reach these goals?
- Check back what were your goals: weekly; every two weeks.

(Goals can remain the same and be continued or they can be rewritten, revised, expanded, and added to).

Self-assessment to measure your progress

- Measure progress towards objectives related to specific language skills
- Evaluate your abilities in various areas (comprehension, speaking, reading if appropriate) to see how you progress over the semester.

Evaluate your skill areas according to (1) specific activities in your sessions (2) according to your ability to interact with other speakers of the language.

Keep track of your goals and progress; use the DILS Student Report Form and maintain, for yourself, a *Language Journal*.

EXAMPLE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST

Let this checklist guide you to record **what you think you can do**.

It will help you determine your proficiency level for your skills. You will receive more detailed self-assessment check lists during the semester

1) INTERPRETIVE COMMUNICATION

Student understands and interprets spoken language on a variety of topics:

Listening

I can understand words, phrases, and expressions related to familiar topics in live or recorded materials.

I can understand short and simple conversations on familiar topics in live or recorded materials.

I can understand spoken language when I have previously seen or heard the content.

I can sometimes recognize cognates, prefixes, and thematic vocabulary to help me understand live or recorded spoken language.

2) INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION/Person-to-Person Communication

Student engages in conversations, provides and obtains information, expresses feelings and emotions, and exchanges opinions:

I can introduce myself and others and use basic culturally appropriate greetings.

I can ask memorized questions and answer simple questions, on very familiar topics such as leisure activities, family, food, school, and weather using memorized phrases.

I can handle numbers, quantities, cost, time and dates in simple situations.

I can make myself understood in a simple way, and understand the other person provided he talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

I can in simple fashion ask somebody to repeat what he or she says or ask him or her to speak more slowly.

I can ask and answer in simple terms questions about likes and dislikes.

3) PRESENTATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Student presents information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners on a variety of topics:

Spoken Production

I can give personal information (address, telephone number, nationality, age, family) using words and phrases.

I can talk about things I like and dislike using words and phrases.

I can describe myself using words and phrases.

STUDY SUGGESTIONS

Your first exposure to each lesson or chapter should ideally be with audio/multimedia work.

After having become used to the sound of the language, familiarize yourself thoroughly with the material in the text.

Study the grammatical explanations.

Understand the point of the practice exercises before you return to the audio/multimedia work.

Note which patterns are being demonstrated in the dialogues, and in what context.

Work with the dialogues.

Note how and in what context the idiomatic expressions and words are being used in the dialogues.

Note how the dialogues are used in specific contexts.

Return to the audio work frequently

A few suggestions for the FIRST Practice Session discussion

- Language Partners can review your students' language goals and objectives.
- Students can have a class discussion on how they expect to achieve their goals and objectives.
- Students should jot down their goals/objectives and the strategies they will use; they should keep this information in order to revisit it at least every two weeks: goals can be continually revised, expanded. Students can check their progress by measuring it against their goals/objectives. They will be able to determine if their progress:
 - 1) exceeds their objectives, 2) meets their objectives, 3) needs improvement, 4) does not meet their objectives.
- Language Partners and Students can hold a class discussion on what are 'reasonable' goals (vs. unreasonable, unattainable goals).
- Possible ideas for reasonable goals (for the week, the next two weeks, the semester):
 - Number of new expressions determine how many) to learn;
 - pronunciation improvement;
 - work on grammar points;
 - know how to ask, and how to answer questions;
 - participate in class discussions;
 - know how to talk to a family member;
 - know how to talk with a person they just met;
 - learn songs; watch a movie; watch a news broadcast:
 - students pick out a few words they understood, try to repeat what they understood, try to use it in a sentence

I am sure you can think of many other possibilities. Some students may need prompting to set more challenging goals, and others, to set more realistic ones.

Both Language Partners and students should review periodically the goals identified at the first session, change them, expand them.

Language Learning in the DILS Format

Older models of language learning saw it **as a process of transmission**. In the traditional language classroom it was assumed that the role of the ‘teacher’ is to ‘transmit’ knowledge; the learner was seen as the recipient. This teacher-centered model viewed the teacher as active and the student as fundamentally passive. The teacher was responsible for transmitting all of the information to the students. The teacher talked; the students listened and absorbed (or took a nap).

Approaches to language learning have significantly changed over the years. Language ‘teaching’ is now seen as learner-centered: **the learner is expected to take on the active role in the language acquisition process**. The language learning process is now dialogical; it relies largely on student-tutor (or Language Partner) *interaction*. Learners develop their language skills for communication purposes; they do so by *using* the language with the highest frequency possible in a classroom or practice session setting.

The above approach is applied today in many traditional language classrooms. In the DILS environment, it is the very basis of the students’ language acquisition process. Students in DILS are expected to be independent, pro-active language learners. They are responsible for learning on their own, while being supported, encouraged, by their Language Partners.

The Role of Language Partners

The Language Partners’ primary role is to *model* correct and appropriate language *use* and to *facilitate* the students’ development of language skills. Students are expected to *use* the language in practice activities that *simulate real communication situations*. This also implies that in the process, they absorb characteristics of the target culture. It is an accepted tenet today that the acquisition of new linguistic skills means simultaneously absorbing the inherent cultural ‘messages’. At international Universities such as UM, and due to the use of the internet and the numerous digital devices that are available, communication is seen as intercultural.

Language Partners are in a perfect position to identify activities for the Practice Sessions that function not only in the context of the material presented in the textbook (or CD or DVD) but also in a broader perspective; they can find appropriate real-world materials, initiate role-play and task based activities that reflect their culture.

Language Partners must remember that students need to *hear* the language as native speakers use it. Language Partners can make this happen in two ways:

Language Partners are urged to *use the language as naturally as possible* when talking with students. Slowing down may seem to make the message more comprehensible, but it also distorts the subtle shifts in pronunciation that occur in naturally paced speech. In addition, students get used to hearing ‘pedagogical’ language instead of being exposed to the language, as they would encounter it in the native speaker’s country. It is best to always speak at a normal rate.

It is best to use vocabulary, sentence structures and in general those language features which students studied in preparation of their Practice Sessions; but these features can be used in a broader linguistic context as well, in order to suggest to students approximations of ‘real life’,

authentic linguistic and cultural environments.

The same ideas can be stated in different ways to aid comprehension. The Web is a rich resource for authentic materials. The use of authentic materials motivates students at all levels because it gives them the sense that they really are able to use the language.

Provide *context* to help students have *an authentic experience of hearing and using language*; prepare them by raising their awareness of the context in which it occurs. Context can include a social situations or knowledge of a particular topic

To work in context implies that it should use vocabulary and language features in which the content occurs. Context should reflect the social and cultural expectations associated with the content. You can ask students what they know about a given topic; you can ask them what they can predict from the opening line of a particular listening selection (of a piece of music, of a movie, etc); you can draw the students' attention to the vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and sentence structures that are usually found in that type of material; you can review with them relevant social and cultural expectations.

Ordinarily, communication has a purpose, it is meant to convey information. Activities in the Practice Session should try to simulate communication outside the classroom. Try to design activities with a purpose; e.g., students have to fill an information gap by getting answers, or expand a partial understanding of a situation by asking questions. You can enlist the students to come up with suggestions.

Use Task-based Activities. Fluent speakers use language to perform tasks such as solving problems, developing plans, and working together to complete projects. The use of similar task-based activities in the Practice Session is an excellent way to encourage students to use the language. Tasks may involve solving a word problem, making a video, preparing a presentation, drawing up a plan.

Whenever possible, have students work in pairs or in small groups: *students among themselves should find ways* to get answers, resolve problems, unravel puzzling situations. You can give students structure in the form of a defined task and outcome. This structure will allow students to collaborate as they develop a work plan, discuss the substance of the task, and report the outcome. This way, they will use language in a variety of ways and learn from each other.

After the basic homework material has been covered, other content material may be added to Practice Session activities: students often find it enriching to share their fields of interest with others in the group and like to discuss topics they already know: their knowledge of the topic helps them understand and use the language. They can build on existing knowledge as they increase their language proficiency. For students who plan to study and/or work in a field that will require them to use the language they are learning, integration of content can be a powerful motivator.

The issue of grammar.

Students must study grammar on their own. Do not try to explain grammar rules in the

Practice Session (students will try to pressure you, do not give in!). Instead of ‘explaining’ ‘how’ a particular structural point should be used, state how the language is actually used by fluent speakers: *give examples* and have students imitate your use of the language; have them repeat a structure or an idiom several times if necessary.

Feedback and error correction.

Language Partners are asked to give direct and immediate feedback. Students should be encouraged to self-correct, by asking them to try again.

A few feedback techniques:

Paraphrase a student's utterances, *modeling* the correct forms
Ask students to repeat utterances; ask them to clarify their utterances, providing paraphrases of their own

When the focus is on communication activities, the ‘flow’ of talk should not be interrupted by the Language Partner’s corrections. React to the content of the students’ utterances, not just to the form. This serves two purposes: 1. Your response is a useful way of checking the student’s comprehension ability; 2. On the affective level, it shows that you are listening to what the student says. You should make note of recurring errors while students talk, and address them when they have finished talking – individually and with the whole group.

Include Awareness of Cultural Aspects of Language Use

Languages, in addition to being cognitive systems, express ideas and transmit cultural values. Grammar and sentence structures, verb inflections, the use of pronouns and other language features implicitly convey cultural information, and different modes of thinking and behaving (formal versus informal communication, greetings, asking for information such as directions, ways of beginning a conversation, etc) When you demonstrate or model language use for your students, you are also conveying information on the social, cultural, and historical context that language forms carry for native speakers.

Culture is expressed and transmitted in numerous other ways. Students are encouraged to avail themselves of activities and opportunities in their environment to hear and to use the language through radio and television programs, movies, the internet, lectures, cultural programs on campus or in the wider community. In the classroom, using media as authentic materials can expand students’ perspectives and generate interesting discussions about the relationships between language and culture.

Suggestions for possible strategies, techniques and activities

Language modeling and repetition:

Students should do frequent repetitions (especially if they are beginners).

Language Partners “model” the language and students repeat the phrases they hear. You should not hesitate to correct the students’ pronunciation; it is also important to correct students’ tones/intonation; students should get tones/intonation/cadence of the language right from the start. It is extremely difficult to correct problems related to pronunciation later, once they have established certain speech habits.

You can require of beginner level students to memorize the vocabulary/idiomatic expressions, even some of the dialogs for each chapter of their study material in order to be able to converse in the target language during the sessions. You should also encourage students to ask questions of each other in a variety of ways. Once students have learned how to ask questions they will be able to create a dialog.

Instead of ‘teaching’ grammar, you should “model” phrases that illustrate the grammar structures students are studying.

Avoid the use of English as much as possible while working with students. If you reach a real impasse, try to put off addressing the matter until the end of the session and then send the last few minutes clarifying the issue.

You can introduce some vocabulary and idioms at the beginning of the semester, expressions that are most frequently used and are culturally most appropriate, such as greetings, introduction of self, meeting someone for the first time: any expressions that help to eliminate the use of English right from the start.

Below are a few suggestions of vocabulary or idiomatic expression you may also want to teach especially beginner level students in the target language at the very beginning:

Please repeat (after me); repeat again; repeat once more;

Say it again

Answer; answer me;

Ask; ask me; ask X...

tell me; tell him; tell her;

I understand; I don’t understand; do you understand?

Listen carefully

Good ;

Excellent;

You did well;

You can think of other basic expressions that are more appropriate in your native language. This should help to eliminate the use of English from the very start.

With somewhat more advanced level students in a program, you could **go from direct to indirect discourse**, using **ask** and **tell**: **ask X to answer you; ask Y to tell you...**

Using language learning strategies

Although strategies are especially important for less proficient students, even the best students don't use strategies as thoughtfully and flexibly as they could. Less advanced students may need

more modeling and coaching. More advanced students need faster "scaffolding"--releasing control to them by providing less explicit cues to use strategies they have learned. As students encounter a language task, they can develop strategies to approach or handle

Role-play: when role-playing, make sure they stay in their role; guide them to use what they know; help them pick up clues from the other speakers in the group; try to have them answer by repeating part of the question; try to have them think of another way of saying things; have them monitor their listeners: are they following?; have them monitor themselves; encourage them to be flexible; try another approach; they can ask 'leading' questions; they can use 'fillers' in the target language.

Listening

Without telling students what they are going to listen to, have them listen to a tape, online material, a dvd; ask them what they understood.

- E.g. you can have them listen to a weather report. If they found it difficult to understand, tell them you will play it again. But before listening, ask them to make predictions of the kinds of information they would expect to hear in a weather report. Have them *brainstorm* words in the target language that they might hear. Encourage them to listen for the words they predicted and for other familiar words to help them get the main points of the weather report. After playing the tape the second time, ask students what they were able to pick up. Did they catch any of the words they had predicted?

You can also **practice listening comprehension** through story telling. You can tell a story in a very simple way already for beginning learners.

Tasks

Think-aloud tasks

A think-aloud is a technique in which a person verbalizes his or her thought processes while working on a task. Students are telling their thoughts as they are working on a topic, or are working on a specific task. Think-aloud can serve as a valuable instructional technique for creating active, independent learners. Think-aloud can make students more aware of their thought processes and increase their control over their learning techniques and affective states.

You can use think-aloud techniques in the classroom by focusing on how students get their answers. For instance, when a student answers a question, ask the student how he or she arrived at this answer (How do you know that? What makes you think so? What were you thinking as you did that? Why did you decide to say that?).

This requires a shift from immediately evaluating a student's response as right or wrong to looking at the student's processing. If the student's response is correct, sharing his or her strategies may encourage other students to try new techniques. If a response is incorrect, focusing on how the student got the answer can help you and the student see where his or her thinking may have gone astray.

You can illustrate this process for students. You can explain that thinking aloud is like talking out loud as you are looking for something you lost. E.g. "I know I read that magazine, but where did I put it? I remember seeing it on the desk. Maybe my roommate/brother, etc. took it. I think I'll ask. Maybe I put it in my briefcase-I'll look there", etc.

You can demonstrate a 'think- aloud' yourself in front of the class working on a language task. You can have students make comments on your process/strategy and ask you why you used them.

Think-aloud can be used in pair activities with students. One student can work on a language task and think aloud. The other student can be the interviewer. Pairs of students can work on similar types of tasks; they can compare and discuss strategies.

Think-aloud can be useful in increasing students' awareness of how they learn. And you can become more aware of how the students are learning and will allow you to better identify problem learning areas by focusing on you students' thought processes.

A few prompts (in the target language, to get started or when a student is silent):

- What are you thinking about? What's going through your mind?
- How are you doing this? How are you figuring this out?
- What are you looking at? Why?
- What are you looking at? Why?-
- What do you understand so far? How did you know that?

Prompts responding to what a student has said or done:

[Restate what student has said.]

- How did you figure that out?
- Why do you say that? How do you know? How does that help?
- Why did you change your mind?
- Why did you decide to speak about this?
- How did you come up with that? Why did you say that?

Possible interview questions (you can think of many more; the purpose is to make students talk about themselves, their environment (*describe*), convey information, relate activities, etc)

You can ask questions *to guide* the student if s/he is extremely quiet, having difficulty thinking of anything to say, or if s/he is talking easily in the language and should be pushed to a higher level.

Allow the student moments of silence because s/he may be thinking about what to say.

- A day on campus; a day at work:

Describe a typical day for you

What's your favorite class, activity, project you worked on? Why?

Will you continue next year? What are your plans?

Imagine you are talking to a potential exchange student. Describe your college/university, your classmates, etc.

What classes would you recommend? Why?

What classes would you have liked to have skipped? Why?

- Family:

Who is in your family?

Tell me a little about them, what do they do, where they work, how old are they, etc.

Describe what they look like (appearance) *describe* their personalities.

Compare some of the people in your family--appearance & personality.

- Favorite hobbies:

What are your favorite hobbies? (photography, backpacking, skydiving, tracing your family tree, changing oil in a car, giving a successful party, writing a resumes... (let your students be a little absurd if they want to; if they do not have the vocabulary, your can try to guide them by finding word associations, inferences)

Tell me about one of them; explain why

How long have you played (name the sport)? What is your best memory of (name the sport)?

How would you encourage someone else to take up this hobby?

- Home:

Where do you live?

Can you *describe* your home for me? (E.g., How many rooms? Describe your room.)

Where do you want to live? *Describe* your dream house. My favorite book, movie, actor, Etc:

What was it about? Why is it your favorite...

My best friend/ worst enemy; Why is this person your best/worst...?

For intermediate and advanced level students, you can pay attention to see if they are **narrating** in the past or the future; if they use the conditional; if they give supporting opinion; if they can compare/contrast

Have students interview each other, taking turns

Do NOT volunteer information.

Be careful not to lead student into responses (put words in their mouth.)

The object of all activities should be **to incite students to be active users of the language** they are learning; to give them every possible means to develop into increasingly more competent thinkers and speakers in the language, and become 'culturally proficient' in the target culture.

Evaluation of the DILS Program

DILS Student Mid-Semester Evaluation of the Program *(this questionnaire might come in a Word or as a Survey Monkey questionnaire)*

Tell me about your experience of studying in DILS so far this semester. Please respond to the questions below and make any additional comments you wish concerning your language study experience in DILS.

1. Is the DILS Program meeting your expectations up to this point?
2. Are you satisfied with the progress you are making toward the goals you established at the beginning of the semester?
3. Are you able to give the necessary time to reach those goals?
4. Were your goals realistic? If they were not, should you reassess your initial goals? Do you think the DILS Program gives you the opportunity to review and if necessary readjust your goals?
5. What changes should you make, if any, in your study process
6. Please comment on the study materials you are using.
7. What do you find the most helpful and what do you find the least helpful working with your Language Partner.
8. What changes, if any, would you like to see happen in your interaction with your Language Partner;
9. What is your comfort level of expressing yourself in the language you are studying: (a) with your Language Partner; (b) with other native speakers of the language you are studying.
10. In your opinion, what are the greatest benefits of studying in a DILS-type program; what are its greatest drawbacks.
11. If you had a choice, would you prefer to study your language in a traditional classroom setting rather than in DILS?
12. What changes would you like to see happen in DILS in order for the program to be of greater benefit to you.
13. Any other thoughts and comments concerning your language study in DILS are most welcome.

Thank you for your cooperation in responding to this questionnaire.

DILS Language Partner's Mid-Semester Evaluation of the DILS Program

Please give me your comments about your experience as a Language Partner in the DILS program so far.

1. From your point of view, does the program *work*? Please say what you think works well and what you think does not seem to work?

2. Please comment briefly on your students' performance:

- a) session participation
 - b) homework assignment
-

3. Do you follow the initial syllabus or do you make changes/adjustments? If you do please give your reason(s).

4. How do you help your students to re-evaluate their language learning goals and their process of studying the language?

5. How much feedback (error correction; confirmation of correct language use; other comments on their language use) do you give your students?

6. How do you provide your students with contextual situations that go beyond the textbook that allow them to acquire 'real life, every day, current language skills?

7. What do you think have been the most useful strategies you have used in your sessions to stimulate student learning? (Role-play, description, discussion, use of technology such as YouTube; Films; other)?

8. How do you motivate your students in your session to study: a) at all, b) to study harder?

9. Since DILS is not for credit, what do you think has the greatest impact on student motivation and performance?

10. What do you think are the best/most useful features of DILS and what are its worse/least useful features?

11. Do you think your students would benefit more if they studied the language in a traditional language course?

12. If you think changes in the program would be beneficial, what changes would you suggest for improvement?

13. Feel free to make any comments and/or suggestions you wish

Thank you for completing this evaluation

DILS Student's End of Semester Evaluation of the Program
(this questionnaire might come in a Word or as a Survey Monkey questionnaire)

1. What language did you study in the DILS program _____

2. What were your short-term language goals when you enrolled in DILS?

3. Do you think you achieved, or came close to achieving, your short-term goals?

Please explain your answer:

4. What are your long-term goals in studying this language?

5. How will your DILS program help you in achieving your long-term goals?

6. On a scale of 1 (not at all helpful) to 5 (extremely helpful), please rate how each of the following helped you toward achieving your language study goals:

- Instructional Materials _____
- Language Partner _____
- Your own study/practice _____
- Other (contact with speakers of the language; TV, internet, etc) _____
- Please explain your answers: _____

7. Please comment on the instructional materials for your DILS program (see also question on materials further below):

- Textbook _____
- Workbook _____
- Audio (and any accompanying Manual) _____
- DVD _____
- Other _____

8. Please comment on the Language Partner's work with you. _____

9. How often did you study during each week of the program? _____

10. How much time did you typically spend during any one of your language study periods?

11. On a scale of 1 (not at all helpful) to 5 (extremely helpful), please rate how helpful each of the following were **when you studied on your own**:

- Text/Printed Materials (Textbook; grammar book, etc) _____
- Audio Materials _____
- DVD _____
- Other Course Materials _____
- Please explain: _____

12. If audio materials were not available for your program, explain how you studied/practiced dialogues, idiomatic expressions, etc.

13. Please describe how you studied/practiced the language **while studying on your own**.

14. If there were other students in your language program, please respond to the following questions:

- Did you meet with the other students **to practice** together outside your program sessions?

If yes, how often? _____

- Did you meet with others in your program **to review** previously covered materials? _____

If yes, how often? _____

15. Did you pursue any activities outside your practice sessions that engaged you in the language of your study? If yes, please explain: _____

16. Would you be interested in taking another DILS program to study the same language at a more advanced level? _____

17. Would you be interested in taking another DILS program to study a different language?

If yes, what language: _____

18. If you were to study in DILS again, would you like to see anything done differently?

Please explain: _____

19. Would you recommend the DILS program to a friend interested in studying a language not available at UM? _____ Please explain your answer:

20. Additional comments and/or suggestions are welcome:

Date: _____

Name (optional): _____

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

