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**Bridging the Gap: Self-Assessment, E-portfolios, and Formative
Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom**

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**Bridging the Gap: Self-Assessment, E-portfolios, and Formative
Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom**

by

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Dissertation

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Dedication

This is dedicated to Katya, Lana, and my family.

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Bridging the Gap: Self-Assessment, E-portfolios, and Formative Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

Supervisor: Thomas J. Garza

Despite the amount of empirical evidence available to validate the claim that language learners have the ability to evaluate their own abilities in a foreign language, many educators feel that self-assessments are unreliable and do not fit into the foreign language classroom. However, the move towards a proficiency-based student-centered classroom over the past two decades has caused many educators to rethink the use of self-assessment measures in the foreign language classroom.

At the same time, portfolios have emerged as assessment tools for both educators and learners. Most recently, with the technological advancements in the past decade, Internet-based e-portfolios have become increasingly popular in education. However, there are very few studies on the use and implementation of e-portfolios, specifically in the foreign language classroom.

This dissertation examines the role of self-assessment in the foreign language classroom. It utilizes an e-portfolio platform with pre-loaded can-do statements to create an evidence-based self-assessment for an intensive Russian language class. This dissertation presents self-assessment as a teacher-validated process utilizing formative assessment to create a learner-centered environment outside of the classroom.

The study correlates results from three separate foreign language assessment tools to determine their relation to one another. The study promotes a holistic approach to language assessment and provides a process for holistic approach in the foreign language classroom. The process outlined in this study is easy to replicate and can be incorporated into foreign language courses with a limited amount of resources.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Assessment has become increasingly important in education over the past decade. The increase in importance of assessment is due to changes in both legislation regulating education and teaching trends in education. Education as a whole has been shifting towards standards-based learning. In regards to assessment in standards-based education, self-assessment and portfolio assessment are being used to a greater extent (Belgrad, 2013; Wigglesworth, 2008). Since the publication of American Councils on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines in 1986, the field of foreign language education has been experiencing this shift towards standards-based education. Similar to other fields in education, self-assessment and portfolio assessment have become very common in the foreign language classroom.

In language arts, self-assessment has often been associated with portfolios (Little, 2005). Similarly, there have been numerous studies on self-assessment in foreign language classes and the use of portfolios in foreign language classes. However, there is very little research into the use of portfolios, more specifically e-portfolios, in regards to self-assessment of foreign language abilities. There is even less research on the role of formative assessment in the self-assessment process. This study will look at how e-portfolio-based self-assessments provide educators with ratable language samples to assess reading, writing, and listening, the same way that Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPIs) provide raters with ratable language samples to assess speaking. It will incorporate formative assessment in the self-assessment process to assess what, if any, effect the former has on the latter.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the growing interest in portfolio-based self-assessment in the foreign language classroom, no researchers have yet to focus on formative assessment in the self-assessment process. And although many researchers have focused on the reliability and validity of self-assessment measures, there have been very few research studies where the self-assessment is connected to a set of standards. This study intends to fill the gap in knowledge of the role of formative assessment in e-portfolio-based self-assessment measures in foreign language education.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Portfolios in foreign language education were originally used for assessing in-service teachers, rather than language learners. During the 1990s, not long after the proficiency movement in foreign language education began, portfolios were seen as tools to be used in the foreign language. The research on portfolios as assessment tools focuses mainly on the ability of students to compile samples of their work. However, there are very few empirical studies on self-assessment, one of the key components in portfolio assessment.

Opponents of self-assessment contend that the drawbacks of self-assessment are: 1) most learners are not trained in assessment and this makes self-assessments unreliable; 2) self-assessment may persuade some learners that they are incapable of certain tasks and this could lead to a lack of motivation; and, 3) self-assessments are not accurate as learners may overestimate their abilities if the self-assessment is connected to a grade or placement in an academic program.

Conversely, proponents of self-assessment contend that self-assessment can lead to more autonomous learners and that the advantages of self-assessment are: 1) learners are more aware of and take more responsibility of their own learning; 2) self-assessment

links assessment to instruction and makes learners aware of the criteria by which they are judged; 3) learners are able to understand their abilities and gaps in their abilities; and, 4) learners can be motivated to enhance their proficiency.

In regards to self-assessment studies, two major meta-analyses have been conducted by Ross (1998) and Blanche (1988) of empirical studies on self-assessment in foreign language education. Ross (1998) points out two major issues with self-assessment studies: (1) many times the criterion scale and the self-assessment scale are not ordinal, possibly throwing off the validity of the correlations; and, (2) self-assessment statements that are situational may allow for different interpretations among subjects, thus throwing off the results.

These meta-analyses have found that such studies also fall short in one major aspect of the self-assessment process – formative assessment. Formative assessment, also known as “assessment for learning,” is a process whereby an educator provides elaborate feedback to help bridge gaps in a learner’s knowledge (Heritage, 2010). Formative assessment is considered by many scholars to be an integral part of the self-assessment process. Black and Wiliam (1998) concluded from their review of previous studies that formative assessment accounted for some of the largest gains ever reported (Heritage, 2010). However, Black and Wiliam’s study focused on numerous subject areas and not particularly on foreign language. In fact, in regards to formative assessment in the foreign language classroom, there have been few studies and even fewer empirical studies.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is a quantitative study of assessment measures used in the foreign language classroom. It will correlate student scores on three separate assessment measures in order to determine the statistical significance between the three measures.

Students in a six-hour Intensive Russian language class were the participants in the study. The study took place at the University of Texas at Austin over a two-semester period.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant to learners, educators and researchers in the field of foreign language education. For learners, the proposed study intends to outline ways in which they can begin to understand the process of learning a foreign language through self-assessment and formative assessment. For educators, the proposed study will help educators form a deeper understanding of how to engage their students in the assessment process. The study will provide educators with techniques for utilizing portfolio-based self-assessments and formative assessment in their classrooms. For researchers, the proposed study will identify areas where future research is needed and provide a methodology for future research studies.

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions presented here grow out of gaps in the literature discussed in Chapter 2. The research questions for this study were:

1. Do learners' self-assessments align to what they actually score on a proficiency-based summative assessment?
2. Do language learners truly understand their own functional language abilities?
3. Do portfolios give us an accurate indication of learners' proficiency?

HYPOTHESES

1. Results of self-assessments that are connected to a proficiency-based portfolio system where formative assessment is incorporated are fairly accurate as validated by alignment with results of computer-based summative assessments.
2. When guided by an educator and given specific guidelines that allow deeper understanding of learning, language learners can understand their own functional language abilities through self-assessment.
3. Proficiency-based portfolios are an accurate indicator of learners' language proficiency, when the portfolios are guided by both the learner and the educator and incorporate formative assessment.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The participants in the study were recruited from a two-semester intensive Russian language course which I taught at the University of Texas during the 2011-2012 academic year. There were nine participants in the study (three females and six males) all of which had prior experience in learning a foreign language.

Three instruments were used to collect data for this study. An e-portfolio platform was used for both the self-assessment and formative assessment aspects of the study. Paper-form unit tests given every two weeks as well as a computer-based proficiency exam were used as the summative assessment tools in this study.

Participants completed self-assessments over the course of the study. The self-assessments were performed through an e-portfolio system with pre-loaded can-do statements. The educator created asks and connected them to the can-do statements included in the self-assessment. The participants submitted evidence based on their self-

assessment and the educator was responsible for confirming the participants' self-assessment. Participants were given in-class exams every two weeks over the course of two semesters. The participants were also given a computer-based proficiency exam at the end of the study. Overall proficiency ratings from the three instruments were taken and correlated to determine their how well the three measures correlate.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework cited for this study is the triangulation of three assessment measures. This theory is relatively new in regards to its use in assessment. Triangulation is a strategy used for the purpose of assessing the validity of research findings. As Ghrayeb, Damodaran, and Vohra (2011) point out, "the method relies on using multiple data sources to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, don't contradict it." In the field of foreign language education, Ross (1999) utilizes the triangulation framework in his study on the validity of self-assessment. Whereas Ross (1999) incorporates a paper-based self-assessment without evidence, an achievement test, and educator evaluations in his study; this study incorporates an e-portfolio-based self-assessment with learner evidence required, unit tests, and a computer-based proficiency exam to offer a triangulated view of self-assessment.

ASSUMPTIONS

This study assumes that assessment is an integral part of the foreign language learning process. It advances that the goal of language educators should be teaching towards a proficiency-based classroom. This study assumes that self-assessment is a process in which both the learner and the educator are involved. It assumes that a self-assessment requires learners to provide evidence of their self-assessment and this

evidence is assessed by the educator. This study assumes that the educator is trained in proficiency and capable to assess the learner's evidence.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations for this study revolve around resources available. Enrollment in the course used in this study was relatively low in relation to similar courses taught in the department. The investigator only had access to one class of nine students to utilize in the pool of participants. The study pertains to only three out of the four domains of language – reading, writing, and listening. Speaking was not included due to a lack in monetary resources to properly assess speaking abilities. Also, speaking was omitted due to the fact that there are numerous studies on speaking abilities in foreign language learning.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

By *e-portfolio*, I mean an online platform where both learners and educators have the ability to develop the learner's plan for knowledge acquisition (Stefani, Mason, and Pegler, 2007). Educators can assign tasks that require the learner to submit a language sample, thus making the e-portfolio an extension of the classroom. This study will utilize what Belgrad (2013) refers to as an *assessment of standards portfolio*. Assessment portfolios can aide learners in understanding how their work aligns to established criteria.

An integral part of an e-portfolio is a self-assessment. By *self-assessment*, I mean a process by which learners reflect on their abilities and assess themselves through the use of can-do statements (Little, 2005; Ross, 1999). By *can-do statements*, I am referring to statements developed by the American Councils on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) that align to the proficiency guidelines. They are the academic version of the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) can-do statements developed for self-assessment of language abilities. However, my definition of self-assessment includes

a step in the process not commonly used in self-assessment – educator validation of a learner’s self-assessment.

When the learner self assess their abilities, they are required to submit evidence of their aptitude with a language sample. Through the process of formative assessment, the educator either confirms the learner’s self-assessment or asks for another language sample and offers formative feedback to guide the learner. By *formative assessment*, I mean a process that focuses on learner and educator collaboration to improve both learning and teaching (e.g.; Heritage, 2010; Oosterhof, Conrad, and Ely, 2008; Shute, 2007).

Key to formative assessment is formative feedback. *Formative feedback* is the process by which the educator offers the learner guidance through feedback elaboration (Shute, 2007). Feedback elaboration, according to Shute (2007), can (a) address the topic, (b) address the response, (c) discuss particular errors, (d) provide worked examples, and (e) give gentle guidance (Shute, 2007). Formative assessment differs from summative assessment in that it is a process, whereas summative assessment is a tool.

Summative Assessment, as the name implies, focuses on summarizing a learner’s achievement after some defined period of time (Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis, 2011; Hargreaves, 2008; Moss, 2013; Sadler, 1989). Unlike formative assessment, which is an ongoing process, summative assessments are tools used at a specific point in the learning process.

SUMMARY

Chapter 2 will further clarify the problem identified in Chapter 1 by reviewing the relevant literature on self-assessment, portfolio assessment, and formative assessment. It will also review the literature on the theoretical framework for the current study. Chapter

3 will discuss the environment of the study. Chapter 4 will present the methodology, building upon the information outlined in Chapter 1. It will present the modified self-assessment processed used in this study. Chapter 5 will present the results of the research study. Chapter 6 will present discussion, limitations, and implications for further teaching and research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The current literature on portfolios focuses on their capacity to promote learning outside of the classroom and to allowing learners to reflect on their learning process. In contrast, the literature on self-assessment examines the reliability and validity of self-assessment measures. Finally, the recent literature on formative assessment targets development of autonomous learners through educator and learner dialogue. This chapter will elaborate on the findings of the current literature surrounding portfolios, self-assessment, and formative assessment.

Definition of a Portfolio

During the 1990s portfolios as assessment tools were still in their infancy. According to Bond (1999), the first generally accepted definitions for the term ‘portfolio’ was drafted by Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1990):

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student’s efforts, progress and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include student participation in selection contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and the evidence of self-reflection (p.60).

Paulson, Paulson, and Meyer’s definition allows for student input in every phase of the portfolio process. However, Shores and Grace’s (1998) definition of a portfolio offers a more direct approach to understanding what a portfolio is and relies less on learner input at every point of the process:

A portfolio is a collection of items that reveal different aspects of an individual child’s growth and development over time.

Portfolios were originally utilized in literary and writing courses at the elementary and secondary school levels. However, during the early 1990s, the portfolio expanded into other subject areas, in particular the field of foreign languages. Bond (1999) points to Moore’s (1994) outline of the characteristics of a portfolio in the field of foreign

languages, where Moore suggested that student portfolios should be: goal based, contain samplings of students' work, contain evidence of students' growth, span a period of instruction, allow for feedback, and be flexible.

Bond (1999) also points out that portfolios in the field of foreign languages were used not only for assessing students but also for assessing in-service language teachers. He points to Wolf and Dietz's (1998) definition of a teaching portfolio being a "structured collection of teacher and student work created across diverse contexts over time, framed by reflection and enriched through collaboration that has its ultimate aim the advancement of teacher and student learning" (p.9).

Delett, Barnhardt, and Kevorkian (2001) offer a more contemporary definition of portfolios as, "an ongoing, interactive assessment that actively involves both the teacher and the student in the process of learning". With the recent shift in foreign language education away from teacher-centered instruction, the focus has shifted to learner capabilities. In this environment, both teachers and students find themselves in new roles, with new responsibilities. And as Delett, Barnhardt, and Kevorkian (2001) point out, "portfolios are one means of developing a learner-centered classroom".

Similarly, Belgrad (2013) gives us the most updated definition of a portfolio as:

A tool used to engage students in the assessment process in order to (1) select and reflect on a variety of documentation or evidence of growth in knowledge, abilities, and dispositions; (2) promote authentic communication about learning with peers, teachers, and parents; (3) promote metacognition through ongoing reflection of their work; and (4) assure student awareness and understanding of external goals and standards so they may set their own goals, self-assess their progress, and pursue new goals to attain achievement.

Connected to the definition of a portfolio are the purposes for a portfolio, which can give us more granular definitions of different types of portfolios. Belgrad (2013) outlines numerous different types of portfolios, based on their purpose:

1. *Learning portfolios* provide a holistic picture of learning and engagement over period of time for a learner.
2. *Development portfolios* demonstrate growth and development in a given area.
3. *Assessment or standards portfolios* demonstrate a learner's achievement of benchmarks or standards and assist the learner in understanding how their abilities align to established criteria and how they can improve their learning.
4. *Showcase portfolios* encourages learners to communicate individual achievements.

Despite portfolios being used in numerous fields and for many different purposes, most scholars agree on the principles of what constitutes a portfolio. Taking Bond (1999), Moore (1994), and Belgrad (2013) into consideration, one can outline the definition of a portfolio, in relation to foreign language education. The current literature in foreign language education and assessment defines portfolios, in short, as structured, collaborative, and ongoing assessment tools that are an integral part of the student-centered classroom and allow learners to demonstrate achievement of standards.

Definition of an E-Portfolio

Technology is becoming an increasingly integral part of education, both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers use computers for presentations inside the classroom while outside the classroom teachers use email and websites to stay connected to learners. Learners use computers and electronic tablets both inside and outside of the classroom to complete assignments and stay connected to their teachers and fellow classmates.

At the same time, teachers and students have been utilizing technology to compile samples of completed assignments, assessment results, and numerous other course materials into Electronic-portfolios, or e-portfolios. And over the past twenty years there

have been numerous developments in e-portfolios; taking them from loosely organized folders on a computer to Internet-based platforms stored on servers.

According to Stefani, Mason, and Pegler (2007), Penn State University was one of the early adopters of the e-portfolio approach as education knows it today. Penn State originally offered their students access to e-portfolios as a way for their students to develop interactive ways of displaying their materials and skills. In reference to education, every teacher in the state of Pennsylvania must maintain an e-portfolio. Because of this, the College of Education at Penn State requires all students to maintain an e-portfolio throughout their academic career. Penn State even allows students to receive academic credit for courses through successful completion of a portfolio. Penn State University (<http://eportfolio.psu.edu/>) defines an e-portfolio as:

Electronic Portfolios (e-Portfolios) are dynamic, developmental spaces representing your professional "self" on the Web. They are becoming standard practice for academics, students, and professionals and typically include examples of skills and achievements, as well as a reflective blog element.

E-portfolios require learners to not only reflect on their own learning but to also develop their own plan for learning (Stefani, Mason, and Pegler, 2007). In order to aid the learner in self-reflection as well as the process for planning their learning, the portfolio must be well-structured and well-organized (Genesee and Upshur, 1996). E-portfolios, then, offer the learner a tool to organize and present, as well as assess, their work.

There are many different platforms for e-portfolios on the market and teachers are beginning to find numerous innovative ways to capture learner evidence within e-portfolios. Evidence is a language sample of a learner's language abilities. It can be an audio recording, a video recording, or a written text. Educators and education administrators alike have identified the need for and value in portfolios (Moore and

Bond, 1997). This value is evident in the fact that major educational management systems, such as BlackBoard® and Canvas®, have added e-portfolio features to their list of tools. The popularity of portfolios is also evident in the development of major portfolio platforms specifically for language arts such as LinguaFolio®, developed by The Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) at the University of Oregon, and iCAN®, developed by Avant Assessment, LLC.

Scholars maintain that e-portfolios are an extension of the classroom and allow for a more student-guided learning process that thrives on interaction between both the teacher and learner. An aspect of e-portfolios which scholars have neglected in their studies is the feedback possibilities available with an e-portfolio system. As technology becomes more intertwined with learning, the field of education will surely see vast advancements in the technology surrounding e-portfolios and the use of e-portfolios in innovative ways.

Comparing Portfolios and E-portfolios

By comparing current research on portfolios (Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1990); Shores and Grace (1998); Moore (1994); Bond (1999); Wolf and Dietz (1998); Delett, Barnhardt, and Kevorkian (2001) and e-portfolios (Stefani, Mason, and Pegler (2007) we can see that e-portfolios are similar to paper-based portfolios in nearly every aspect. Both require learner and teacher input and reflection, are a collection of learner evidence, and follow a learner's progress for an extended period of time.

However, as Stefani, Mason, and Pegler (2007) point out, the main difference between an e-portfolio and a traditional paper-based portfolio is that an e-portfolio can allow for learners to compile many different kinds of evidence. E-portfolios also allow

for educators to give learners feedback through numerous different types of mediums that are not available with the more traditional paper-based portfolios.

With a traditional paper-based portfolio the learner can only compile evidence using a limited number of media (e.g., paper, DVDs, and CDs) and likewise, an educator can only provide feedback in specific media (e.g., paper, in person, etc.). While with an e-portfolio the learner has the ability to compile evidence using more numerous media (e.g., MP3 audio files, MP4 video files, screen captures, websites, etc.) and similarly, the educator can provide feedback utilizing a greater number of media than a paper-based portfolio allows (e.g., MP3 audio files, MP4 video files, etc.).

An area where research has fallen short in both paper-based and e-portfolios is the feedback possibilities available with a portfolio. Both paper-based and e-portfolios allow for more elaborative feedback. E-portfolios allow for automatic feedback, making e-portfolios an integral part of the learning process. However, this is not covered by any of the current research on portfolios.

The choice of whether or not to use a paper-based portfolio versus an e-portfolio is based on numerous factors such as economic means, assessment ability, and technological know-how. Some school districts and teachers cannot afford the cost of e-portfolio systems (the most common e-portfolio systems range from \$10-\$25 per user per year). Nor can the school districts cover the cost to train educators in utilizing an e-portfolio system and all of the features it may have. To use a portfolio properly, both the educator and the learner must understand exactly what the goal is associated with each task and with the portfolio overall. Many educators are not trained in assessment, specifically normative assessment which is necessary to utilize a portfolio properly in an educational setting. Although e-portfolio platforms give the learner and educator the ability to collect and analyze evidence in numerous media, this flexibility also requires

more than a basic understanding of technology. Not every learner or educator may have the technological know-how to the e-portfolio properly (Cheng, 2009).

Although there may be some educators and learners that are not able to use e-portfolios for one reason or another, a majority of today's educators and learners are well versed in technology. E-portfolio platforms are relatively inexpensive when we take into account the time and materials saved relative to paper-based portfolios. And as our educational system and research moves toward instruction based on standards-based education many educators are becoming versed in formative assessment.

During the past three decades, foreign language education has been guided by the National Standards for Foreign Language Education and the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The National Standards and ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines guide teaching and learning in the foreign language classroom; in primary, secondary, and post-secondary education. E-portfolios have the capability of organizing the standards and guidelines into 'can-do' statements that align with in-class learning, allowing educators to extend contact time with the language. The can-do statements, developed by ACTFL, are an academic version of the can-do statements developed by the Interagency Language Roundtable for a learner to self-assess their language abilities. Taking all of these factors into account, we can assume that e-portfolios are becoming a very important tool in education and will eventually replace paper-based portfolios.

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Portfolios have been used to assess a learner's abilities since the 1980s (Cummins and Davesne, 2009). During the 1990s portfolios were being used to assess learners' abilities in several disciplines, but focusing on the ability of the portfolio to solicit more authentic evidence from the learner (Cole, Ryan, and Kick, 1995). According to Delett,

Barnhardt, and Kevorkian (2001), portfolio assessment has three main benefits: 1) portfolios provide a portrait of what students know and what they can do by offering a multidimensional perspective of student progress over time; 2) portfolios encourage student self-reflection and participation; and 3) portfolios link instruction and assessment. (For detailed descriptions of the advantages of portfolio assessment see: Belgrad, 2013; Delett, Barnhardt, and Kevorkian, 2001; Genesee & Upshur, 1996; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996).

Even though there has been much research on the benefits of portfolios, Belgrad (2013) points out two areas where empirical research is lacking: (1) reflection (the process where a learner thinks about their abilities) and (2) student self-assessment. Both reflection and self-assessment are key components to the portfolio process used in the current study.

In spite of the advancements made in assessments during the past twenty years, language development is multifaceted and learners' abilities cannot be assessed by any single means. Portfolios allow for a learner's language abilities to be holistically assessed (Moya and O'Malley, 1994), but a portfolio should be just one of the assessment tools used in a foreign language classroom to allow for the most reliable evaluation of a learner's language abilities (Byers, 2010; Pierce and O'Malley, 1992).

This section will discuss portfolios and their use as assessment tools in foreign language education. Portfolios offer an alternative to quantitative assessment measures. However, when quantitative measures must be used portfolios are useful as supplemental assessment tool along with quantitative assessment measures. As qualitative assessment tools, portfolios allow for more authentic assessment of a learner's language ability. Authentic assessment refers to the ability for the learner to perform a specific task outside of the classroom, in a real-world situation.

Portfolios and Non-Traditional/Alternative Assessment

In foreign language assessment, standardized quantitative measures are widely used to assess a learner's progress. Garrett (1991) and Ockey (2009) outline numerous issues with quantitative language assessments relating to the challenge of accurately leveling an examinee. In response to this issue, Cummins and Davesne (2009) offer the option of using more qualitative assessments, referring specifically to portfolio assessment. They point out that a portfolio, "presents a reasonable alternative form of evaluating linguistic outcomes and intercultural competence" (Cummins and Davesne, 2009). Likewise, Barootchi and Keshavarz (2002) affirm that alternative assessments, like portfolios, should be used to compliment quantitative measures.

In Moore and Bond's (1997) study on portfolios for in-service primary and secondary teachers in Texas, the school administration sees portfolios as a much needed change in education as it moves away from the pen and paper tests. However, Cummins and Davesne (2009) see portfolio assessment as a complement to quantitative assessment measures, rather than a replacement.

In order to offer learners and educators a complete understanding of a learner's abilities, portfolios should be used as alternative assessments. However, the portfolios should just be one of the tools used to assess learners and should be used in conjunction with numerous other measures.

Portfolios and Authentic Assessment

In our foreign language classrooms, we as educators emphasize the use of authentic materials (materials originally intended for native speakers and not produced specifically for language learners) to solicit authentic language production from language learners. The need thus arises for us to use authentic assessments to assess learners'

abilities to use language accurately. Portfolios provide a way to offer authentic assessment.

Herman (1992) defines “authentic” assessment as one that requires a learner to produce, rather than just chose, a response. Bachman and Palmer (1996) consider authenticity to be an important quality of assessment and define authenticity, as it relates to an assessment tool, as, “the degree of correspondence between characteristics of the TLU (target language use) task and those of the test task” (pg. 23-24). Similarly, Elton and Johnston (2002) see authentic assessment as testing a learner’s ability to perform tasks that resemble authentic situations. When an examinee needs to only chose a correct response rather than produce a response the fear for many educators is that surface learning is encouraged, rather than the examinee having a deeper understanding of what is being tested (Smith, 2007).

Although most language test developers consider authenticity in designing language assessments (Bachman and Palmer, 1996), the fact is that many quantitative measures focus less on authentic production and more on a learner’s ability to use language passively (Knight, 2010). The reason for the high amount of non-authentic assessments is due to two main factors: 1) the inability of language educators to develop authentic tasks due to lack of training in assessment; and, 2) the push from administrators and legislators for educators to obtain certain results from learners and thus they develop non-authentic assessments based on non-authentic curriculum (Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Elton and Johnston, 2002; Knight, 2010; Stefani, Mason, and Pegler, 2007).

As Stefani, Mason, and Pegler (2007) point out, “in conventional or traditional assessment strategies there has been a tendency to prepare students for specific; sometimes rather artificial, tests.” When learners are only given quantitative measures, the teaching becomes more focused on passing the test and not on offering learners an

authentic learning experience where they can actively use the language. When non-authentic assessments are used then this leads to the curriculum becoming non-authentic and thus counterproductive to the goal of the course itself. Furthermore, when learners become focused on becoming 'test-smart' they may lose motivation in the course. Non-authentic assessment can also lead to a learner becoming focused on the test itself rather than the deeper meaning in the material that the learner should master (Smith, 2007).

However, as a qualitative measure of performance, portfolios are a collection of a learner's evidence of their ability to perform authentic tasks in a target language. Both Elton (2003) and O'Suilleabhain (2004) see portfolios as a way to set up authentic situations where learners can gain new knowledge. As mentioned above, e-portfolios are connected to the National Standards and ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines which are made to elicit authentic language production. When the learner is held to these standards and guided by the ACFTL guidelines then they will understand the deeper meaning in the task. The new e-portfolios allow for more authentic tasks and have the ability to change the way a learn learns and approaches a subject.

AUTONOMOUS LANGUAGE LEARNING

One of the main goals of foreign language educators is to produce autonomous language learners. Little (1991; 2000), Dickinson (1997), Conttia (2007), Kohonen (2000) and others have outlined the reasons for why foreign language educators are in favor of autonomous language learners: 1) language learning is more efficient and effective when the learner is involved to make the learning more personal and focused; 2) when learners are proactively involved in their learning than there is a stronger sense of motivation; and 3) learners with a high degree of learner autonomy have an easier time mastering discourse roles on which communication in a foreign language depends.

The objective of foreign language educators should be to make their learners more autonomous. Scholars such as Benson (1997; 2001), Lantolf (2000), and Little (1991; 1999; 2000; 2002) point to Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) and Wood, Bruner, and Ross's related theory of scaffolding (Wood, Bruner, and Ross, 1976) as the theoretical framework for autonomous language learning. Both of these theories focus on making the learner the center of the learning process, rather than the educator. The learner works on tasks with differing amounts of input from the educator, depending on the learner's potential level of performance on the task. As the learner's cognitive abilities become more sophisticated and they are able to better understand a subject, the educator becomes less involved in the process and the learner drives the learning.

Learner-centeredness, along with communicative teaching, autonomous learning, and intensive teaching (a version of Lozanov's Suggestopedia, modified by the Soviet pedagogue Galina Kitaigorodskaya) all share a focus on the learner as the key agent in the learning process (Benson, 2001). However, each of the aforementioned methods still rely on the educator to be both a guide for learners to navigate tasks and an expert in the target culture and language to offer a point of reference for the learner (Byrne, 2002; Kitaigorodskaya, 1991).

As Boud (2006) points out, the idea that higher education should be centered on the learner "has become an unquestioned mantra" during the past two decades (pg. 19). Making the learner the focus of teaching gives them the tools to continue the learning process outside of the classroom. This idea is evident in the methods that are currently used to teach Russian language courses in the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. The Intensive Method, a modified version of Galina Kiataigorodskaya's method, is currently being used in two sections of the beginning

Russian language courses at the University of Texas. Starting in 2013, all beginning Russian courses will be taught using the Intensive Method.

Portfolios and Autonomous Language Learning

As noted above, autonomous language learning requires a majority of the input from the learner. However, the educator plays an integral role in the learning process. Kohonen (2000) points out that developing learner autonomy requires time and commitment from both the learner and the educator as well as explicit pedagogical guidance from the educator. In actuality, in a classroom setting it is often very difficult for an educator to give each learner the amount of time they need. The use of a portfolio can not only extend the learner's contact time with the language but it can also give both the learner and educator the ability to interact outside of the classroom (Stefani, Mason, and Pegler, 2007).

An e-portfolio requires learners to reflect on their learning, consider how they will provide evidence of their learning, and develop a plan for their learning. The educator provides feedback that the learner uses to modify their learning to bridge any gaps the educator may have identified. In short, as Stefani, Mason, and Pegler (2007) contend, implementation of an e-portfolio cultivates a considerable level of learner autonomy.

To summarize, in order for learners to become autonomous they must be involved in the learning process. The educator is still a vital part of the learning process but the majority of input is from the learner. The use of an e-portfolio makes it possible to keep the learner engaged in the learning process while allowing the educator to offer guidance.

TASK AND PERFORMANCE BASED ASSESSMENT

Over the past three decades foreign language education has moved towards a communicative approach where teaching emphasizes interaction with the language. This

move, towards a communicative approach, has resulted in the need for assessments that evaluate language in use, rather than language as an object. Task and performance based assessments have replaced standardized language tests to fulfill the assessment needs for the communicative approach.

As Wigglesworth (2008) points out, performance-based assessments are meant to gather a demonstration of the scope of knowledge a learner has rather than just testing the accuracy of a learner's response to a selection of questions, as is the case with standardized assessments. In terms of foreign language testing, tasks in performance-based assessments are meant to allow the examinee to demonstrate language skills required in real-world contexts (Wigglesworth, 2008).

Some scholars consider task-based language testing to be a subset of performance based language testing, where tasks are meant to elicit language samples for rating (Brown, Hudson, Norris and Bonk, 2002). The language itself is rated rather than the ability to complete the task in a real-world situation (Wigglesworth, 2008). However, many scholars use the term task-based performance assessment, where by the tasks are used to elicit language in real-world situations (Bachman, 2002). The learner's ability to perform such tasks in the real-world is assessed rather than the just the language itself (Wigglesworth, 2002).

SELF-ASSESSMENT

As Gipps (1999) points out, self-assessment is a product of the rise of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in education. According to Vygotsky's theory, the learner takes an active role in their learning and does not depend solely on the educator. When the learner takes control of their learning then they are also more invested in outcomes (Vygotsky, 1978). Following Vygotsky's theory, as the learner becomes more involved and engaged

in the learning process the educator becomes less involved. According to Black and William (1998), self-assessment is an important tool to stimulate such engaged participation from the learner (In Suomi, 2013).

As Suomi (2013) points out, self-assessment in language education was not promoted until the 1970s when the Council of Europe developed an adult foreign language learning system that was heavily reliant on learner autonomy. The Council of Europe produced a self-assessment questionnaire in the 1970s, which was one of the first steps in promoting self-assessment in foreign language education (Blue, 1994; Oskarsson, 1978; Suomi, 2013). Although the publishing of the ACFTL Proficiency Guidelines in 1986 was a milestone in foreign language assessment in the United States, the guidelines themselves do not constitute a means for self-assessment.

The first major contribution to foreign language self-assessment in the United States came from Chamot and O'Malley in 1994 (Suomi, 2013). In Chamot and O'Malley's Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), the focus of their approach was on self-assessment forming the core of planning, monitoring, and evaluating in the classroom (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994 as cited in Suomi, 2013). The next major contribution to self-assessment of foreign language proficiency in the United States was in the 2000s when ACTFL, the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NCSSFL), and CASLS at the University of Oregon collaborated to produce 'can-do' statements aligned with the ACFTL Proficiency Guidelines. The 'can-do' statements were then taken and built into an e-portfolio - *LinguaFolio*®.

Due to the rise in popularity of self-assessment over the past three decades, it has expanded into a distinct field of study in foreign language education. And as de Saint Leger (2009) points out, most scholars have explored the validity and reliability of student ratings in self-assessment (Bachman and Palmer, 1989; Blanche, 1990; Boud,

1995; Butler and Lee, 2006; Pierce, Swain, and Hart, 1993) rather than the learning process involved in self-assessment.

In quantitative studies on the reliability of self-assessment, reliability is usually measured internally by comparing the consistency of learner self-assessments within a population of learners as well as consistency of learner self-assessment across specific tasks (Ross, 2006). In quantitative studies on the validity of self-assessment, validity is usually measured by correlating self-assessment performance scores with scores from educators and other quantitative assessment measures such as proficiency tests (Blanche, 1990; de Saint Leger, 2009). The results of these studies (Bachman and Palmer, 1989; Blanche, 1988; Blanche, 1990; Blanche and Merino, 1989; Butler and Lee, 2006; Byers, 2010; Ross, 1990; Ross, 1998) point to high rates of reliability and validity overall. However, the results also illustrate that the reliability and validity of self-assessments are affected by numerous different variables (e.g., domain assessed, personality traits of learners, cultural backgrounds of learners, parental expectations, career aspirations, exposure to foreign languages, age, academic record, lack educator and learner training in self-assessment, etc.) and that self-assessments should not be used for high-stakes summative assessment purposes, due to their subjective nature (Brown and Hudson, 1998; de Saint Leger, 2009).

However, there are also many scholars that have taken a qualitative look at self-assessment and its role in foreign language education. Scholars have focused on the use of self-assessments as alternative assessment tools, self-assessment and autonomous learning, and self-assessment in learner-centered teaching (Byers, 2010; Little, 2005).

Opponents of self-assessment contend that self-assessments are unreliable, as most learners are not trained in assessment. Opponents also contend that self-assessment may also lead to a lack of motivation by persuading some learners that they are incapable

of certain tasks. In relation to accuracy of self-assessments, opponents of self-assessment contend that learners may overestimate their abilities if the assessment is connected to a grade. Finally, opponents mention numerous variables that affect the reliability of self-assessments such as: 1) gender; 2) nationality; and 3) previous language study (Blanche, 1988; Boud and Falchikova, 1989; Brown and Hudson, 1998; Ross, 1999; Ross, Rolheiser, and Hogaboam-Gray, 2002; Sung, 2005).

Conversely, proponents contend that self-assessment can lead to more autonomous learners. They contend that learners are more aware of, and take more responsibility for, their learning when they self assess. Self-assessment makes learners more aware of the criteria by which they are judged because it connects assessment to instruction. Due to the reflective nature of self-assessments, learners are able to understand their abilities and can see gaps in their knowledge during the reflection process. Finally, proponents contend that self-assessment increases learner motivation by putting them in control of the assessment process (Blanche and Merino, 1989; Byers, 2010; Ekbatani, 2000; Little, 2005; Luoma, 2013; Oscarson, 1989; Ross, 1998; Ross, 2006).

In regards to the use of self-assessment in the foreign language classroom, the positives outnumber the negatives. Self-assessment should never be used as a summative assessment; rather self-assessment should be used as formative assessment tool. However, the self-assessment should be connected to a grade to ensure learner participation. As a formative assessment tool, self-assessments can extend the classroom time and keep a running dialogue between educators and learners. It should be noted, though, that self-assessments used in the foreign language classroom must be connected to standards-based curriculum to give guidance and structure to the process. The next section discusses the use of a portfolio as the platform for a self-assessment in the foreign

language classroom.

Self-Assessment and Portfolios

As stated above, self-assessment can encourage autonomous learning by making the classroom more learner-centered. However, as Little (2005) points out, unless the learner is also involved in the assessment process then it is not a true learner-centered environment. The self-assessment process must also be transparent and clear to the learner so they understand what they are assessing and not making random decisions about their abilities (Little, 2005).

Over the past three decades educators have attempted to formalize self-assessment, usually in one of two forms. One way in which educators have attempted to formalize self-assessment is to provide the learner with, or have the learner create, checklists or other forms of evidence to assess their ability to perform a task (Nunan, 1988). But as Little (2005) points out, the checklist approach can be limited by the criteria it is based on. The criteria applied to this type of assessment only have relation to similar self-assessment tasks. This means it is less related to criteria connected to other external assessments, such as standardized tests (Little, 2005). The second approach to formalizing self-assessment comes in the form of a portfolio.

The most common approach to portfolio self-assessment is to have learners compile a collection of work that is evidence of their abilities and rate their portfolio against a checklist of portfolio criteria (Little, 2005). Learners are usually expected to also include a reflection of the process they went through while compiling their portfolio, accounting for the reflective aspects of a portfolio (Little, 2005). The reflection is usually just a short written statement describing the process the learner went through while self-assessing their abilities. Similar to the checklist approach, as Little (2005) points out, this

approach can also be limited by the criteria it is based on and may or may not relate to the criteria of external assessments on which the learner will be judged.

Although Little (2005) identifies a common flaw with many portfolio-based self-assessments, e-portfolio platforms such as LinguaFolio® and iCAN® bridge the gap between self-assessment and other external assessment measures. Both platforms allow for all aspects of the self-assessment process: 1) learners observe their abilities; 2) learners analyze their abilities; 3) learners judge their abilities against a set of criteria; and 4) learners reflect and determine how to improve based upon their results (Benson, 2001; Blue, 1994; Ekbatani, 2000; Geeslin, 2003; McMillan and Hearn, 2009). These platforms also fill the gap between self-assessments and external assessment by being connected to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, thus rectifying the issue brought up by Little (2005).

Although issues have been identified with using portfolios for self-assessment purposes, recent developments in e-portfolios have made it possible to connect the proficiency-based classroom to self-assessment. This development makes e-portfolios an integral part of the learning process in the learner-centered classroom.

COMPUTER-BASED LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Although the theoretical structure for large-scale computer tests was worked out by Frederick Lord in the 1970s (Cheng 2009), it was not until the mid-1980s that computer-based testing entered into the field of language testing (Stansfield, 1986). Over the past three decades, computer-based language assessments have evolved into one of most acceptable and widely used forms of assessment (Cheng, 2009).

A major advantage of computer-based assessments over pencil-and-paper assessments is that they offer test developers the ability to build item banks that feed into adaptive test forms. This ability allows for immediate feedback for the learners after the

assessment, individualized testing, and testing security (Dunkel, 1999). Another advantage of computer-based language assessments is that they allow test developers the ability to build simulated language tasks that elicit more contextualized real-world language samples (Jamieson, Chapelle, and Preiss, 2005; Cheng 2009).

Even as early as 1981, scholars such as Hughett (1981) contended that the main advantage of computer-based assessments is the feedback capabilities available to both educators and learners. Computer-based assessments can give instantaneous feedback to learners, some assessments explain the proficiency level the learner has reached and what the learner is able to do at that proficiency level, and some assessments can even provide instructions and directions for learners to improve the language skills (Hughett, 1981; Ke, 2009).

When connected to classroom instruction and other forms of assessment, in particular self-assessments, computer-based assessments provide an integral piece to a holistic approach to assessing learners. Computer-based assessments, usually given at specific points in the learning process, complement other summative assessments such as chapter tests that are given every few weeks. Computer-based assessments also complement formative assessments, which are ongoing and continuous throughout the learning process.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

In short, formative assessment, unlike summative assessment, is not a single measure by which learners are judged. Since Michael Scriven first proposed the terms formative and summative assessment in 1967, scholars and educators have been working to define these terms. As the name implies, summative assessment focuses on summarizing a learner's achievement after some defined period of time (Gikandi,

Morrow, and Davis, 2011; Hargreaves, 2008; Moss, 2013; Sadler, 1989). Formative assessment, or assessment for learning (Heritage, 2010), focuses on a process of learner and educator collaboration to improve both learning and teaching (Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis, 2011; Hargreaves, 2008; Heritage, 2010; Oosterhof, Conrad, and Ely, 2008; Shute, 2007; Vonderwell, Liang, and Alderman, 2007).

Although the term ‘formative assessment’ was first proposed in 1967, as stated above, the first major contribution to developing a working understanding of formative assessment in the field of education came in 1968 with Bloom’s *Mastery Learning*. This was later expanded upon in Bloom, Hasting and Madaus’s *Handbook of Formative and Summative Evaluation*. In the handbook, the authors use formative assessment as the foundation for their concept of mastery learning. Mastery learning requires learners to demonstrate mastery of a learning objective before they can move on to the next learning objective (Bloom, Hasting, and Madaus 1971).

For both Bloom (1968) and Scriven (1967), an assessment can only be formative if the results are used to alter later educational decisions. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Bloom and Scriven’s definition of formative assessment was considered the norm and it was not until the late 1990s when the idea of formative assessment as we know it today was developed.

In 1998, Black and Wiliam completed a meta-analysis of over 200 research studies on the topic of formative assessment. They found that the commonly held definition of formative assessment, developed by Scriven and Bloom, was too restrictive (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Not only did Black and Wiliam find that formative assessment could guide future teaching, but that it could also provide evidence whether or not the strategy the educator and learner took was appropriate (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Following Black and Wiliam’s groundbreaking publication, formative assessment

became an important topic in education. As Black and Wiliam contended in *Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards through Classroom Assessment*, formative assessment could be a way for educator and learner standards to be raised (Black and Wiliam, 1998). The way to raise standards is connected to formative feedback, part of the formative assessment process (Heritage, 2010; Shute, 2007).

Formative feedback is the process by which the educator offers the learner guidance through feedback elaboration (Shute, 2007). Feedback elaboration, according to Shute (2007), can (a) address the topic, (b) address the response, (c) discuss particular errors, (d) provide examples of sample responses to the task, and (e) give gentle guidance (Shute, 2007). Pointing back to Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximal development (the area where learning takes place), formative feedback attempts to remove the external scaffolding as it develops a learner's cognitive system and makes a learner more autonomous (Shute, 2007). And as such, elaborative feedback is an integral part of formative assessment. As Heritage (2010) points out, formative assessment as a whole enables both the educator and the learner the ability to consistently work within the zone of proximal development, thus maximizing the learning possibilities.

Scholars contend that formative assessment and summative assessment are both integral parts of the learning process and both have specific roles in education (Oosterhof, Conrad, and Ely, 2008). Summative assessment remains crucial in education as it is concerned with accountability and certification of one's abilities (Oosterhof, Conrad, and Ely, 2008). However, many scholars argue that formative assessment plays a greater role in education today as it supports optimal learning and teaching (Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis, 2011). In foreign language education specifically, both formative assessment and summative assessment, when used together, offer educators and learners a more holistic approach to assessing a learner's proficiency.

Formative Assessment and Portfolios

One of the key aspects of portfolios is that they allow for ongoing feedback to occur between both learners and educators (Lam and Lee, 2010). Portfolios also allow for collaborative learning between the educator and learner as well as between other learners (Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis, 2011). The major e-portfolios on the market, LinguaFolio® and iCAN®, have capabilities that allow learners and educators to communicate virtually about portfolio tasks and learner responses. They allow for educators and learners to be in a constant dialogue about the learning process. A major aspect of this dialogue is through the use of formative assessment.

In their study on portfolio assessment, Lam and Lee (2010) discussed formative assessment in the context of portfolios with their study participants. Study participants, instructors in a school district, commented that learners spend most of their time worrying about their grades and do not necessarily know how to improve as learners (Lam and Lee, 2010). Instructors found that portfolio assessment that incorporates formative assessment allows learners to focus on the process of learning rather than the grades they receive (Lam and Lee, 2010).

Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis (2011) reviewed numerous studies on formative assessment and online learning. Two of the studies utilized e-portfolios in their study on formative assessment. They found that, “e-portfolios created an authentic learning context that supported collaborative learning and assessment” (Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis, 2011). Although the studies are not in the field of foreign language education, they highlight two major goals of the learner-centered classroom: 1) collaborative learning; and 2) collaborative assessment.

Although there is not much research on formative assessment and portfolios in the field of foreign language education, the research that does exist on formative assessment

and portfolios is relevant to the field of foreign language education, and education in general. Collaborative learning and assessment make the learning environment more learner-centered and promote learner autonomy. Previous sections in this chapter outline the benefits of both learner-centered and autonomous learning in foreign language education. Based on the research, one can conclude that portfolios are an adequate platform for formative assessment in the learning process.

Triangulation Approach to Research

The theory of triangulation is relatively new in regards to its use in assessment (Ghrayeb, Damodaran, and Vohra, 2011). Triangulation is a strategy used for the purpose of assessing the validity of research findings. As Ghrayeb, Damodaran, and Vohra (2011) point out, “the method relies on using multiple data sources to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, don't contradict it.”

Nelson (2010) outlines two different approaches to triangulation. The first approach, citing Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz (2005), focuses on the fact that there are inherent flaws in the use of one single assessment. As Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz (2005) point out, questions of the validity of results are reduced when different measures lead to the same conclusion. The second approach, citing Coats and Stevenson (2006), focuses on different areas of development involved in the assessment process: 1) curriculum development; 2) staff development; and 3) learner development.

Some recent studies utilizing triangulation have been conducted in higher education. Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz's (2005) study used triangulation to assess the interdisciplinary curriculum of LaGrange College. In their study, Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz, utilized the following three measures: 1) objective testing (academic profile test); 2) portfolios; and 3) exit interviews. They used both quantitative and

qualitative methods in order to take a more nuanced approach to evaluating their program. Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz (2005) also make the point that a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods for producing measures is recommended by King, Keohane, and Verba (1994) in their work on research methods.

Similarly, Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis (2011) used a mixed method by using the following three measures in their study on assessing the quality and outcomes of specific programs in the College of Engineering at Northern Illinois University: 1) professor evaluation of program objectives; 2) student self-assessment; and 3) exit interviews. Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis (2011) contend that triangulating investigators is another method to approach triangulation in order to fulfill the requirements of adequate data collection.

In the field of foreign language education, Ross (1999) utilizes the triangulation framework in his study on the validity of self-assessment. Ross (1999) uses the following measures in his assessment of an English-language program in Japan: 1) paper-based self-assessment; 2) an achievement test; and 3) and educator evaluations based on class records. Similar to Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz's (2005) and Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis (2011), Ross (1999) incorporates more than one investigator as learners perform a self-assessment. However, in contrast, he utilizes a strictly quantitative approach.

As Ghrayeb, Damodaran, and Vohra (2011) point out, the theory of triangulation is relatively new in regards to its use in assessment. Because of this, there is not one agreed upon method for conducting triangulation. The studies outlined here are a guide for developing a triangulation study but have very little in common. In order to assess a program or a course's ability to meet its stated goals, a triangulation approach can be useful.

CONCLUSION

Although scholars have written much about paper-based portfolios and e-portfolios, they have failed to focus on the feedback process within the portfolio process. This feedback process is also referred to as formative assessment. And although there have been many recent publications on the use of formative assessment in education, there have not been any studies on formative assessment in the field of foreign language education. Formative assessment is also missing from studies on self-assessment. This study focuses on the self-assessment process and formative assessment through the use of e-portfolios.

Chapter 3: Environment of the Study

The environment in which I conducted this study is specific to this particular study. However, understanding the environment of the study not only provides background information but also gives educators and scholars ideas for teaching, curriculum development, and future research. This chapter will describe in detail the environment in which I conducted this study, namely it will outline the situation in foreign language education at the University of Texas at Austin since 2010. This chapter will discuss, in detail, the teaching method used in the course for this study.

LANGUAGE STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

Language programs at the University of Texas at Austin have long been viewed as some of most productive and innovative programs in the United States. Over eighty languages are offered on campus and on-line through twelve different departments on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. The language programs within these departments are constantly working to improve both the learning and teaching of languages through innovative methods and technologies.

In the past decade, the language programs at the University of Texas at Austin have been faced with numerous challenges. One of the challenges language programs have faced is the need to produce speakers with an advanced or higher level of proficiency. In light of funding cuts, language departments have been compelled to pursue grant opportunities from the United States Department of Education and Department of Defense. Driven by the national security and foreign policy of the United States government, federal funds are earmarked for language and area studies training. Language departments who get such grants are then compelled to fulfill grant training requirements, as the skills of students are formally assessed.

Over the last decade, language programs at the University of Texas at Austin have been under threat due to Texas state and university fiscal problems. The university's endowment reduced in size due to the world economic crisis during the 2000s. The state legislature has also cut the amount of funding funneled to the university system as a result of financial difficulties, also stemming from the world economic crisis. As language and area studies have not been central to the priorities of the current administration, foreign language programs have been deeply affected by budget cuts and university policies.

The University of Texas at Austin has cut instructional funds while at the same time changed their teaching policy to track number of hours being taught, not number of courses being taught. Previously, an instructor could teach three courses per semester no matter the number of hours. Current policies only allow an instructor to teach twelve hours maximum. Most first-year language courses are five hours each, making it possible for an instructor to only teach two courses where they would have taught three courses under the previous policies. And since instructional funds have also been cut, it makes it impossible to teach the same number of courses previously taught in the language.

The two measures above and the challenges outlined previously have made it increasingly difficult for language programs at the University of Texas at Austin to continue teaching languages as they have in the past. However, the challenges have compelled language programs to evolve and create innovative ways to teach languages.

One of the most innovative programs at the University of Texas at Austin is the Arabic language program. In 2007, the Arabic program switched to an intensive method for teaching Arabic at all levels (ACTFL Novice-Superior / ILR L0+-L3). The intensive method used in the Arabic program attempts to achieve maximum language production during class through the communicative approach and also incorporates the use of on-line

workbook-like exercises to maximize student interaction with the language outside of class while also providing automatic feedback.

The intensive model of teaching used in the Arabic language program responds to the challenges to foreign language teaching at the University of Texas at Austin. The Arabic language program commonly graduates students with ACTFL Advanced Plus – Superior language proficiency; and in many instances even higher. This fulfills the national security and foreign policy needs of the national government.

The Arabic program is able to fund their endeavors through the use of funds from a number of highly competitive grants. These grants include: 1) The Language Flagship initiative which funds students to study between three and five years of intensive Arabic as well as study abroad opportunities; 2) Title VI grant which funds the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and provides for lesser taught languages to be offered; and 3) Project GO which provides funding for ROTC cadets to study Arabic or Turkish at the University of Texas and abroad. The Arabic program also receives funding from the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas.

The College of Liberal Arts requires all majors to take a two-year sequence of a foreign language and the intensive model turns the traditional two-year sequences into a one-year sequence. This fulfills the language requirement for all majors in the College of Liberal Arts in one year while also making it easier for students to graduate on time; a primary goal of the current administration. It also makes it possible to teach the same amount of sections of the language with the same amount of faculty. For example, a regular sequence in a language may have ten sections of first-year and eight sections of second-year. This would mean a department would need at least seven instructors to cover all eighteen sections for a total of eighty-two credit hours. However, with the

intensive model a department could offer ten sections and only need five instructors to cover sixty credit hours.

Currently, the following languages are offered using the intensive model described above: Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, French, Italian, and Russian. However, many other languages at the University of Texas at Austin have moved to a six-hour course for their beginning sections; including Spanish, German, and others. These courses are not called intensive but rather accelerated. The difference between the languages that specifically call their courses “intensive” and those that call their courses “accelerated” is the methodology used in teaching the courses.

THE INTENSIVE METHOD

A Short History of the Intensive Method

The Intensive Method used at the University of Texas is a modified and updated version of the Intensive Method developed by the Soviet pedagogue Galina Kitaigorodskaya during the 1970s and 1980s. Kitaigorodskaya’s method has been used for the past three decades both in the Soviet Union and in the former republics of the Soviet Union. Kitaigorodskaya’s method itself is a modified version of Georgi Lozanov’s Suggestopedia.

Suggestopedia is a teaching method that was developed by the Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov. According to Lozanov, the intended purpose of suggestopedia is to enhance learning by tapping into the power of suggestion, working not only on the conscious level of human mind but also on the subconscious level, the mind’s reserves (Lozanov).

Teachers trained in the Suggestopedia method use various techniques such as the use of art and music to create an atmosphere and physical surroundings where students

feel comfortable and confident. A typical lesson utilizing the Suggestopedia method consisted of three main phases: deciphering, concert session, and elaboration.

Deciphering is when the teacher introduces the grammar and the lexis of content to be learned during a specific session.

Concert session contains two parts: an active and passive session. In the active session, the teacher reads a text at a normal speed as the students follow along. In the passive session, music is played in the background as students relax and once again listen to the teacher reading the same text.

Elaboration is the part of the lesson where the students practice what they have learned by enacting dramas, singing songs, or playing games.

After numerous years of experiments Lazonov extended the method into four main phases: introduction, concert session, elaboration and production.

Introduction is when the teacher introduces the material in “a playful manner” instead of analyzing grammar and the lexis in a directive manner.

Concert session contains two parts: an active and passive session. In the active session, the teacher reads a text at a normal speed as the students follow along. In the passive session, music is played in the background as students relax and once again listen to the teacher reading the same text.

Elaboration is the part of the lesson where the students practice what they have learned by singing songs or playing games. The teacher acts as a consultant in during this part of the lesson.

Production is the part of the lesson where the students spontaneously speak and interact in the target language without interruption or correction.

Suggestopedia has been criticized as being based on pseudoscience. Many opponents question many aspects of the method; such as the non-conscious acquisition of

language and bringing the learner into a childlike state during the learning process. The Suggestopedia method has also been criticized as being teacher-controlled rather than student-controlled. The Soviet pedagogue Galina Kitaigorodskaya trained with Lozanov in the late 1960s and early 1970s to learn the Suggestopedia method. Kitaigorodskaya took Lozanov's method and modified it to fit the needs of the time in the Soviet Union. Her method is called the Intensive Method.

Kitaigorodskaya draws on social psychology, particularly on the works of Vygotsky, which was not present in Suggestopedia to make the Intensive Method more acceptable to the Soviet public who were skeptic of sub-conscious learning and psychotherapy.

Kitaigorodskaya's Intensive Method focuses on five key principles of educational communication which differ from Lozanov's Suggestopedia:

(1) Person-Centred Communication – In the Intensive Method the relationship built between the students is extremely important. In the classroom everybody communicates with everybody and a strong bond is formed among the students. Communication happens at numerous different levels: learner-learner, teacher-learner, teacher-group, and learner-group. Due to the highly active and communicative atmosphere, the learner's personality is extremely important as all members of the group must take an active role in communication.

(2) Role-Playing in Teaching Materials and Procedure – Kitaigorodskaya focuses on role-playing in the Intensive classroom to motivate learners. She makes the point that the role-plays should be relevant to the intellectual level of the learners and assign social roles to the learners. At the beginning of the course, each learner is given a specific role which they play the entire length of the course. The scenes enacted are meant to model real-life language situations.

(3) Collective Communication through Team Work – Team work is the most important aspect of the Intensive Method, according to Kitaigorodskaya. Team work can take the form of individual group work (one learner plays the role of the teacher in the group), pair work, rotating pairs, groups of three, and larger groups. Kitaigorodskaya identifies three key benefits in the use of teamwork: (1) the learner gains knowledge and improves speaking abilities through participation in group discussions, (2) learners build personal connections with each other through inter-personal contact, and (3) as group communication is a key component of the Intensive Method, each learner is dependent on each other and so each learner's progress is closely connected to the progress of their fellow learners.

(4) Concentrated Teaching Materials and Procedure - Kitaigorodskaya lays out a three-step model for learners to acquire both oral and written skills: (1) Synthesis 1, (2) Analysis and (3) Synthesis 2. Synthesis 1 consists of dialogues and listening comprehensions where the learner acquires language that they don't understand as structures and words are not explained at this stage. Analysis is where the learner engages in active production of the material gained in Synthesis 1, using vocabulary and grammatical constructions. During synthesis 2 many new words are introduced but almost no new grammatical structures so the learner uses previously learned grammar structures with the new vocabulary.

(5) Poly- or Multi-Functionality of the Exercises - Kitaigorodskaya discusses the poly-functionality and multi-functionality of tasks used in the classroom. She points out that every communicative task uses grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics which solve several aims at once.

Kitaigorodskaya's Intensive Method depends greatly on the instructor. According to Kitaigorodskaya, a teacher in the Intensive classroom must not only be trained in the

method but must also have the right personality to be a successful and helpful instructor. Kitaigorodskaya outlines three major roles of the teacher in the Intensive classroom:

(1) The teacher is a source of information for the learners. They also act as a scriptwriter, director, and producer of the dialogues the learners act out in the learning process.

(2) The teacher organizes the communication among the students. At first the teacher is the role of the teacher with superior knowledge, as the course progresses the teacher becomes an equal partner among the students in the learning process.

(3) The teacher is a model of proper use of language as well as an expert in the target culture.

Although there are differences between Kitaigorodskaya's Intensive Method and other commonly used Western methods, such as the communicative approach, there is also a lot in common between these two methods. For both methods, the material is taught orally and the target language is the only language used in the classroom. When new material is presented it is always introduced and practiced in context. And reading and writing are introduced later when the learner has formed a strong basis of the vocabulary and grammar.

Kitaigorodskaya's Intensive Method is still widely used in the republics of the former Soviet Union. The method is presented in relatively the same manner as it was during the 1980s. When the University of Texas was looking into the Intensive Method, foreign language faculty realized that Kitaigorodskaya's method could be useful with some changes to make the method work within the current needs of the university, just as Kitaigorodskaya did with Lozanov's method.

The Intensive Method at the University of Texas

In 2007, the Arabic program at the University of Texas was looking for a way to increase the proficiency of their students while at the time shortening the time needed in class (from four semesters to two). During the summer of 2007, the Arabic program began to use a modified form of the Intensive Method for their summer language institute. Dr. Mahmoud Al-Batal, the director of the Arabic Flagship Program at the University of Texas, developed the Arabic Intensive model to fit the needs of the Arabic program.

Dr. Al-Batal's version of the Intensive Method has much in common with Kitaigorodskaya's method. The instructor plays an extremely important role in the Arabic model, just as in Kitaigorodskaya's method. They are the moderator of classroom discussions and the model for accurate language use and cultural correctness. Similarly, the instructor in the Arabic model is trained in the method and is dedicated to the method, this is vital for the method to work. If the teacher believes in the method, the learners will believe in the method.

The Arabic model attempts to maximize the time in class actually using the language and not discussing the language or focusing on phonetics. This is done through role-play dialogues and small-group activities done completely in the target language. Students learn vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics outside of the classroom through an online homework tool. The students practice what they have learned at home in context during class time. This is similar to Kitaigorodskaya's method where class time is reserved for speech production only and much of the background work is to be done by the student outside of class. In the Arabic model, the student is supported outside of class by a graduate teaching assistant as well as their instructor.

After a few years of running the Arabic model, the Arabic program at the University of Texas at Austin saw students obtain proficiency levels of Intermediate Mid to Advanced Low after only two semesters of language study. Following the Arabic model, the French program and the Italian program, both in the Department of French and Italian, as well as the Russian program, in the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies, started developing intensive courses during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Currently, French and Italian are both taught exclusively using the Intensive Method, similar to the Arabic method but tailor-made for French and Italian. Over the past few years the Russian program has offered a mix of both intensive and regular language courses to students. However, starting in Fall 2013, all introductory Russian courses will be taught using the Intensive Method, developed by Dr. Thomas Garza and based on both the Arabic model and Kitaigorodskaya's method.

Intensive Russian at the University of Texas

Dr. Thomas Garza piloted the Intensive Russian course over the 2010-2011 academic year at the University of Texas at Austin. The Russian model borrows heavily from both Kitaigorodskaya's method and the Arabic model. The goal of the Intensive Method is for students to have between 540 and 720 contact hours after two semesters and to reach proficiency levels of Intermediate Mid through Advanced Low.

Like other models, the instructor is of vital importance in the Russian model. The instructor moderates the course and acts as a bridge to the target culture for the students. During class time, the instructor is constantly moving between exercises and promoting language production from all of the students through dialogues and contextualized exercises. The goal of the Russian model, just like Kitaigorodskaya's method and the Arabic model, is to maximize language production during class time.

Outside of class, students are expected to spend a minimum of two hours per each in-class hour working on Russian. This includes homework assignments that contain writing, reading, and listening tasks. Teaching Assistants and Assistant Instructors hold office hours and conduct speaking practice sessions outside of class as well to give the students every opportunity possible to practice their Russian. Students are also encouraged to utilize online materials developed at the University of Texas at Austin – Rockin’ Russian and Café Russia.

Rockin’ Russian is a platform built in cooperation with the Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning (COERLL) and the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies. It consists of contemporary Russian music videos complete with subtitles lyrics in Russian, colloquial English, and literal English. Each video is connected to exercises that practice both vocabulary and grammar in the context of the songs. Exercises range from the Novice to Superior level on the ACTFL proficiency scale. The site also consists of a secondary set of retro music videos from the Soviet Union. These videos also contain subtitled lyrics; however the lyrics for the retro videos are glossed and give the listener a chance to see the orthography of each word.



Illustration 3.1: Rockin' Russian Home Page

Café Russia is a platform built in cooperation with the Texas Language Center (TLC) and the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies. Café Russia's main goal is to make Russian students computer literate in Russian. This is done by having the students go through modules, which teach students how to use a Russian keyboard, use Russian computer vocabulary and terminology, and exercises which actively engage the students in using Russian websites.



Illustration 3.2: Café Russia Home Page

The purpose of the homework, speaking sessions, and online materials is to extend the classroom and give the students every opportunity possible to have contact with Russian. Another way this is done is through the use of portfolios in the Intensive Russian class.

Portfolios are just one of the assessments used in the Intensive Russian course at the University of Texas at Austin. Students are assigned a number of tasks through Blackboard® and are required to compile a paper-based portfolio to submit completed tasks at various times throughout the semester. The tasks are developed by the instructor and attempt to assess all four domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). The

tasks align to the curriculum and are an extension of what the students are doing in class on homework assignments and in-class exams.

Portfolios benefit both the instructors and the students in the Intensive Russian course. Portfolios benefit students by giving them more opportunities to not only have contact with the language but to provide evidence of their abilities outside of class, homework, and exams. Through portfolios instructors are able to better assess each individual student and to modify their teaching if needed. With class sizes of fifteen to twenty students it is difficult for students to get individualized attention and feedback from the instructor and it is difficult for an instructor to accurately assess a student's abilities with such large class numbers and short amount of time spent in the classroom. Portfolios extend the classroom for the students and they allow educators to provide students individualized feedback, which is beneficial for students and teachers at all levels.

CONCLUSION

The Intensive Russian instructional format is a new endeavor at the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Because there has only been one course taught using this method in the Russian program, empirical data is needed to determine both effectiveness of the method and data is needed to assist in identifying any gaps that may exist in the current method.

This study seeks to offer empirical data on the Intensive Method used in the Russian program. This study seeks to identify any gaps that may exist in the learning process and will make suggestions for further research and suggested modifications to the Intensive Russian course at the University of Texas of Austin.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter will explain the methodology of the study and provide explanations for why that methodology was chosen. First, the research questions will be presented, followed by the hypotheses. Next, relevant background information about the study will be given. General procedures for administering both the self-assessment, by means of an e-portfolio, and computer-based summative assessment will be discussed. Information about the participants for the study will be provided. The participants completed a survey that provides information about their educational and personal backgrounds, including previous foreign language study. Participants completed tasks in an e-portfolio system. The development of these tasks will be explained. In short, the instructor worked with the participants to provide formative feedback regarding the participants' work; this process will be explained. The participants participated in a self-assessment (?) that covered the domains of reading, listening, and writing; the use of this instrument also will be explained.

BACKGROUND

Public education has been marginalized and under threat due to the fiscal crises of the last half decade. At the same time education has turned to a standards-based system, which has forced teachers of foreign languages to reach higher measurable standards with fewer resources, and therefore find ways to adapt. The adaptations have come in the form of both instructional and curriculum changes, as well as changes in the way educators assess foreign language abilities of learners. Educators in primary, secondary, and post-secondary education have been forced to teach more learners in a shorter period of time as well as provide evidence of learner progress.

Traditionally foreign language classes at institutes of higher education have an average enrollment of twelve to fifteen students. For decades learners grew accustomed to learning in this environment and educators have developed their instruction, curriculum, and assessment around this number of learners. However, due to fiscal issues, foreign language programs at most institutes of higher education in the United States have been forced to change their policies and procedures.

Foreign language programs at the University of Texas at Austin are viewed as some of the most respected and innovative programs in the United States. In an era when language departments are being folded into larger departments of modern languages, the foreign language departments at the University of Texas at Austin continue to enjoy some sort of autonomy. However, budget cuts and faculty depletion have left many foreign language departments, deeply affected by the budget cuts, to reconsider their teaching methodology.

Numerous departments have moved to an intensive method of teaching foreign languages. At the University of Texas at Austin, the Arabic language program in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies was the first language to adopt an intensive method of teaching. The French language program and the Italian language program in the Department of French and Italian was the next department to make a complete switch to an intensive method of teaching. Most recently the Russian language program at the University of Texas at Austin, after a two-year pilot period, decided to make the switch to an intensive model of teaching for all of their lower-level Russian language classes starting during the 2013 fall semester. The switch to an intensive model was a move of practicality for the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies. Diminishing faculty numbers and budget cuts made it difficult to offer the amount of sections of Russian

language previously offered. The intensive model allows the department to offer fewer classes while keeping enrollment numbers the same or even higher.

The Intensive Russian class meets six hours per week in class. Per each hour spent in class, students are expected to spend a minimum of two hours working with the language outside of the classroom. The in-class time is meant to maximize communication so the students must spend time outside of class learning the vocabulary and the grammar before coming to class. If students are prepared, the class will allow for maximum learning by allowing all learners to communicate using the vocabulary and grammar they have previously learned.

A key element in the intensive method is assessment. The students in the Intensive Russian class are required to take six exams per semester as well as compile a portfolio.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions presented here grow out of gaps in the literature discussed in Chapter 2. The research questions for this study, as outlined in Chapter 1, were:

1. Do learners' self-assessments align to what they actually score on a proficiency-based summative assessment?
2. Do language learners truly understand their own functional language abilities?
3. Do portfolios give us an accurate indication of learners' proficiency?

HYPOTHESES

This study was conducted with the following hypotheses in mind:

1. Results of self-assessments that are connected to a proficiency-based portfolio system are fairly accurate in regards to aligning to results of computer-based summative assessment.

2. When guided by an educator and given specific guidelines that allow deeper understanding of learning, language learners can understand their own functional language abilities well.

3. Proficiency-based portfolios are an accurate indicator of learners' language proficiency, when the portfolios are guided by both the learner and the educator.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

The group of participants for this study consisted of nine undergraduate students at the University of Texas at Austin. Three of the students were females while the remaining six students were males. Their ages ranged from age eighteen to age twenty-one. Eight of the nine students were native speakers of English while one student was a native speaker of Spanish, born and educated in Mexico. One of the nine students had a documented learning disability, namely dyslexia. All nine of the participants had experience learning a foreign language before enrolling in the Russian language course. One of the students had studied English (the native Spanish speaker), two students had studied German in high school, two students had studied French in high school, and the remaining four students had studied Spanish in high school. Previous language study is more common now than before, as most states require two years of foreign language study in high school.

INSTRUMENTATION

Three instruments were used during this study. The major instrument used was an e-portfolio platform that was used for both the self-assessment and the portfolio assessment portion of this study. A computer-based proficiency exam was used as the summative assessment tool in this study. The third instrument used was a set of unit tests connected to the textbook used in the Intensive Russian class.

All of the instruments used during the course of this study are connected to, and aligned with, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The textbook used in class to align tasks to the curriculum for the e-portfolio is also in conformity with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The in-class exams are aligned with the textbook, and therefore with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines as well. The summative assessment used at the end of the two-semester sequence is produced by ACTR and is also aligned to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

E-portfolio

For this study, an e-portfolio platform, iCAN®, was used for the self-assessment and portfolio assessment aspect of the study. iCAN®, developed by Avant Assessment, LLC, is a web-based e-portfolio platform that has pre-loaded can-do statements based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The can-do statements cover levels Novice through Superior on the ACTFL scale.

Although education management systems such as Blackboard® and Canvas® have the ability to be used as e-portfolios, platforms such as iCAN® are specifically built as e-portfolios. iCAN® allows for storage of learner data and gives the educator the ability to provide feedback directly into the system. A platform such as iCAN® was specifically chosen for this study because of the pre-loaded can-do statements, the storage ability, and the ability it gives educators and learners to communicate within the system itself.

iCAN® allows educators to develop tasks connected to can-do statements. A learner is required to provide evidence of their abilities based on the tasks. Learners provide evidence through numerous different media, such as audio files, video files, and text files. iCAN® allows for both educators and learners to store a large amount of data

within the platform itself. Another feature of iCAN® that was used for this study to collect participant information is a learner biography page where learners can input information about any previous language study.

The portfolio portion of iCAN® was used for both the portfolio and self-assessment aspects of this study. Learners incorporated numerous assigned tasks into their portfolios. The learners were able to self-assess themselves by completing educator-assigned tasks when they were able. But learners were also able to self-assess themselves by developing their own tasks for non-assigned ‘I can’ statements.

Standardized Exam

For this study, the American Councils of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) Prototype AP® Russian Examination was used as the standardized assessment measure. Although this particular assessment was developed for secondary-school students of Russian, items were field tested among college-level American students of Russian. In order to set target levels, data from study abroad programs ran by ACTR were used to estimate the proficiency-based level of university students at different points in their language education. For the most part, students with at least two or three years of study were used in target settings.

Items on the AP exam measure learner achievement through proficiency-based tasks that are based upon the ACTFL proficiency guidelines in levels from Novice-Low through Superior.

Unit Tests

Exams were given every two to three weeks in the Intensive Russian course. Each exam covered two units in the textbook. The exams align with objectives outlined at the beginning of each unit in the textbook. The objectives align to the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines and National Standards. In total, twelve in-class exams were given over the two-semester period, which this study covers. As the course instructor, I graded the unit tests using keys made in collaboration with other members of the faculty at the University of Texas.

Items on the unit tests measure learner achievement through proficiency-based tasks that are based upon the ACTFL proficiency guidelines in levels from Novice-Low through Intermediate-Mid.

PROCEDURES

Study participants were recruited from an Intensive Russian language course at the University of Texas during the fall semester of 2011 and the spring semester of 2012. They signed consent forms. At the beginning of the first semester, students completed a questionnaire about their language learning background within the e-portfolio system.

At the beginning of the first semester the instructor held a tutorial with the students to demonstrate how to use the e-portfolio system. Students also had access to online tutorials and websites developed to assist the students with using the e-portfolio platform. In cooperation with Avant Assessment, LLC, I handled any technical issues with the e-portfolio platform.

Over the course of the year, students completed an average of one portfolio assignment per week for thirty weeks. The students did not have portfolio assignments every week or may have had more than one portfolio assignment during a given week. Deadlines were given to students on when they had to submit portfolio assignments using the e-portfolio platform, iCAN®. Not every portfolio assignment was required as students were able to self-assess their skills and complete assignments they believed possible, given their abilities.

I received email notifications each time a student submitted a portfolio assignment. Using the rubric attached to a specific portfolio task, the instructor evaluated the student's language samples. After I evaluated the sample he would provide elaborative feedback. The students would either need to resubmit another sample based on my comments or I would confirm the student's ability to perform the task assigned. Simultaneously, over the course of the academic year, students took summative exams after every two units in the textbook.

At the end of the second semester, in May 2012, students took the ACTR Prototype AP® Russian Examination in a computer lab on campus at the University of Texas at Austin. The exam took three hours and was split up over a two-day period. The Internet-based exam was graded both by computers and human raters. Results of the exam were sent to the instructor. The following sections will discuss the process used with each instrument in greater detail.

Student Background Information

At the beginning of the first semester, students were asked to complete a short background survey about whether or not they have any knowledge of a language other than English.

Add New Experience

What languages do you speak/have you learned? *

English *

1. How long have you studied or spoken English? *

[Select Duration] *

2. What year did you begin studying/learning English? *

3. Where do you mostly learn English? *

[Select One] *

4. Does a family member or relative speak this language? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Have you ever traveled to or lived in a country where English is spoken? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Have you participated in a language camp or intensive study program for English? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Do you participate in any online learning activities for English? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Do you write to or speak with English friends? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Do you listen to music, read books/magazines, or watch movies in English? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Cancel Save

Illustration 4.1: Student Biographic Information Page

The purpose of the biographic information page was to capture the students' previous experience with language learning. Studies have shown that previous study of a language can lead to success in learning subsequent languages (Eisenstein, 1980). The biographical information page is completed by the student and stored in their e-portfolio. I had access to this information after the students entered information.

E-portfolio

As stated before, the e-portfolio platform used was iCAN®. iCAN® comes preloaded with can-do statements based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Before each semester began, I worked with the curriculum and the textbook to plan out the course for the semester. While planning out the course, I utilized the pre-loaded can-do

statements to assign portfolio assignments, which correspond to the material covered during the course.

I produced forty-four tasks connected to can-do statements over the thirty-week study. Students were required to complete thirty tasks over the course of the two-semester course. Students were also encouraged to complete non-assigned tasks outside of the thirty required tasks. The instructor required thirty tasks for practical reasons, as it made sure the students would attempt to use the self-assessment and take the process seriously. The can-do statements chosen covered Novice-Intermediate Mid, following the ACTFL levels covered in class. Although tasks were created in all four domains (reading, writing, listening and speaking), only tasks for reading, writing, and listening were used in this study. Speaking was not assessed due to lack of fiscal resources to accurately assess speaking.

The process used to utilize the e-portfolio in this study included the following steps: 1) As the instructor, I chose a can-do statement; 2) I built a task for the can-do statement to elicit language samples; 3) I attached a rubric to the task (always visible to the student); 4) I published the task; 5) the student saw published can-do statements with associated task;. 6) the students chose a can-do statement; 7) the student provided evidence of their ability to complete the task in the foreign language; 8) I assessed the student's submission against the rubric and the ACTFL-based can-do statement; 9) I offered elaborative feedback; and 10) based on my feedback, the student may have needed to resubmit evidence; 11) I reassessed the resubmitted evidence and either confirmed the self-assessment of requested yet another submission; and 12) the learner was able to add the validated task to their e-portfolio. The flowchart below shows the process and the above steps are explained in greater detail.

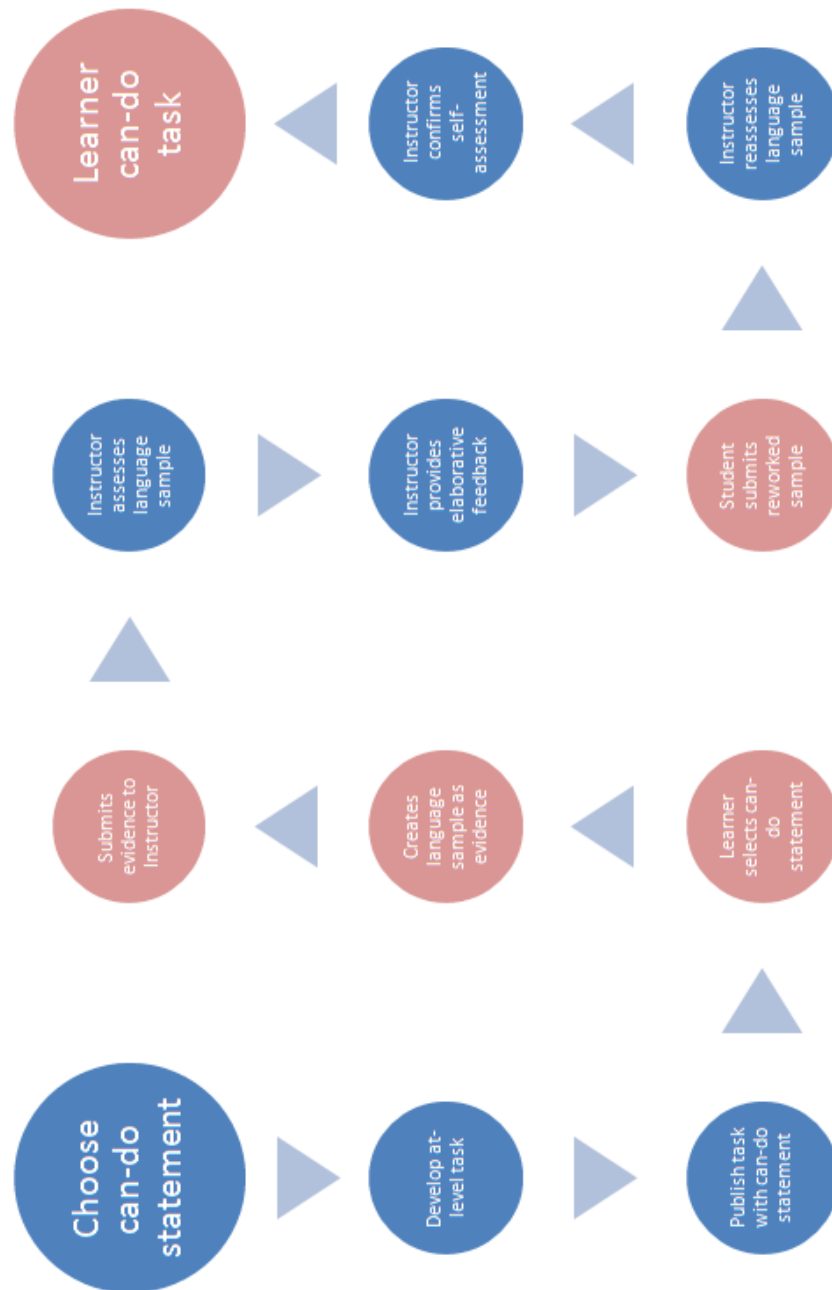


Figure 4.1: Flowchart of Self-Assessment Process

Step 1: I would find a can-do statement appropriate for the lesson the class was working on in that week of the semester. Based on the can-do statement, I requested language samples in specific media. I was able to ask for language samples in the form of audio samples (recorded directly into the system or loaded from the student's computer), writing samples (text typed directly into the system or loaded from the student's computer), or video samples (loaded from the student's computer).

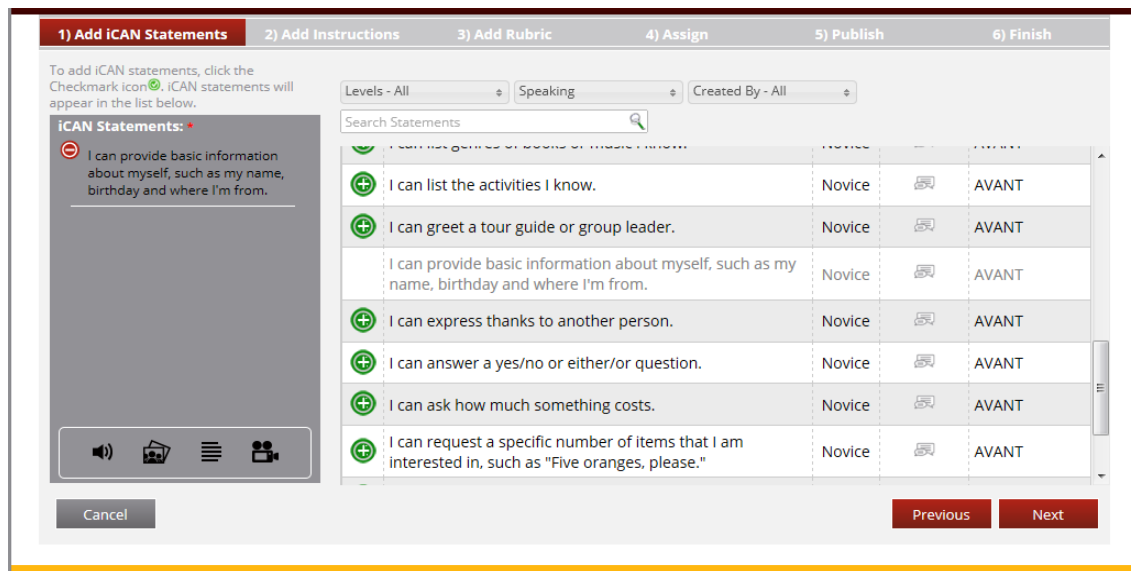


Illustration 4.2: The can-do statements can be filtered by level and domain.

As stated before, I produced tasks for forty-four statements but students were only required to complete thirty of the forty-four tasks. This means that students were not expected to attempt tasks above the levels covered in class. Students also had the ability to, and were encouraged to, complete tasks outside of the forty-five instructor-made tasks.

resulting in an average Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha > .84$, which constitutes good internal consistency.

For most of the tasks I did not require a specific amount of sentences or time spent for the language samples. There were a few for which I did specify lengths; these were tasks similar to task the students had on homework or on exams. If students submitted inadequate language samples I provided feedback for the students to resubmit longer language samples.

Step 3: After developing the task, I needed to attach a grading rubric to the task. The rubric was useful for both me, the instructor, as well as for the student to understand on what criteria the task was being judged. For all of the tasks, for all domains, the General Language Production Rubric (see the following page) was utilized. This allowed the student to see how their language abilities were assessed for each task.

At the beginning of the first semester I explained to the students how to use the rubric. I explained the different aspects of the rubric and exactly how it would be used to assess their language samples. Students had access to the rubric at all times during the course of semester.

General Language Production Rubric

----- Specific Language Focus Areas ----- Overall Communication Ability -----

Scale	Pronunciation	Vocabulary	Language Structure	Delivery/Fluency	Message/Function
6	approximates native speech	is used accurately with creative variety, showing cultural understanding	employs complex structures and speech going beyond memorization of base dialogue	is effortless and smooth, with natural speed, pause, and intonation	is communicated fully, and understood in its entirety and would be easily comprehended by someone unfamiliar to the speaker or who is an unsympathetic interlocutor
5	is mostly correct with few glides or flams	is accurate but has only slight variation	employs consistent and accurate use of language structures with only minor errors	is smooth and mostly natural, with very few, pause, and or intonation errors	is communicated and generally understood and could be comprehended by someone familiar to the speaker or the speaker's native language. (sympathetic interlocutor)
4	is slightly influenced by first language with several flams	is appropriate, follows sample with few exceptions	employs mostly accurate use of language with some minor errors	has some unnatural pauses, slightly choppy due to intonation and or speed errors	is generally understood and could be mostly comprehended by someone familiar to the speaker. Minor errors occur in several categories that may cause some confusion
3	shows strong influence of first language with some major flams	is relatively simple with some word choice errors	demonstrates inconsistency with the language and has some major errors	has occasional halting and or fragmentation due to extended pause, there may also be many intonation errors	is somewhat understood by someone familiar to the speaker and is somewhat confusing because of the number of errors. Communication needs to happen at the vocabulary level
2	is dominated by first language with many major flams	is limited and or often incorrect	has many errors in language structures which cause communication break down	is halting and fragmentary with many unnatural pauses and intonation errors	is difficult to understand even by someone familiar to the speaker speaker's native language and is confusing because of the number of errors primarily with pronunciation and syntax
1	severely interferes with comprehension	is very limited and inaccurate, with use of English words in place of the target language	has little control or understanding of the structure(s) of the language	is very halting and fragmented, with excessive unnatural pauses and intonation errors	is incomprehensible even to someone familiar to the speaker speaker's native language

Illustration 4.4: The General Language Production Rubric used for the tasks in the e-portfolio.

Step 4: While building tasks that align to the syllabus before the semester began, I was able to assign a publish date for the tasks. If needed, I could change the publish date and modify the task before it was published to the students' e-portfolio. This made the portfolios more manageable for me during the course of the semester.

The screenshot shows a web interface for publishing a task. At the top, there is a navigation bar with six steps: 1) Add iCAN Statements, 2) Add Instructions, 3) Add Rubric, 4) Assign, 5) Publish (which is highlighted in red), and 6) Finish. Below this is a red header bar with the word 'Publish' in white. The main content area has a light gray background. On the left, there are five input fields: 'Due Date: *' with the value '04/30/2013', 'Time Due (00:00):' which is empty, 'Display Date:' with the value '04/23/2013', 'Task Points:' which is empty, and 'Estimated Time to Complete:' with the value '5 minutes'. On the right, there is instructional text: 'Save as Unpublished saves the task to the Task list on the Manage page and is not visible to the students. When you are ready for the students to view the Task, click on the Edit button that is located next to each Task name on the Manage Task list and you will be taken to the Assign page. If you do not need to change the assignees, click the Next button to go to the Publish page. Click the **Publish Task** button to change the Task to Published which makes it visible to your students.' At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'Cancel' (gray), 'Previous' (red), and 'Save As Unpublished' (red). To the right of 'Save As Unpublished' is a red button labeled 'Publish Task'.

Illustration 4.5: The instructor can assign a date for the task to be published.

As the instructor, I also had the option to assign tasks to different users or groups of users. During the course of this study, however, I assigned the same tasks to all students involved in the study.

Step 5: Once the tasks were published, the students had a certain amount of time to provide language samples and submit the assignment. The first step in this process for the student was to access the e-portfolio and find the lists of tasks assigned to them.

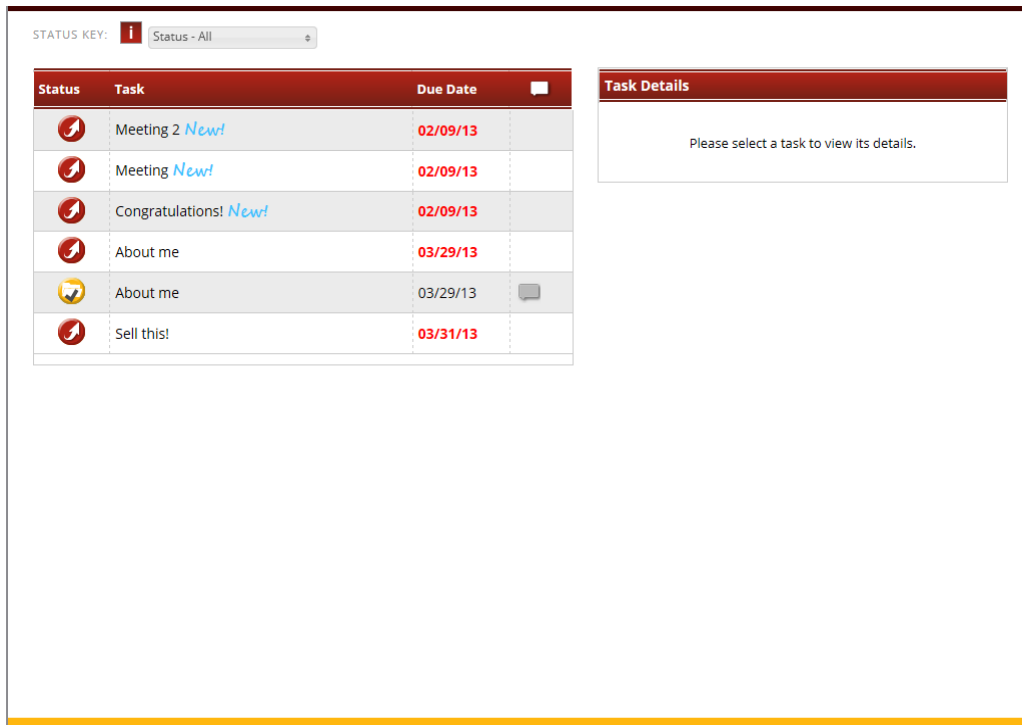


Illustration 4.6: The student view of the list of tasks.

Students could see the tasks assigned, as well as tasks they had previously completed. This allowed students to keep track of how many required assignments remained. The students always had access to the rubric against which the task was graded.

Step 6: The student chose a task to complete from the list of assigned tasks. The student was able to see the domain of the can-do statement. The student was also able to see what type of media they were able to submit as evidence of their ability to complete the assigned task.

Status +	Task	Due Date	
	About me	03/29/13	
	Meeting 2 <i>New!</i>	02/09/13	
	Congratulations! <i>New!</i>	02/09/13	
	Meeting <i>New!</i>	02/09/13	
	About me	03/29/13	
	Sell this!	03/31/13	
	About me	04/07/13	
	I can identify words related to common food or drink items.		
	I can understand a question regarding my personal information, such as my age, date of birth or place of birth.		
	I can understand simple questions and statements about my local environment, such as the weather or characteristics of my community.		
	I can understand simple questions and statements about interests and daily activities.		

Task Details

Task: About me
Nick Gossett

Status: Assigned Goal

OVERDUE - 04/07/13 at 11:30PM

After completing this task

- I can provide basic information about myself, such as my name, birthday and where I'm from.

Instructions

You just arrived in to passport control in the airport in Moscow. The immigration officer is looking at your documents and wants to know some information about you. Take a few minutes to tell the immigration officer about yourself - your name, occupation, birthdate, and where you are from.

Available Points: 10 points.

Your score was based on the following rubric

Evidence

Add to Evidence List
Submit for Evaluation

Illustration 4.7: Student view of an assigned task.

As part of the self-assessment, the students also had the option of finding can-do statements without assigned tasks and providing evidence of language ability for those can-do statements. The ability of students to choose their own can-do statements is comparable with previous studies on self-assessment. However, the student was still required to submit a language sample as evidence and have that sample assessed by the instructor.

ACTFL

Levels - All

















Domains - All

Created By - All

Search Statements

To add a goal and self-evaluate, click on the green Add icon . The Goals and Self-Evaluation table will automatically be updated.

638 iCAN Statements | page 1 of 32

Statement	Domain	Created By
 I can recognize familiar words used when someone introduces him or herself to a group of people.	 AVANT	
 I can understand words for common professions when spoken aloud.	 AVANT	
 I can understand basic greetings and salutations, such as "Hello" and "Thank you."	 AVANT	
 I can recognize familiar words when a peer introduces himself or herself to me.	 AVANT	
 I can tell if someone is speaking to me in the language I'm learning.	 AVANT	
 I can understand some familiar questions about myself, such as name, age or where I am from.	 AVANT	
 I can tell if a production or program I see is in the language I'm learning.	 AVANT	
 I can recognize familiar words in a dialogue when they are spoken clearly and repeated more than once.	 AVANT	

Goals and Self-Evaluation













		I can understand a question regarding my personal information, such as my age, date of birth or place of birth.	
		I can identify words related to common food or drink items.	
		I can understand simple questions and statements about interests and daily activities.	
		I can understand simple questions and statements about my local environment, such as the weather or characteristics of my community.	

Illustration 4.8: Student view of self-assessment can-do statements.

Step 7: Students completed a task based on the instructor-built task and the type of evidence requested by the instructor. The student used the directions for the task as a guide on what type of evidence to submit. Students were encouraged to be creative in producing a language sample. Once the student felt that they had sufficient enough evidence to self-assess their abilities to perform the task, they submitted evidence and marked the task as ‘can-do’.

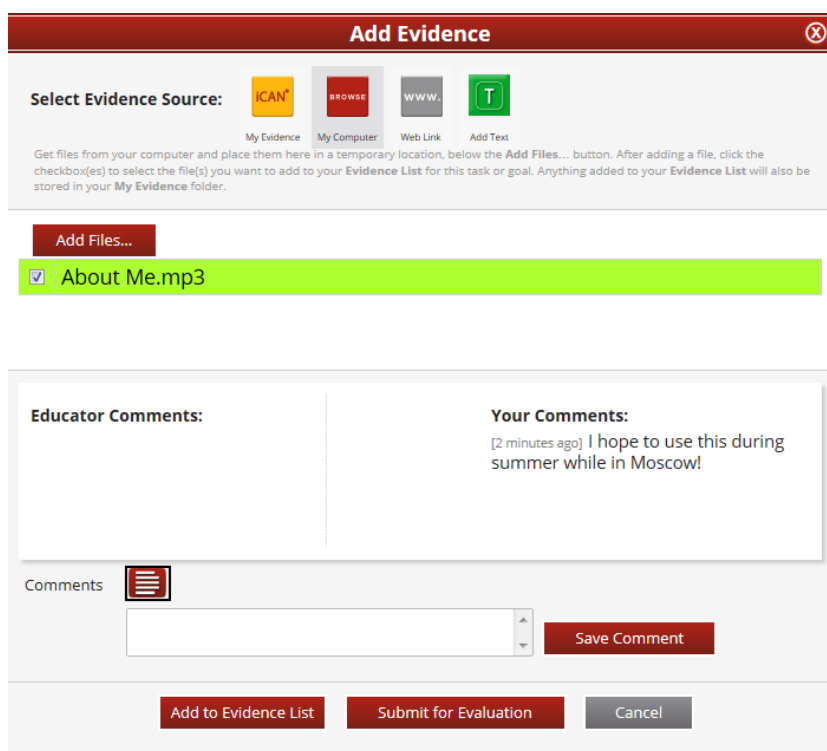


Illustration 4.9: Student view of task submission page.

Evidence could be submitted directly into the platform from the student's computer or from their online file storage folder located within the platform itself. All evidence was stored on a secure server to which only the students and the instructor had access.

Step 8: As the instructor, I set aside a time period of fifteen to twenty minutes each day to check portfolio assignments and offer feedback. E-mails were sent from the system to alert me that a student had submitted an assignment. I assessed each student's submission against the rubric and the ACTFL-based can-do statement connected to each specific task.

Evaluate Evidence

Task: About me

Submitted on 3/29/2013 9:30:49 PM

Evidence Submitted
Evidence Source:
 About Me

Rubric: General Language Production

Your Comments:

Student Comments:
 [2 days ago] I hope to use this during summer while in Moscow!

Comments

Save Comment

Excuse Revise iCAN Verified Cancel

Illustration 4.10: Instructor view of student submission.

I was able to see all files associated with the submission as well as any comments submitted by the student. Students were able to pose questions and offer in-depth explanations about their submissions, if needed.

Step 9: After I assessed the student's submission against the rubric and the can-do statement, I offered formative feedback. Formative feedback should include the following: (a) address the topic; (b) address the response; (c) discuss particular errors; (d) provide worked examples; and, (e) give gentle guidance,

Sample feedback:

1. You covered the information needed for the topic of introducing yourself. But, you should think about talking about what you study.
2. Your recording is pretty good, but I think you can do better. There are some minor aspects you can work on to really improve your ability to introduce yourself.
3. You used the incorrect word for 'student' and the year of your birth is not correct.
4. Go to this link and listen to this woman introduce herself - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOAxKgZNIWk>
5. I suggest you look at the exercises on Day 4 of the homework and on page 76 in the textbook for a little more practice with introductions.

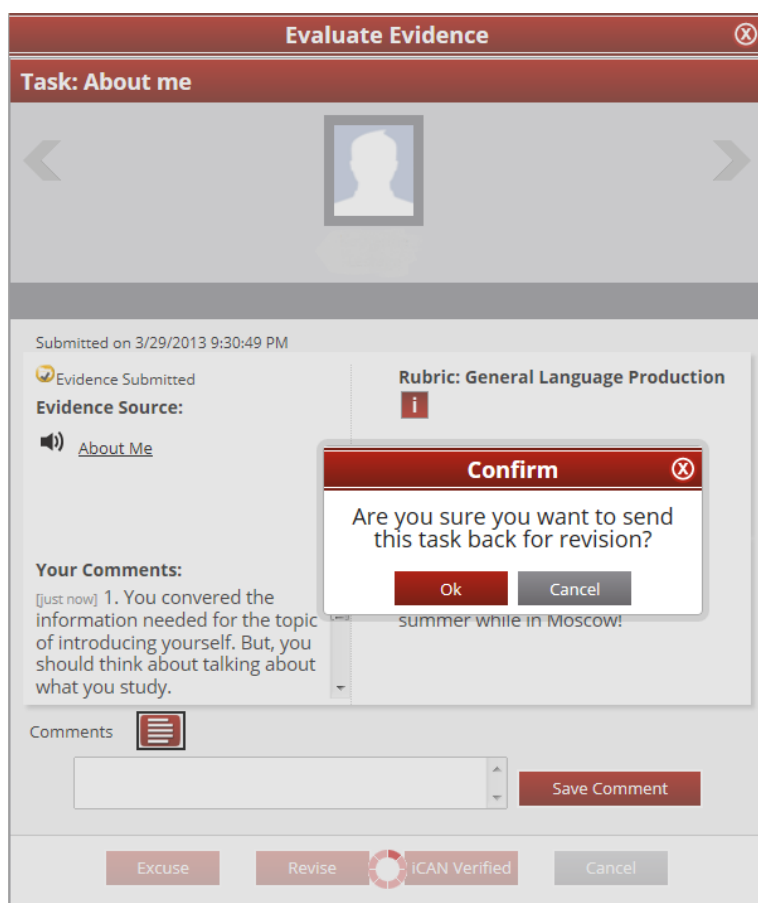


Illustration 4.11: Instructor feedback and request for revisions.

I either offered formative feedback or confirmed the student's self-assessment on each task the student submitted. If I provided formative feedback, the student was required to make revisions and resubmit their language sample. I would confirm the student's self-assessment only after the student submitted an acceptable language sample for a given task.

The screenshot displays a student's e-portfolio interface with several panels:

- Task List Panel:** A table with columns for Status, Task, and Due Date. It shows two tasks: "About me" with a due date of 03/29/13, and another "About me" task with a due date of 04/07/13.
- Task Comments Panel:** A section for comments. It includes "Educator Comments" (e.g., "1. You covered the information needed for the topic of introducing yourself. But, you should think about talking about what you study. 2. Your recording") and "Your Comments" (e.g., "I hope to use this during summer while in Moscow!").
- Task Details Panel:** A panel for the selected task "About me" by Nick Gossett. It shows the status as "Revise" with a timestamp of 04/07/2013 at 07:36 PM. It includes instructions for the task: "I can provide basic information about myself, such as my name, birthday and where I'm from." and "After completing this task... You just arrived in to passport control in the airport in Moscow. The immigration officer is looking at your documents and wants to know some information about you. Take a few minutes to tell the immigration officer about yourself - your name, occupation, birthdate, and where you are from."
- Rubric Panel:** A panel showing the available points (10 points) and a note that the score was based on the following rubric.

Illustration 4.12: Student view of instructor's informative feedback.

Step 10: Students received notification from the portfolio platform when the instructor asked for revisions. Students were also able to reply to the my comments directly into the e-portfolio. Students could ask for further clarification or resubmit language samples for me to assess.

Step 11: Once the students resubmitted, I reassessed their language samples. If the samples were adequate enough evidence that the student could successfully perform the task then I would confirm the self-assessment. If the language samples were still insufficient evidence of the student's ability to perform the task, I offered more feedback and waited for resubmission. This process would continue until the student provided adequate language samples.

Step 12: After I validated the student's self-assessment, they were able to add the completed task and can-do statement to their portfolio. This helped them build up their portfolio and see where they were as far as their goals.

SAMPLE TASKS

Writing

Writing tasks attempt to elicit language samples that can provide evidence of a learner's writing abilities in a foreign language. While creating writing tasks, the educator needs to consider exactly what type of writing evidence they want to elicit from the learner. The most important aspect of writing tasks is that the tasks should elicit written text in the target language at the proper level of difficulty. In regard to difficulty of producing tasks, writing tasks are similar to speaking tasks in that they are easy to produce due to the fact that eliciting language samples are fairly straightforward.

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can label some familiar things.

Task:

Practice using the vocabulary you know! Take some time labeling objects in your apartment or dorm room with sticky notes. You can provide evidence by filming your room with items labeled or labeling a picture of your room. Upload the picture or video into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Low level of proficiency a writer should be able to transcribe isolated and very high-frequency words. A writer at the Novice Low level can also reproduce a number of isolated and high-frequency words from memory, if given adequate time. This task does not ask the learner

to produce any complex language; rather just write out simple memorized words that are used daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider the frequency of the words used by the learner and look for proper spelling and letter reproduction. The Cyrillic alphabet presents some difficulties to Russian language students who are native speakers of a language that utilizes the Latin alphabet and this will be the major hindrance to their writing abilities at this level.

Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can write about myself using learned phrases and memorized expressions.

Task:

Practice using the vocabulary you know! Write a short description of your family. Talk about their occupations and where they live. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Mid level of proficiency a writer should be able to reproduce a fair number of words and phrases in context. A writer at the Novice Mid level should be able to exhibit a high degree of accuracy on familiar topics using formulaic language. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just write out simple memorized formulaic

phrases that are used daily in the classroom (e.g. I am a student, My mother is a teacher, etc.). The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the formulaic language used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The verb ‘to be’ does not exist in the present tense in the Russian language. The lack of the present tense of the verb ‘to be’ is especially problematic for a native speaker of English learning Russian at this level.

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can write a short note using phrases and simple sentences.

Task:

You just arrived in Moscow! Take some time to write your parents an email (8-10 lines) letting them know you are in Moscow and a little about your first impressions of the city and the Russian people. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice High level of proficiency a writer should be able to produce simple sentences using learned vocabulary and structures. A writer at the Novice High level should be able to express themselves, but only within the context in which the language was learned. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just to write out simple sentences using language in context the learner uses daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the context in which the language is used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The learner cannot be expected to write with native level accuracy and so the educator must allow for variances in word order as long as the meaning is understood. Word order is not intuitive for a native speaker of English learning Russian at this level.

Intermediate Low

Can-do Statement:

I can express my opinion on familiar topics using a series of sentences with some details.

Task:

A friend in Russia wants to know about your life at school. Write an email (12-15 lines) describing what you like and dislike about your life as a student. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Low level of proficiency a writer should be able to produce simple sentences mostly in the present tense using learned vocabulary and structures. A writer at the Intermediate Low level should be able to express themselves, but only within highly predictable content areas using sentences that are repetitive in nature. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just write out simple sentences using the present tense, simple structures, and language in context the learner uses daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the context in which the language is used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The learner cannot be expected to write with native level accuracy and so the educator must allow for variances in word order, mistakes in punctuation and spelling as long as the meaning is understood.

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can write a short report on a familiar topic using connected sentences with many details.

Task:

You've been asked by the student newspaper at your university in Moscow to write a short article (15-20 lines) about your university campus or hometown. The editor would like you to discuss monuments or buildings dedicated to someone. He wants his Russian readers to see the similarities and differences between Russian and American culture in this aspect. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Mid level of proficiency a writer should be able to produce simple sentences using mostly the present tense, but that may also contain references to other time frames. A writer at the Intermediate Mid level should be able to express themselves, but only with discrete sentences that may fail to connect with other surrounding sentences. The writing style of a learner at the Intermediate Mid level resembles oral discourse in its organization and

context. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just write out simple sentences using the present tense, possibly the future and past tense, simple structures, and language in context the learner uses daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the context in which the language is used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The learner cannot be expected to write with native level accuracy and so the educator must allow for mistakes with verb tenses and aspect as well issues with sentence organization and the overall flow of the piece.

Listening

Listening tasks, in contrast to writing tasks, do not attempt to elicit language samples that can provide evidence of a learner's listening abilities in a foreign language. Instead, listening tasks must illustrate that the listener understands the context of the audio or video connected to the task. In regards to difficulty of producing tasks, listening tasks are more difficult than speaking and writing tasks as the educator must consider the responses to the tasks ahead of time. However, this allows for less individualization of learner responses.

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the difference between a statement and a question.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording. While listening, place a 'Q' or an 'S' next to each number. The 'Q' represents that utterance you heard is a question while the 'S'

represents that the utterance you heard is a statement. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed checklist directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor produces or finds a pre-made audio recording consisting of ten separate spoken phrases. The phrases are either simple questions or simple statements. The instructor includes a word file with a checklist or pastes it directly into the prompt within the system.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Low level of proficiency a listener should be able to recognize isolated or very high-frequency words and show virtually no comprehension of any kind of spoken message. This task does not ask the learner to recognize any words, nor does it require the listeners to comprehend any language, rather just the intonation being used. The Russian language, like many other languages, differentiates between questions and statements by the use of both lexicon and intonation. This is a very important distinction for a Novice Low listener of a language to be able make. Intonation is taught in the first few weeks of the Intensive Russian class and the learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a listener at the Novice Low level shows virtually no comprehension of the spoken language being studied. The listener at this level should not require understanding the context of the spoken language in the sample.

Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can understand simple words and phrases about daily activities.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording. While listening, put the number of the word that you hear in the recording next the picture that matches that word. Upload the attached word file as evidence.

OR

Listen to the following audio recording. While listening, video record yourself pointing out the object you hear in the recording. Upload the attached audio file as evidence.

Materials:

The instructor produces or finds a pre-made audio recording consisting of ten separate spoken words associated with a learner's daily life. The words are high-frequency and used in the classroom. The instructor includes a word file with a set of ten pictures that match the words spoken on the recording.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Mid level of proficiency a listener can recognize isolated or very high-frequency words. Listeners at the Novice Mid level can understand basic linguistic structures one phrase at a time. This task asks the listener to recognize separate individual high-frequency words. These are words taught in the first months of the Intensive Russian class and the learner hears the same group of words on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a listener at the

Novice Mid level shows very little comprehension of the spoken language and can only recognize high-frequency words. The educator should be sure to not confuse the learner with tasks at this level.

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can understand most directions or instructions in a familiar setting when expressed in short conversations.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording from a voicemail. The voicemail is from your friend that wants you to meet them on Saturday. While listening, follow the directions and find the location where your friend wants meet. Draw a line from where you begin and circle the location where your friend wants to meet. Upload the attached word file as evidence.

Materials:

The instructor produces or finds a pre-made audio recording of a person giving simple directions to a location. The instructor includes a word file with a small map consisting of street names and landmarks mentioned in the recording. The map should also include streets not mentioned in the recording to challenge the listener and make the task more authentic. Actual locations and maps should be used where available.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice High level of proficiency a listener should start to be able to understand simple sentence-length speech. The listener still requires some type of context or extralinguistic support (e.g. visuals) to understand the meaning of the passage. This task provides the listener with extralinguistic support through the use of a map. This task requires the listener to understand short

simple sentences connected to the visual that are standardized ways of giving directions in Russian. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a listener at the Novice High level continues to struggle with understanding the spoken language even with the assistance of extralinguistic support materials. Because listeners continue to struggle at the Novice High level, the educator should allow for slight variations in answers on tasks such as these.

Intermediate Low

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the main idea and some details in messages and announcements on familiar topics.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording from an announcement heard on the radio. Listen to the recording twice. While listening to the recording the second time, answer the questions about the recording in English. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor produces or finds a pre-made audio recording of a concert announcement heard on the radio or television. The audio should include information about the date of the event, the location of the event, and the cost of entrance into the event. The instructor includes a word file with a number of questions related to the recording. The questions should require the listener to comprehend the main idea and a few details about the event.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Low level of proficiency a listener should be able to understand sentence-length speech spoken very slowly and one utterance at a time. This task requires the listener to have a global understanding of the passage as well as a few major details accessible to a listener at the Intermediate Low level. Learners perform similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a listener at the Intermediate Low level understands sentence-length speech spoken very slowly and one utterance at a time. The educator should be careful not to ask about details that are too specific and that require more than sentence-level understanding in the passage.

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the main idea and many details on familiar topics of personal interest presented through media.

Task:

Watch the following video taken from a news report in Russia. Watch the video twice. While watching the video the second time, answer the questions about the video in English. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor finds a video recording of a news event that is common in both American and Russian culture. The video recording should tell about the event and give numerous details about the event. The instructor includes a word file with a number of

questions related to the recording. The questions should require the listener to comprehend the main idea and a numerous details about the event.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Mid level of proficiency a listener should be able to understand sentence-length speech spoken very slowly and one utterance at a time. In contrast to the Intermediate Low level, listeners at the Intermediate Mid level are able to understand language in a wider variety of contexts. This task requires the listener to have a global understanding of the passage as well as a few major and minor details accessible to a listener at the Intermediate Mid level. Learners perform similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a listener at the Intermediate Mid level understands sentence-length speech spoken slowly and one utterance at a time. The educator should be careful not to ask about details that are too specific: 1) details focused on language that is inaccessible to an Intermediate Mid listener; and 2) details that require more than sentence-level understanding in the passage.

Reading

Reading tasks, similar to listening tasks, do not attempt to elicit the same type of language samples as a task in speaking or writing would. Tasks for speaking and writing can easily provide evidence of a learner's abilities in a foreign language. Instead, reading tasks must illustrate that the reader understands the context of a text connected to the task. In regards to difficulty of producing tasks, reading tasks are more difficult than speaking and writing tasks as the educator must consider the responses to the tasks ahead of time. However, this allows for less individualization of learner responses.

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can connect some words, phrases, or characters to their meanings.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains pictures of objects and matching words in Russian in a numbered word bank. Look at the pictures and put the number of the matching Russian word next to the object. Upload the attached word file as evidence.

Materials:

The instructor produces a word document with pictures of ten common objects and a numbered word bank with Russian words that match the pictures.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Low level of proficiency a reader should be able to recognize very few high-frequency words in the target language. For languages like Russian, where the text used is not a Latin-based script, the task of word recognition is even more difficult for a learner. This task only asks for the reader to recognize very high-frequency words used on both the homework and during class. Every word used in this task is a cognate; thus allowing for the reader to access the meaning of the word by recognizing the letters.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a reader at the Novice Low level shows virtually no comprehension of any written language. The educator should avoid difficult words and words that are not cognates with English as they are not usually accessible for a reader at the Novice Low level.

Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can recognize words on a list on familiar topics.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains a shopping list your host mother has given you. Answer the questions about the shopping list. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor produces a word document with a shopping list in Russian. The list contains different types of food and packages that the learner would understand at the Novice Mid level.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Mid level of proficiency a reader can recognize isolated or very high-frequency words as well as cognates. Readers at the Novice Mid level can understand basic linguistic structures one phrase at a time and often only after rereading the phrase more than once. This task asks the reader to recognize separate individual high-frequency words. These are words taught in the first months of the Intensive Russian class and the reader sees the same group of words on both homework assignments and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a reader at the Novice Mid level shows very little comprehension of the written language beyond cognates and high-frequency words, which are highly contextualized. The educator should be careful to not use tasks that require more than word-level understanding.

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can understand information I need on familiar topics.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains an email sent from your friend in Russia. Read the email and answer the questions below the email. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor produces a word document with an email message in Russian. The email is an invitation to a dinner party that is planned for the near future. Below the email there are questions about the content of the email.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice High level of proficiency a reader should start to be able to understand extremely simple sentence-length discourse. The reader still relies heavily on some type of context or extralinguistic support (e.g. visuals) to understand the meaning of a text at this level. This task provides the listener with extralinguistic support through the use of a map. This task requires the reader to understand short simple sentences connected to the visual and that are standardized ways of inviting friends to an event in Russian. The learner performs similar tasks both on homework assignments and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a reader at the Novice High level continues to struggle with understanding the written language even with the assistance of extralinguistic support materials. Because readers continue to struggle at the

Novice High level, the educator should allow for slight variations in answers on tasks such as these.

Intermediate Low

Can-do Statement:

I can understand messages in which the writer tells or asks me about familiar topics of interest.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains an email sent from your friend in Russia. Read the email and answer the questions below the email. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor produces a word document with an email message in Russian. The email contains information about a university event that is planned for the near future. Below the email there are questions about the content of the email.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Low level of proficiency a reader should be able to understand sentence-length text about personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal knowledge. Readers at the Intermediate Low level can understand texts with basic descriptions with occasional gaps in understanding of specific details. This task requires the listener to have a global understanding. This task requires the reader to understand short simple sentences that are standardized ways of describing an event in Russian. The learner performs similar tasks both on homework assignments and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a reader at the

Intermediate Low level understands sentence-length speech written in simple language about personal and social topics. The educator should be careful not to ask about details that are too specific and that require more than sentence-level understanding in the passage.

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the main idea and many details when reading for personal enjoyment.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains a listing of television shows on television with short descriptions of the shows. Read the television listing and chose one that you would be interested in watching! Answer the questions below the television listings. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor produces a word document with a listing of television shows and short descriptions. If the instructor can find a website from a television channel with the same type of information then that can be used as well. The word document contains a series of questions that can be used for any of the television programs.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Mid level of proficiency a reader should be able to understand short, non-complex texts. In contrast to the Intermediate Low level, listeners at the Intermediate Mid level are able to understand language in a wider variety of contexts and situations. This task requires the reader to have a global understanding of the passage as well as a few major details accessible to a

reader at the Intermediate Mid level. The learner performs similar tasks both on homework assignments and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider that a reader at the Intermediate Mid level understands short, non-complex texts. The educator should be careful not to ask about details that are too specific: 1) details focused on language that is inaccessible to an Intermediate Mid reader; and 2) details that require more than sentence-level understanding in the passage.

Speaking

Speaking tasks attempt to elicit language samples that can provide evidence of a learner's speaking abilities in a foreign language. While creating speaking tasks, the educator needed to consider exactly what type of speaking evidence they wanted to elicit from the learner. The most important aspect of speaking tasks is that the tasks should elicit speaking samples in the target language at the proper level of difficulty. In regard to difficulty of producing tasks, speaking tasks are similar to writing tasks in that they are easy to produce due to the fact that eliciting language samples are fairly straight forward.

Although speaking tasks were not included in the current study, learners were assigned speaking tasks as part of their overall portfolio grade. Descriptions of speaking tasks are presented here in order to offer a complete explanation of the self-assessment and portfolio process.

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can introduce myself.

Task:

The University of Texas is hosting a Russian scholar from Moscow State University. You have been invited to a welcome party for the scholar at the Littlefield House. Introduce yourself to the scholar. Tell him your name, occupation, and anything else about yourself you think that he would find interesting. Upload an audio file as evidence or record the audio directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Low level of proficiency a speaker has no real functional ability. A speaker at the Novice Low level, if given adequate time and cues, can exchange greetings and talk about themselves using familiar language. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just say simple memorized words and phrases that are used daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the learner's self-assessment, the educator must consider the evidence submitted by the learner. The educator must consider the frequency of the words used by the learner. At the Novice Low level the learner should not be expected to have native or even near-native pronunciation.

Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can express my likes and dislikes using words, phrases, and memorized expressions.

Task:

You just arrived in St. Petersburg and have been invited to a dinner at your new Russian friend's apartment. They have asked you to call them the day before to help make a shopping list for the party. They wanted you to tell them what foods and drink you like and don't like. You get their voicemail! Leave a message for your new friends telling them what food and drinks you like and don't like. Tell at least five things you like and five things you don't like to give them a little guidance when they go shopping! Upload an audio file as evidence or record the audio directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice Mid level of proficiency a speaker should be able to reproduce a fair number of memorized words and phrases in context. A speaker at the Novice Mid level may only be able to answer with two or three words at a time. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just say simple memorized formulaic phrases that are used daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the formulaic language used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The educator should allow for a fair amount of pauses in the speaker's language sample.

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can describe aspects of my daily life using phrases and simple sentences.

Task:

You are speaking with your Russian friend who studies with you at Moscow State University. They are asking you questions about your university. They want to know about the buildings and the departments at the University of Texas. Working with a partner, take turns playing the Russian student and the American student. Both students should upload an audio file as evidence or record the audio directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Novice High level of proficiency a speaker should be able to sustain short conversations consisting of simple sentences using learned vocabulary and structures. A speaker at the Novice High level should be able to express themselves, but only within the context in which the language was learned. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just use simple sentences utilizing language in context the learner uses daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the context in which the language is used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The learner cannot be expected to speak with native level accuracy and so the educator must allow for variances in word order as long as the meaning is understood. The learner may attempt to utilize features found at the Intermediate level, but they will be unable to maintain such a high level of language at the Novice High level.

Intermediate Low

Can-do Statement:

I can express my needs, wants, and plans using a series of sentences with some details.

Task:

You are speaking with your Russian friend who studies with you at Moscow State University. They are asking you questions about your plans for the summer break. Tell them where you will be going and what you will be doing over the summer break. Working with a partner, take turns playing the Russian student and the American student. Both students should upload an audio file as evidence or record the audio directly into the system.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Low level of proficiency a speaker should be able to handle uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. A speaker at the Intermediate Low level should be able to express themselves, but only within highly predictable topics necessary for survival in the target culture. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just produce simple sentences using the future tense, simple structures, and language in the context the learner uses daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the context in which the language is used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. The learner's pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax are still strongly influenced by their first language at the Intermediate Low level.

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can make a presentation on something I have learned using connected sentences with many details.

Task:

Prepare a presentation about the author of the book, which you are reading for this class. The presentation should be 5-7 minutes and can include slides and other support materials. Use this as practice for your final oral presentations in two weeks. Upload audio, video, or a combination of the two into the system as evidence.

Materials:

The instructor only provides instructions for this task.

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, at the Intermediate Mid level of proficiency a speaker should be able to successfully handle a variety of uncomplicated tasks in the various social situations. A speaker at the Intermediate Mid level should be able to express themselves, but only with discrete sentences that may fail to connect with other surrounding sentences. Although the speaker can use different tenses, they may have some difficulty with linking ideas using more than the present tense. This task does not ask the learner to produce any complex language; rather just write use simple sentences in the present tense, and possibly the future and past tense, simple structures,

and language in context the learner uses daily in the classroom. The learner performs similar tasks on both the homework and during class.

When validating the evidence submitted by the learner, the educator must consider the context in which the language is used and the accuracy of the constructions used by the learner. At the Intermediate Mid level, the learner's speech may contain pauses and self-corrections as they attempt to use appropriate language forms to express themselves.

Unit Tests

Every two weeks, students were given unit tests. The unit tests included sections on reading, writing, and listening. The instructor took exams produced by the book publisher, ACTR, and modified them based on material covered in the course of study. Test items aligned to portfolio tasks, which aligned to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The exams covered material up to ACTFL Intermediate Mid and the tasks elicited language production from ACTFL levels Novice-Intermediate Mid.

The listening sections of the exams consisted of pre-recorded audios of both dialogues and monologues. Each audio lasted between two to three minutes each and were played only two times during the exam. Students were required to answer questions related to the audio. The questions were always presented in English. During the first semester students answered the questions in English. However, during the second semester, students began answering questions in Russian.

Reading and writing sections of the exams required the students to understand prompts and respond in Russian. These tasks included dialogue completion, sentence building, and written responses to reading prompts. Students were required to answer all

reading and writing prompts in Russian. The unit tests used for this study were graded by the instructor.

Standardized Exam

At the end of the second semester the students involved in the study took a three-hour standardized Russian language test. The exam tested the students' Russian abilities in three domains: reading, writing and listening. The exam was delivered over the Internet and proctored in an on-campus computer lab by the course instructor. Students took the exam over a two-day period due to the length of the exam. The exam was split over two days for two reasons: 1) to align the testing window with the class schedule; and 2) to avoid tester fatigue.

The reading and listening sections required the students to respond to prompts. The items consisted of multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank items. The writing section required the students to complete dialogues. The reading and listening parts of the exam were machine scored. The writing part of the exam was scored by two human scorers.

The exam was produced by ACTR. ACTR assisted in administering the exam and offered technical support. ACTR provided the human scorers and provided results to the instructor. Examinees took the exam in a reserved computer lab on campus while their instructor was present to assist with any technical issues. Examinees were provided with paper to make notes as well as headphones for the listening section. The exam was timed and students were not allowed extra time.

STUDY ROLES

In this study, both the educator and the students played vital and active roles and were involved in each part of the process. The role the educator took in this study was based off of previous studies (Ross, 1998; Boud and Falchikova, 1989) and off of

research on self-assessment (Gipps, 1999; de Saint Leger, 2009), the intensive teaching method (Kitaigorodskaya, 1991) and formative assessment (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Heritage, 2010). Similarly, the student role in this study was based off of previous studies (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Boud and Falchikov, 1989; Blanche, 1990) and off of research on self-assessment (Blanche, 1989; Ross, 1998; de Saint Leger), formative assessment (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Heritage, 2010), and the intensive method of teaching (Kitaigorodskaya, 1991). These roles are described in depth below.

Role of the Educator and the Investigator

The educator was the sole investigator in the current study. As the sole investigator, the educator was responsible for the entire study and for the confidentiality of student data. Following Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot's work on ethnography, for this study the educator is also the investigator and is in the role as the participant-observer.

As Lawrence-Lightfoot points out, the observer as a willing and active participant must be written in as part of the story of the study (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997). Being both an observer and a participant gives the investigator a very interesting point of view on the study. The role I played as both the educator and the investigator in each part of the study is described in detail in this section.

Pre-study

The current study was developed based on previous studies and the gap that exists in the current research. As previously stated, technology is being integrated in every part of the education process. An area where there have been few research studies conducted is in the use of computer-based assessment tools in the foreign language classroom; specifically e-portfolios.

Portfolios are of specific interest to foreign language educators as they both allow for a holistic approach to assessment and extend the time a learner spends on the language outside of the classroom. The educator researched both traditional paper-based portfolios and e-portfolios in general and in the context of foreign language education.

Traditional paper-based portfolios have been used for over two decades to assess both learner and educator development during the course of study. In foreign language education, paper-based portfolios are associated with teacher training and development as well as showcasing learner abilities in a foreign language.

E-portfolios are popular in higher education as they allow for a learner to illustrate what they have learned in University in hopes of obtaining a job or furthering their academic career. Most studies on e-portfolios revolve around the use of e-portfolios in writing classes and teacher training courses.

Paper-based portfolios are more difficult to keep organized, allow for a very limited number of media for input of evidence, and require an extended amount of time for assessing the submitted evidence. In contrast, e-portfolios allow for the storage of massive amounts of data, they allow for input of evidence through numerous different media, and decrease the amount of time need for the assessment process by allowing both the educator and learner to communicate through the system.

In my role as the principal investigator for this study, I chose to utilize an e-portfolio as there are very few studies on e-portfolios. I also chose an e-portfolio due to the fact that students currently spend most of their time on the Internet and have grown up in the digital age. Because of this fact, the assumption was made that an e-portfolio would be relatively easy and intuitive for a student.

As the educator, I chose to use an e-portfolio for numerous reasons. I wanted a tool that could deliver and store a task-based self-assessment. I also wanted a tool where I

could extend the class outside of the classroom and provide guidance to my students at all times.

The iCAN system was specifically chosen due to the system's ability to allow instructor input of tasks and the feature which allows the instructor to deliver feedback directly into the system. iCAN allows the students and instructor to have a continuous running dialogue throughout the entire learning process.

Over the course of the two semesters preceding the current study I developed portfolio tasks and piloted them with students of Russian. Modifications were made to the tasks after initial submissions to ensure they were assessing the proper domain and outcome intended. After two semesters I had a set of tasks that could be used in the current study.

Because this study uses human participants, in my role as the principal investigator, I received approval to conduct the current study from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Texas at Austin.

Self-Assessment

As the instructor, my main role in the self-assessment phase of the study was to validate the students' self-assessment. I provided tasks for over forty can-do statements as part of the self-assessment. These tasks, described in detail above, align to the curriculum which itself aligns to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The students were also able to choose can-do statements for which the instructor had not provided tasks and create their own tasks. Whether the students utilized the tasks created by me or wrote their own tasks, I had to assess the evidence and approve it before he could validate the student's self-assessment.

E-portfolio

My role in the e-portfolio was to assess the evidence submitted by the students. The e-portfolio was the tool for delivering and hosting the self-assessment in this study. And as the self-assessment conducted through the e-portfolio, my role was the same in that I assessed the evidence, provided feedback within the e-portfolio, and validated the students' self-assessments within the e-portfolio. As the instructor, I also acted as the expert on the functions and tools of the e-portfolio. If the students had issues or questions, I was the point of contact for the students.

At the beginning of the first semester of the study I gave a tutorial to the students about the e-portfolio. I walked the students through using the iCAN platform over the course of one class period. I gave each student a packet of materials provided by Avant Assessment which gave useful tips and reminders for how to use the iCAN platform.

Formative Assessment

As the instructor, my role in the formative assessment process was to provide elaborative feedback on the students' evidence. When a student submitted evidence of their self-assessment for a can-do statement, I was sent an email from the iCAN platform. I set aside twenty-thirty minutes per day during the week to assess any tasks submitted by students through the e-portfolio system.

I assessed the tasks against the rubric connected to the specific tasks. If the student's language sample was not ample enough evidence for me to confirm the student's ability to successfully complete the task, I provided elaborative feedback to the student judged against the rubric. In giving elaborative feedback, I considered the language sample submitted by the student, the assigned task, and the proficiency level of the task.

I provided elaborative feedback and reassigned the task to the student. When the student resubmitted evidence based on my feedback, I assessed the student's new language sample. If the language submission was adequate, I would confirm the student's self-assessment and the can-do statement would show up as "validated" in their list of tasks in the e-portfolio. If the language submission was not sufficient evidence enough of their ability to complete the task, I once again provided elaborative feedback and reassigned the task. This process continued until the student submitted a language sample that illustrated their ability to successfully complete the given task.

Computer-based Assessment

My role in the computer-based assessment process was the role of proctor. Working with staff at ACTR, I set a date for the exam and to provide a range of proficiency levels tested. The exam was taken over a two-day period in May 2012. I reserved a computer lab and made sure that all computers were capable of delivering the exam. I remained in the room with the students during the entire exam in case technical issues arose.

Data Collection

As the instructor for the course, I was the principal investigator in the study and responsible for all data collection. At the end of the study, I reviewed each student's portfolio to see how many tasks were completed and at what levels within the portfolio. I looked at the highest level achieved by each student for which they had at least three instructor-validated tasks. This was done for the three domains assessed in this study (reading, writing, and listening). The computer-based assessment was scored by both the computer and by human graders. ACTR sent the results to the University of Texas after all scores had been collected and aligned to proficiency ratings.

Role of Student

The students were the participants in the current study. They took an active role in nearly every aspect of the study. As the assessments used in the study were a part of the normal class, the students were not offered any incentives to take part in the study.

Pre-study

During the pre-study period, the students completed language biographies about themselves. These biographies were completed within the e-portfolio system. The instructor had access at all times to the language biographies and the students could add languages at any time during the course of the study.

The students were also asked to sign IRB approved consent forms. Each student signed the forms and the instructor kept the forms in a secure location to protect the privacy of each student.

Self-Assessment

The students played an active role in the self-assessment process of the study. The students would login to the system every week to perform a self-assessment of their abilities. When the student found a can-do statement that they were able to provide evidence, they completed the assigned task. The student uploaded language samples as evidence. The student was also able to provide evidence for can-do statements for which the instructor had not provided tasks.

E-portfolio

The self-assessment was developed within the e-portfolio system. Outside of the self-assessment, the students were able to set individual goals and targets for their language acquisition. The e-portfolio stored all of the language samples and the student is able to access the e-portfolio even after the completion of the project.

Formative Assessment

If I returned a task back to the student for edits, the student needed to make edits and resubmit the task. The student was provided elaborative feedback, which gave the student guidance when resubmitting tasks. The student was also given guidance on where to find more information about grammar aspects. And the student was given suggested exercises to practice the language needed to perform the assigned task.

Computer-based Assessment

The student spent two class sessions completing the computer-based assessment given at the end of the course. Since the exam was no-stakes, meaning that it was not being used to give credit or place the students, the students were asked to take the exam seriously and perform to the best of their abilities. The students were told what the purpose of the exam was and all students completed each section of the exam. Since the exam was timed, students were asked to be on time and remain for the entire exam.

Chapter 5: Results

This chapter will discuss the results of each of the three assessments included in the triangulation study. First, the chapter will discuss the results of each of the three assessments used in the study. Next, this chapter will discuss the results of the triangulation study. And finally, this chapter will discuss the results for each hypothesis.

The scale used for the self-assessment and computer-based assessment was based on the ACTFL ratings, which is a non-numerical scale. In order to perform statistical analyses the investigator had to use numerical representations of the non-numerical characters. The ACTFL ratings range from Novice through Superior, the ratings that were used in this study were: Novice Mid, Novice High, Intermediate Low, and Intermediate Mid. The following numerical representations were used: Novice Mid (0.5), Novice High (0.8), Intermediate Low (1.1), and Intermediate Mid (1.4).

RESULTS OF ASSESSMENTS

In order to perform a triangulated study, the results of the three assessments are needed. Self-assessment results are based on an average score of the three separate domains (reading, writing, and listening). The unit tests were not scored separately between the domains so their score is only average between all of the tests taken over the two-semester study. The results of the computer-based summative assessment, like the self-assessment, are based on an average of the three separate domains.

Self-Assessment Results

Participants completed a minimum of 30 tasks each over the course of the study. 10 tasks each were complete in the following three domains: reading, writing, and listening. Once students submitted their self-assessment with a language sample as evidence of their abilities, the instructor assessed the evidence.

Students chose a task in a specific level and domain. Once the instructor validated the student's self-assessment the student could attempt a task at the same level or a task at the next highest level. The instructor could also suggest the student try a task at a lower level if the evidence submitted contained numerous issues. Once a student could perform at least three tasks consistently at the same level without instructor feedback, the instructor concluded that the student could successfully perform at that proficiency level.

At the end of the study the instructor took the proficiency levels reached in each of three domains (reading, writing, and listening) and averaged them to get an overall rating.

Table 5.1: Results of the Self-Assessment

Participant	Reading	Writing	Listening	Average
Participant 1	1.1	1.1	0.8	1
Participant 2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Participant 3	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.9
Participant 4	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Participant 5	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Participant 6	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Participant 7	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Participant 8	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Participant 9	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2

Participant 1 and Participant 3 were the only two to score below 1.1 (Novice Low) on the self-assessment. Participants 2 and 4-8 scored right at 1.1 (Intermediate Low), while Participant 9 scored a little above 1.1 at 1.2. Students had different levels

because they were only required to complete 30 tasks in at any level. To ensure the integrity of the self-assessment, the instructor did not specify the levels.

Part of the self-assessment process used in this study that makes this study different from previous studies is the formative assessment component. Once the participant submitted a language sample with their self-assessment the instructor would assess their submission against the rubric. If the language sample was acceptable, the instructor confirmed the participant's self-assessment. If the language sample was not accepted, the instructor offered formative feedback and asked for modifications.

For the purposes of this study, the instructor kept track of the amount of self-assessment submissions, which required modifications. The graph below illustrates the percentage of submitted self-assessment tasks that were returned for modifications.

Table 5.2: Percentage of Self-Assessments Returned for Modifications

Participant	Assigned	Submitted	Returned	Percent Returned
Participant 1	30	32	10	31%
Participant 2	30	34	7	21%
Participant 3	30	30	12	40%
Participant 4	30	33	7	21%
Participant 5	30	32	8	25%
Participant 6	30	30	6	20%
Participant 7	30	30	8	27%
Participant 8	30	30	9	30%
Participant 9	30	36	6	17%

Overall, when the percentages are averaged, 26% of submissions were returned for modifications while 74% of the self-assessments were confirmed by the instructor upon initial submission.

Unit Test Results

Participants took 12 in-class exams over the course of the two-semester study. Although the exams consisted of reading, writing, and listening sections, these sections were not graded separately. Therefore, overall tests averages from the two-semester course were used in this study. In order to use the unit test results in the triangulation study, the scores had to be adjusted to fit into the study. The averages of the test results were multiplied by 1.4. This was not an arbitrary choice. The tests align to the textbook which aligns to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. At the end of the second semester, the material covered in the course equaled Intermediate Mid on the proficiency scale.

Therefore, a 100% on the exams would theoretically mean that the learner would be at the Intermediate Mid level. 1.4 is the numeral that represents the Intermediate Mid level in this study.

Table 5.3: Results of the Unit Tests

Participant	Semester 1	Semester 2	Average	Adjusted Score
Participant 1	0.75	0.73	0.74	1.04
Participant 2	0.89	0.86	0.88	1.23
Participant 3	0.78	0.77	0.78	1.09
Participant 4	0.88	0.88	0.88	1.23
Participant 5	0.87	0.90	0.89	1.24
Participant 6	0.96	0.77	0.87	1.21
Participant 7	0.93	0.83	0.88	1.23
Participant 8	0.90	0.84	0.87	1.22
Participant 9	0.93	0.92	0.93	1.30

The instructor graded all exams using a key to avoid subjectivity in grading. All participants scored around or above the Intermediate Low level on the in-class exams.

Computer-based Proficiency Test

Participants were given a computer-based proficiency test that covered three domains - reading, writing, and listening. As the test was proficiency based, the results were provided in terms of the ACTFL proficiency levels. The average across all three domains was taken for the purpose of triangulating the scores with the self-assessment and unit test scores.

The table below presents the results of the proficiency-based exam. All participants scored at the Novice High or Intermediate Low level.

Table 5.4: Results of the Computer-based Proficiency Test

Participant	Reading	Listening	Writing	Average
Participant 1	0.8	1.1	0.8	0.90
Participant 2	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.80
Participant 3	0.8	0.5	0.8	0.70
Participant 4	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.10
Participant 5	0.8	0.8	1.1	0.90
Participant 6	1.1	1.1	0.8	1.00
Participant 7	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.80
Participant 8	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.10
Participant 9	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.10

Data Aggregation

In order to perform a triangulation study of the three assessment measures, the results of the three measures must be correlated. This study consists of noncontiguous data, meaning it is possible for several individuals to receive exactly the same score on one variable. The size of the participant group is statistically small (n=9). Because of noncontiguous data and the small size of the participant group, Kendall's tau_b was used to correlate the three measures.

			apexam	unittests	eportfolio
Kendall's tau_b	apexam	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.281	.549
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.323	.071
		N	9	9	9
	unittests	Correlation Coefficient	.281	1.000	.722*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.323	.	.015
		N	9	9	9
	eportfolio	Correlation Coefficient	.549	.722*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.071	.015	.
		N	9	9	9

Figure 5.1: SPSS Data Results of Kendall's tau_b

The likelihood of witnessing a Type 1 error increases with each time data is correlated. Due to the fact that there are three correlations, the Bonferroni correction needs to be admitted. As the p -value is already provided, the new p -value can be found by multiplying $p \times 3$.

			apexam	unittests	eportfolio
Kendall's tau_b	apexam	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.281	.549
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.969	.213
		N	9	9	9
	unittests	Correlation Coefficient	.281	1.000	.722*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.969	.	.045
		N	9	9	9
	eportfolio	Correlation Coefficient	.549	.722*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.213	.045	.
		N	9	9	9

Figure 5.2: Kendall's tau_b with Bonferroni correction - * significant at .05

The AP exam and unit tests resulted in a correlation coefficient of $r=0.281$ and a p -value of 0.969. Therefore the correlation between the AP exam and the unit tests is not significant.

Table 5.5: Correlation of AP Exam and Unit Tests

Correlation Coefficient	0.281
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.323
N	9

The AP exam and self-assessment resulted in a correlation coefficient of $r=0.549$ and a p -value of 0.213. Therefore the correlation between the AP exam and the e-portfolio is not significant.

Table 5.6: Correlation of AP Exam and Self-Assessment

Correlation Coefficient	0.549
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.213
N	9

The unit tests and self-assessment resulted in a correlation coefficient of $r=0.722$ and a p -value of 0.045. Therefore the correlation between the unit tests and the self-assessment is significant.

Table 5.7: Correlation of Unit Tests and Self-Assessment

Correlation Coefficient	0.722
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.045
N	9

Hypotheses:

The hypotheses have been modified to make it easier to test them using the aggregated data.

Hypothesis 1:

H₁ Learner self-assessments are more accurate when formative assessment is a part of the process.

H₀ Learner self-assessments are not more accurate when formative assessment is a part of the process.

Hypothesis 2:

H₁ Learners understand their own functional language abilities better when formative assessment is used.

H₀ Learners do not necessarily understand their own functional language abilities better when formative assessment is used.

Hypothesis 3:

H₁ A learner's portfolio scores are an accurate indicator their proficiency level.

H₀ A learner's portfolio scores are not necessarily an accurate indicator their proficiency level.

Hypothesis 1

The correlation between the self-assessment and the unit tests has a strong relationship and the self-assessment and the AP exam have a moderate relationship. However, the correlation is not significant, based on the p -value. Because of this, we fail to reject the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2

The correlation between the self-assessment and the unit tests has a strong relationship and the self-assessment and the AP exam have a moderate relationship. However, the correlation is not significant, based on the p -value. Because of this, we fail to reject the null hypothesis for hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3

The correlation between the self-assessment and the unit tests has a strong relationship and the self-assessment and the AP exam have a moderate relationship. However, the correlation is not significant, based on the p -value. Because of this, we fail to reject the null hypothesis 3.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

There are very few studies in foreign language education pertaining to e-portfolios and formative assessment. This dissertation connects e-portfolios to self-assessment in the foreign language classroom. It looked specifically at e-portfolio-based self-assessment and the role of formative assessment in the portfolio process. This dissertation sought to determine the validity of self-assessment ratings. To do so, this dissertation looked at the comparison between three measurements to determine their correlation. The three measurements used in this study were: e-portfolio-based self-assessment, unit tests, and a computer-based proficiency exam.

Although there have been numerous studies on the validity of self-assessment measures in foreign language assessment (Blanche, 1989; Ross, 1999), this is the first known study to incorporate formative assessment in the self-assessment process. This dissertation seeks to contribute to the field of foreign language assessment by examining the effect of formative assessment on the validity of self-assessment measures.

This dissertation sought to answer the following questions:

1. Do learners' self-assessments align to what they actually score on a proficiency-based summative assessment?
2. Do language learners truly understand their own functional language abilities?
3. Do portfolios give us an accurate indication of learners' proficiency?

This chapter will discuss the results of the research study. It will outline the implications for educators, learners, and researchers in the field of foreign language education. It will also outline the limitations of this study and areas for further research on formative assessment in the self-assessment process.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The main empirical findings are chapter specific and were summarized within Chapter 4. This section will synthesize the empirical findings to answer the study's three research questions as well as the study's three hypotheses.

Research Question 1

1. Do learners' self-assessment results align to what they actually score on a proficiency-based summative assessment?

The correlation of the e-portfolio-based self-assessment scores with the AP exam computer-based proficiency test scores resulted in a moderate relationship, but it also resulted in being statistically not significant. The correlation was not significant due to the *p*-value. This is due to the fact the number of participants was too small to collect enough data to make the correlations significant. Due to this result, based on the statistical analysis, it is not possible to definitively say that a learner's self-assessment result is a valid indicator of their proficiency level.

Research Question 2

1. Do language learners truly understand their own functional language abilities?

The correlation of the e-portfolio-based self-assessment scores with the AP exam computer-based proficiency test scores resulted in a moderate relationship, but it also resulted in being statistically not significant. The correlation was not significant due to the *p*-value. This is due to the fact the number of participants was too small to collect enough data to make the correlations significant.

The correlation of the unit test scores with the AP exam computer-based proficiency test scores resulted in a weak relationship, and it also resulted in being

statistically not significant. The correlation was not significant due to the p -value. This is due to the fact the number of participants was too small to collect enough data to make the correlations significant. However, the correlation of the e-portfolio-based self-assessment scores with the unit test scores resulted in a strong relationship, and it also resulted in being statistically significant.

The difference in correlations indicates, as stated before, that the number of participants is too low to garnish any significant data. It may also indicate that one of the measures used was not reliable enough to use in the correlation. Based on the statistical data, there is not sufficient statistical data to definitively say whether a learner understand their functional abilities or not.

Research Question 3

1. Do portfolios give us an accurate indication of learners' proficiency?

The correlation of the e-portfolio-based self-assessment scores with the AP exam computer-based proficiency test scores resulted in a moderate relationship, but it also resulted in being statistically not significant. The correlation was not significant due to the p -value. This is due to the fact the number of participants was too small to collect enough data to make the correlations significant. Due to this result, based on the statistical analysis, it is not possible to definitively say that a learner's score on a portfolio, which is based in self-assessment, can be taken as a valid indicator of their proficiency level.

Hypothesis 1

1. Results of self-assessments that are connected to a proficiency-based portfolio system where formative assessment is incorporated are fairly accurate in regards to aligning to results of computer-based summative assessment.

This study was different from previous studies that incorporated self-assessment in the assessment of foreign language (Blanche, 1989; Ross, 1999). The self-assessment was performed with the aid of an e-portfolio and heavily relied on formative assessment in the self-assessment process. By utilizing formative assessment, the investigator wanted to try to avoid common issues associated with self-assessment: 1) most learners are not trained in assessment and this makes self-assessments unreliable; and, 2) self-assessment may persuade some learners that they are incapable of certain tasks and this could lead to a lack of motivation; and, 3) self-assessments are not accurate as learners may overestimate their abilities if the self-assessment is connected to a grade or placement in an academic program (Blanche, 1988; Boud and Falchikova, 1989; Brown and Hudson, 1998; Ross, 1999; Ross, Rolheiser, and Hogaboam-Gray, 2002; Sung, 2005).

Overall, when the percentages are averaged, 26% of submissions were returned for modifications, while 74% of the self-assessments were confirmed by the instructor upon initial submission. If we consider the 74% to mean that 74% of the time the instructor agreed with the learner's self-assessment, that is higher than the 64% that Falchikov and Boud (1989) found in their meta-analysis of studies on self-assessment in higher education.

The reason for this could be the fact that the learners knew that the instructor was going to assess their evidence to confirm their self-assessment. However, data was not collected on learner attitudes and so this theory cannot be confirmed within the framework of the current study.

Although the correlation between the e-portfolio-based self-assessment and the computer-based proficiency exam was moderately high, due to lack of significant data the hypothesis cannot be proved with the current study.

Hypothesis 2

2. When guided by an educator and given specific guidelines that allow deeper understanding of learning, language learners can understand their own functional language abilities.

The self-assessment process incorporated in the e-portfolio allowed for the educator to better communicate goals to the learners with the use of can-do statements. The learners knew what was expected of them through the use of the can-do statements and the formative feedback given by the instructor. The purpose of the self-assessment process used in this study was to promote learner autonomy. Learner autonomy leads to more efficient and effective learning as the learner is involved in the learning process, the learner is more motivated which leads to improved performance, and the learner has an easier time of mastering discourse roles which are essential for communication in a foreign language (Little, 1991; Little 2000; Dickinson, 1997; Contia, 2007; Kohonen 2000).

By using the can-do statements and incorporating formative feedback in this study, the educator attempted to improve the learners' understanding of their own functional language abilities. However, the inconsistency of the data makes it difficult to prove the hypothesis.

The one piece of data that offers some evidence that this hypothesis is true is the percentage of self-assessment tasks returned for revisions. As stated before, 26% of submissions were returned for modifications while 74% of the self-assessments were confirmed by the instructor upon initial submission. As the learners were able to choose from a number of self-assessment tasks at various levels, this relatively high percentage means that learners, for the most part, understood what they were able to do in the

language. This would mean that the learners have at least some understanding of their functional language abilities.

Hypothesis 3

3. Proficiency-based portfolios are an accurate indicator of learners' language proficiency, when the portfolios are guided by both the learner and the educator and incorporate formative assessment.

To prove this hypothesis, the three measures would have all have to have strong correlations and the correlations would have to be statistically significant. Only then would we be able to triangulate the three measures and prove this hypothesis. Due to the fact that the correlations are not consistent, there is not enough data to prove this hypothesis.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Although the statistical data in this study turned out to be not significant due to the size of the n , the qualitative aspects of this study make it a contribution to the field of foreign language education. The self-assessment process presented and outlined in this dissertation is unique to this study and is revolutionary in the field of foreign language education.

This study utilized an e-portfolio for the purposes of conducting a validated self-assessment. The process of developing tasks for the self-assessment can-do statements is outlined in this study. That process requires the educator to consider numerous aspects while developing tasks.

While developing tasks for can-do statements the educator must consider the proficiency level of the can-do statements. This makes the educator consider the proficiency level being assessed and the constructs of the task being developed. And that

thinking process furthers the educators understanding of their own curriculum and how it connects to their assessment measures being used in the class.

The educator must also consider the language sample they are eliciting with each task they write. When the educator anticipates the students' responses they can prepare to offer more elaborative feedback. Educators can also use the feedback process to provide as little or as much scaffolding as possible to the student, thus extending the learning process outside of the classroom.

On the student side, the entire process is beneficial for students as well. Whether the self-assessment process is completed over a semester or over the course of an entire academic year, the student is engaged in the process both inside and outside of the classroom. The student performs tasks that they are asked to perform in class and on other assignments. The tasks are also meant to offer the student a chance to use their language abilities in a real-world setting, which is set up by the task.

However, the two most beneficial aspects of the process outlined in this dissertation revolve around both the educator and the student.

For the student, the self-assessment process gives the student more practice with the language. The process also teaches the students a valuable skill for continued learning – self-assessment. By having the students select can-do statements which they believe they can do, the self-assessment process is started. Over the course of the study the students submitted tasks and received feedback from me. I had to provide less and less feedback to students as the semester continued. I can assume from this that students were beginning to truly understand their own functional abilities. The students also began to understand what was required of them as far as language samples for the self-assessment.

If students can learn to accurately self assess their abilities, they have theoretically understood proficiency and what it means to be proficient in a language. By

understanding their proficiency, students can become more autonomous learners and continue the learning process outside of the classroom. Since teaching towards proficiency and the proficiency guidelines are widely accepted and used today, students will also begin to understand how their language abilities are being judged by their peers and by any other institutions where they may study or work. The ultimate goal of teaching students the self-assessment process is to create lifelong learners.

For teachers, the self-assessment process gives the teacher a better understanding of their students' abilities. When the students submit language samples, the teacher assess the samples against the rubric and against the proficiency guidelines for the level of the task. The teacher sees their students' abilities in reference to the proficiency guidelines and can also help the teacher make decisions. The teacher can decide that their tasks may or may not be valid or that the tasks are truly assessing what they are supposed to assess.

The teacher can also make decisions on how or what they are teaching in their class. During the course of the study, I modified my teaching based on student self-assessments. If there were certain tasks where a majority of the students had trouble, I would focus my teaching on that specific aspect or modify the way I had been teaching a specific subject.

The self-assessment process outlined in this study allows for teachers to modify their teaching during the course of study. By modifying their teaching, teachers can keep their students engaged and make sure that their curriculum continues to be proficiency-based. Instead of waiting for unit tests or end-of-the-semester exams, teachers can assess their students' abilities and understanding of subjects on a regular basis with the self-assessment process.

The entire self-assessment process engages the educator and students in the learning process. It not only gives the students the ability to understand their own

learning but it also allows teachers assess their own teaching. Because of that, the self-assessment process outlined in this study benefits both teachers and students.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The review of the literature presents self-assessments as both a qualitative and a quantitative measurement tool. While most studies present self-assessment as a qualitative measurement tool, for the purposes of triangulation of assessment measures, the portfolio-based self-assessment in this study is used as a quantitative measurement tool. Previous studies have presented self-assessment as an unchecked personal record of learning. This study, incorporating formative assessment in the self-assessment process, presents self-assessment as a validated personal record of learning. By having the instructor validate the learner's self-assessment, quantitative scores can be derived from the portfolio-based self-assessment.

The self-assessment incorporated instructor validation in an attempt to avoid certain variables from affecting the results. Opponents of self-assessment contend that self-assessment measures are not reliable due to many learners' overestimation of their abilities (Blanche, 1988; Boud and Falchikova, 1989; Brown and Hudson, 1998; Ross, 1999; Ross, Rolheiser, and Hogaboam-Gray, 2002; Sung, 2005). Therefore, the choice to incorporate instructor validation in the self-assessment helped to eradicate contamination of final scores by outside factors.

In regards to triangulation, this study differs from many other previous studies, which utilized both quantitative and qualitative assessment measurements. This was a conscious decision that may or may not have had an effect on the study itself. The use of all quantitative measures stands in contrast to the theory of using both quantitative and qualitative measures in assessment triangulation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

This dissertation outlines methods for assessment in the foreign language classroom. Assessment is not only vital for learners to understand their abilities and gaps in knowledge, assessment is also vital for educators to understand their students' abilities and how they should modify their teaching. Drawing for the current study, this section will outline the implications for teaching.

Self-assessment

Learners take language courses for different reasons. They may take a language course in order to fulfill degree requirements, communicate with family or friends, or to further their career aspirations. For whatever reason a learner studies a language, their foreign language skills are going to be judged by someone. Connecting our teaching to commonly-accepted guidelines allows us to prepare our students for using foreign language outside of the classroom.

This study utilizes an e-portfolio system for learner self-assessment. Many self-assessment measures are connected to class curriculum. Curriculum in foreign language classrooms should be guided by the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. For learners, educators, policy makers, and others outside of education, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines act as a point of reference to understanding a person's foreign language abilities.

If we as educators are teaching in a proficiency-based classroom, then our assessment measures must also be aligned to the same guidelines that our curriculum is aligned (Wigglesworth, 2002). The e-portfolio system used in this study comes pre-loaded with can-do statements connected to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. This makes it possible to connect assessment, self-assessment in particular, to curriculum.

The process of self-assessment outlined in this dissertation is different from other self-assessment processes in that it incorporates educator validation of a learner's self-assessment. Instead of giving the learners a checklist to arbitrarily assign themselves a score, the process in this dissertation gives the learners more context to reflect on their abilities and make an informed decision.

Requiring learners to submit evidence of their abilities forces them to actually reflect on their abilities. The process of reflection is an integral part of the self-assessment process (Belgrad, 2013; Paulson, Paulson and Meyer, 1990; Wolf and Dietz, 1998). Over the course of time, as a learner reflects, self assesses, and submits evidence; they begin to better understand the guidelines against which they are being assessed (Belgrad, 2013). Understanding the standards to which they are held by their teachers, peers, and outsiders helps a learner understand their own learning (Delett, Barnhardt, and Kevorkian, 2001). Understanding their own learning leads to learner autonomy, this in turn moves our classrooms closer to a learner-centered environment (Stefani, Mason, and Pegler, 2007).

Formative Assessment

Part of the self-assessment process in this study includes the incorporation of formative assessment. When the educator reviews the learner's language sample, which the learner submits as evidence for their self-assessment, they judge it against a rubric. Should the learner's language sample not provide enough evidence to the educator that the learner can successfully perform the task; the educator returns the task and requests another language sample. The educator provides formative feedback to the learner about their submission in order to help guide the learner in their learning.

Providing formative feedback keeps the dialogue between the learner and the educator open and makes the assessment process a collaborative experience (Heritage, 2010; Shute, 2007). The formative feedback process also allows the educator to see the gaps in the learner's knowledge (Shute, 2007). Understanding gaps in the learner's knowledge makes it possible for the educator to adjust the amount of scaffolding they build around the topic (Heritage, 2010; Shute, 2007).

The formative assessment process outlined in this dissertation, which was part of a larger self-assessment process, is also beneficial in extending the learning outside of the class room (Heritage, 2010; Stefani, Mason, and Pegler, 2007). Learners spent an extra thirty minutes to one hour per week working on the portfolio assignments and then would spend another thirty minutes to an hour working on revisions based on the instructor's comments. This added on nearly one class period of instruction per week as the formative feedback included suggestions learning and focused the learner on areas where they were not as proficient.

Although the data aggregation for the triangulation resulted in data that is not significant, data not included in the triangulation promotes the use of formative assessment in the self-assessment process. As stated above, previous studies that did not include formative assessment in the self-assessment process resulted in a mean of 74% accuracy in relation to teacher validation of the self-assessment. That is higher than the 64% accuracy Falchikov and Boud (1989) found in their meta-analysis of studies on self-assessment in higher education.

Extending the classroom outside of class and closing the gaps in a learner's knowledge lead to learner autonomy by removing the scaffolding (Heritage, 2010; Shute, 2007). Using formative assessment in the self-assessment process allows educators and learners to be engaged in a continuous dialogue. This dialogue is essential to both learner

autonomy and learner performance. Using such methods can result in increased proficiency and should be integrated into the learning process.

Holistic Approach to Assessment

This dissertation contends that educators should incorporate a holistic approach to assessment into their classrooms. Although the triangulation approach presented in this study resulted in data that was not statistically significant, it did incorporate three different assessment measures that provided the educator and the learner a holistic assessment of their language abilities.

In spite of the advancements made in assessments during the past twenty years, language development is multifaceted and learners' abilities cannot be assessed by any single means. Utilizing numerous assessment tools in a foreign language classroom allows for the most reliable assessment of a learner's language abilities (Byers, 2010; Pierce and O'Malley, 1992).

Educators that use internal and external assessment measures are able to not only assess their students' abilities against standards used by the larger foreign language education community but also they are able to assess their own teaching. Assessing one's own teaching can not only assist the teacher in improving their own methods but it in turn can increase a learner's abilities (Bond, 1999; Moore, 1994).

A holistic approach to assessment means utilizing numerous assessment measures, both internal and external, to provide the educator and learner with the reliable assessment of a learner's language abilities. In our proficiency-based classrooms and in a time when educators are asked to do more with less, a battery of assessments can really improve both teaching and learning.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major limitation in this study was the number of participants available ($n = 9$). Due to the small number of participants, the aggregated data was determined to be not significant. Enrollment in the course used in this study was relatively low in relation to similar courses taught in the department. The investigator only had access to utilize one class for the pool of participants. Enrollments in Russian language courses are relatively small, in comparison to Spanish or French language courses. This is a common problem in all of the less commonly taught languages (Arabic, Persian, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, and Russian).

Another limitation to consider is the fact that the study in this dissertation was a purely quantitative study; only quantitative measures were used in data aggregation. In other studies utilizing triangulation, both quantitative and qualitative measures were used (Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz, 2005; Gikandi, Morrow, and Davis, 2011). Considering only quantitative data may not allow for a nuanced approach to evaluating learner abilities in a foreign language as not all aspects of language abilities can be assessed by a quantitative measure (Thomas, Lightcap, and Rosencranz, 2005).

The investigator and the educator were the same person in this study. This means that the investigator was not as subjective as he would have been had he not been an active participant in the current study (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1996).

Another limitation is that the investigator was an employee of Avant Assessment during the course of the study. Avant Assessment is the company that developed the e-portfolio used in this study, iCAN. The investigator did not work directly with the iCAN system but as an item development manager for proficiency tests. This study is not meant in any way to be an endorsement for the iCAN system or any other product produced by Avant Assessment.

A final limitation to consider is the way the data was collected and the way it was correlated. Due to the type of unit exams used in the class from this study, the investigator did not score reading, writing, and listening separately but rather took an average of overall tests scores. This limited the type of analysis that could be done on the three separate domains as has been done in previous studies (Blanche, 1988; Ross, 1999).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to the lack of research studies on the triangulation of assessment measures and formative assessment in foreign language education, there is much room for future research studies in these two areas. This study has also highlighted areas of language assessment where more in depth analysis should be done.

Future research studies will be centered on both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. Student surveys will be utilized to assess a learner's understanding of the self-assessment process. Surveys will also focus on the learner's attitudes towards formative assessment. This data would allow for modifications to be made in the process, if needed, or would outline the need for learners and educators to be better trained in formative assessment.

Future studies will analyze data around formative assessment to track the number of times tasks are returned to the learner. Trends in feedback will be analyzed as well to determine the most common gaps in learner's abilities. Changes in teaching resulting from feedback will also be tracked to better understand this process. I believe that this data will be a powerful tool in encouraging more educators to engage in the formative assessment process as part of a larger self-assessment process.

Future studies will include all four domains so as to offer more granular data analysis; thus providing a more holistic assessment of the learner's proficiency. Aiding in

more granular data analysis, unit tests in future studies will be assessed per domain. This granular analysis will provide data on how and at what rate learners obtain certain skills in a foreign language.

Future studies will also include a larger number of participants in order to avoid the data aggregation issues in the current study. To access a larger pool of participants, future studies will incorporate numerous other languages to allow for data analysis of variables such as: gender, age, previous language learning, and reasons for studying a specific language. Data from numerous languages will allow for cross-language analysis as well global analysis on language acquisition and foreign language assessment.

Future studies will look at student motivation through the use of badges. When a student reaches each proficiency level, they will receive a badge of some type. For students of Russian this is something that can be connected to the Russian culture since badges are given to students for similar accomplishments. Badges are being used in higher education by educational upstarts as well as in many Fortune500 companies with some degree of success (Young, 2012). Studies have yet to be done on the use badges in the teaching of foreign languages and the use of badges seems to be very compatible with self-assessment and proficiency-based learning.

CONCLUSION

This study has outlined a self-assessment process that can be implemented into foreign language curriculums with a very small amount of resources needed. Self-assessment leads to more autonomous learners by producing more metacognitive experiences through self-reflection and self-reporting. Self-assessment also makes educators more aware of what and how they teach by requiring the educator to provide elaborative feedback.

I consider this study to be the first step that provides new insights into the situated practices of design and implementation of e-portfolio-based self-assessment and formative assessment into the foreign language classroom. This research has allowed me to face the complexities of foreign language assessment. It has also allowed me to develop new ways of assessing my students through a truly holistic approach in an attempt to obtain the most reliable rating of their proficiency. It has also allowed me to share this process with other educators in the hopes of improving the teaching and assessment of foreign languages.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Writing Tasks

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can label some familiar things.

Task:

Practice using the vocabulary you know! Take some time labeling objects in your apartment or dorm room with sticky notes. You can provide evidence by filming your room with items labeled or labeling a picture of your room. Upload the picture or video into the system.

Student Submission:



Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can write about myself using learned phrases and memorized expressions.

Task:

Practice using the vocabulary you know! Write a short description of your family.

Talk about their occupations and where they live. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Student Submission:

Это моя семья. Мой папа и моя мама живут в Далласе. Мой папа – профессор. Он работает в университете. Моя мама – медсестра. Она работает в клинике. Это моя собака. Её зовут Тоби. Моя сестра студентка в Лос Анжелесе. Мой брат студент в Остине.

This is my family. My father and mother live in Dallas. My dad is a professor. He works in the university. My mother is a nurse. She works in the clinic. This is my dog. Her name is Tobì. My sister is a student in Los Angeles. My brother is a student in Austin.

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can write a short note using phrases and simple sentences.

Task:

You just arrived in Moscow! Take some time to write your Russian teacher an email (8-10 lines) letting them know you are in Moscow and a little about your first impressions of the city and the Russian people. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Student Submission:

Здравствуйте Профессор Госсетт,

Я сейчас в Москве. Здесь красиво и интересно. Здесь много людей и машин! Я живу с бабушкой. Её зовут Анна Борисовна Володина. Здесь тоже живёт кошка – Шарик. Здесь очень холодно! Русские люди очень хорошие и ходит много. Я люблю Москву!

Пока!

Hello Professor Gossett,

I am now in Moscow! Here it is pretty and interesting. Here there are a lot of people and cars! I live with a grandmother. Her name is Anna Borisovna Volodina. Here also lives a cat – Sharik. Here is very cold! Russian people are very good and walk a lot. I love Moscow!

Later!

Intermediate Low

Can-do Statement:

I can express my opinion on familiar topics using a series of sentences with some details.

Task:

A friend in Russia wants to know about your life at school. Write an email (12-15 lines) describing what you like and dislike about your life as a student. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Student Submission

Привет Маша!

Ты знаешь что я студент в тexasском университете. Университет находится в хорошем городе – Остин. Остин очень забавный город. Там много музыкантов и баров на шестой улице. Я живу рядом с университете в квартире. У меня 4 соседи в квартире. Мне нравится жить в крартуре. Мы с соседями любим ехать на велосипеде. Я учусь историю в университете. Мне нравится мой профессеры истории и русского языка. У меня лекция в 8 утра, я это не люблю! И когда жарко мне надо ходить в класс, я тоже это не люблю. Мне нравится спорт и у нас хорошая футбольная команда и я эту люблю! Что тебе нравится о твоей жизни в университете?

Пока!

Hi Masha!

You know that I am a student at the University of Texas. The university is located in a good city – Austin. Austin is a very fun city. There are a lot of musicians and bars on 6th street. I live close to the university in an apartment. I have 4 roommates in the apartment. I like to live in an apartment. My roommates and I love to ride bikes. I study history at the university. I like my professors of history and Russian language. I have class at 8 am, I don't love that! And when it is hot I need to walk to class, I also don't love that. I like sports and we have a good football team and I love that! What do you like about your life at the university?

Later!

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can write a short report on a familiar topic using connected sentences with many details.

Task:

You've been asked by the student newspaper at your university in Moscow to write a short article (15-20 lines) about your university campus or hometown. The editor would like you to discuss monuments or buildings dedicated to someone. He wants his Russian readers to see the similarities and differences between Russian and American culture in this aspect. Upload a word file as evidence or paste the text directly into the system.

Student Submission:

Я студент в тeхасском университете в Остине. Тeхасский университет в Остине был основан в 1883 году. Тeхасский университет – государственный университет. Главный кампус тeхасского университета находится в центре города в Остине. На кампусе есть много зданий, библиотек, и памятников. Главная библиотека называется ПКБ или библиотека имени Перри Кастенайди. Моё любимое место на кампусе – южный малл. Там много памятников известным Американцам. Главный памятник – памятник Джорджу Вашингтону, наш первый президент. Факультет русского языка находится в здании Калхун Халл, или халл имени Калхуна. Калхун был президент тeхасского университета почти 70 лет назад. А наша футбольная команда играет свои игры в стадионе. Стадион называется Даррелл К. Ройал-Мемориал, или стадион имени Даррелла К. Ройала. Даррек К. Ройал был главным тренером футбольной команды много лет назад.

I am a student at the University of Texas in Austin. The University of Texas at Austin was founded in 1883. The University of Texas is a public university. The main campus of The University of Texas is located in downtown Austin. There are many buildings, libraries, and monuments on campus. The main library is called the PCL or the library named for Perry Castaneda. My favorite place on campus is the south mall. There are many monuments to famous Americans. The main monument is the monument to George Washington, our first President. The Russian language department is located in the building Calhoun Hall, or the hall named for Calhoun. Calhoun was President of The University of Texas nearly 70 years ago. And our football team plays their games in a stadium. The stadium is named Darrell K. Royal – Memorial or the stadium named for Darrell K. Royal. Darrell K. Royal was the head coach of the football team many years ago.

Listening Tasks

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the difference between a statement and a question.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording. While listening, place a 'Q' or an 'S' next to each number. The 'Q' represents that utterance you heard is a question while the 'S' represents that the utterance you heard is a statement. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed checklist directly into the system.

English Transcript of Recording:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. This is a pencil. | 6. This is a table. |
| 2. This is a pencil? | 7. This is a chair. |
| 3. This is a vase? | 8. This is a chair? |
| 4. This is a vase. | 9. This is a cat. |
| 5. This is a table? | 10. This is a cat? |

Student Submission:

Put an 'x' next to the Q if the utterance you hear is a question or an 'x' next to the S if the utterance you hear is a statement. Listen as many times as needed!

- | |
|---|
| 1. Q <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> S _____ |
| 2. Q _____ S <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Q <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> S _____ |
| 4. Q _____ S <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Q <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> S _____ |
| 6. Q _____ S <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Q _____ S <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Q <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> S _____ |
| 9. Q _____ S <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Q <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> S _____ |

Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can understand simple words and phrases about daily activities.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording. While listening, put the number of the word that you hear in the recording next the picture that matches that word. Upload the attached word file as evidence.

Student Submission and Instructor Worksheet:



3



1



5



7



8



2



4



6

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can understand most directions or instructions in a familiar setting when expressed in short conversations.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording from a voicemail. The voicemail is from your friend that wants you to meet them on Saturday. While listening, follow the directions and find the location where your friend wants meet. Draw a line from where you begin and circle the location where your friend wants to meet. Upload the attached word file as evidence.

English Transcript of Instructor's Recording:

Hey! Let's meet for dinner tomorrow. I know you are meeting a friend at the Metropol Hotel for tea so you'll be going from there. Follow Teatralni proezd until it turns into Lubyanka square. Cross under the street towards the Mayakovski museum and follow Myasnitskaya street and turn right on Bolshoi Zlatoustinski pereulok. Stop at the ATM on Bolshoi Zlatoustinski pereulok if you need money. Follow Bolshoi Zlatoustinski pereulok until you get to Mali Zlatoustinski pereulok. The café will be on the corner of Bolshoi Zlatoustinski pereulok and Mali Zlatoustinski pereulok.

Student Submission:



Intermediate. Low

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the main idea and some details in messages and announcements on familiar topics.

Task:

Listen to the following audio recording from an announcement heard on the radio. Listen to the recording twice. While listening to the recording the second time, answer the questions about the recording in English. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

English Transcript of Recording:

Dear listeners of Hit FM, Beeline and Pepsi present the rock group Gorod 312. Saturday, June 9 at 7 at club B1, metro Leninsky Prospect, Ordzhonikidze street. Tickets cost 1000 rubles at the entrance; VIP costs 3000 rubles.

Comprehension Question and Student Submission:

1. What event is being announced?
A rock concert
2. When is the event taking place?
Saturday, June 10
3. Where is the event taking place?
At a club
4. What is the price for a ticket?
3000 rubles

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the main idea and many details on familiar topics of personal interest presented through media.

Task:

Watch the following video taken from a news report in Russia. Watch the video twice. While watching the video the second time, answer the questions about the video in English. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Student Submission:

1. What event is the woman reporting?
The opening of a new store.
2. What is significant about the event?
It's the first type store opened in Russia.
3. What is being offered?
Discounts for customers.

Reading Tasks

Novice Low

Can-do Statement:

I can connect some words, phrases, or characters to their meanings.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains pictures of objects and matching words in Russian in a numbered word bank. Look at the pictures and put the number of the matching Russian word next to the object. Upload the attached word file as evidence.

Student Submission:



3



1



2



5



6



4

1. стол

2. ваза

3. стул

4. окно

5. ручка

6. карандаш

Novice Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can recognize words on a list on familiar topics.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains a shopping list your host mother has given you. Answer the questions about the shopping list. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Text Provided by Instructor:

Продукты

1. яблоки -2 кг
2. апельсины – 1 кг.
3. морковь – 4 кг.
4. картофель -3 кг.
5. вода – 2 л
6. молоко – 1 пакет

Groceries

1. apples -2 kilograms
2. oranges – 1 kilogram
3. carrots – 4 kilograms
4. potatoes -3 kilograms
5. water – 2 liters
6. milk – 1 carton

Student Submission:

What do you need to buy 2 kilograms of?

Apples

How much water do you need to buy?

2 liters

How many kilograms of potatoes do you need?

3 kilograms

What do you need to buy 4 kilograms of?

Carrots

Novice High

Can-do Statement:

I can understand information I need on familiar topics.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains an email sent from your friend in Russia. Read the email and answer the questions below the email. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Text Provided by Instructor:

Приглашаю тебя на вечеринку по случаю моего Дня Рождения.

Вечеринка пройдет 25 мая (в пятницу) в ресторане "Тарас Бульба".

Начало: в 19:00.

Адрес: улица Тверская, дом 5.

I invite you to a party for my birthday.

The party will take place May 25 (Friday) at the restaurant "Taras Bulba".

Start: 7:00 PM

Address: 5 Tverskaya St.

Student Submission:

What is the purpose of the email?

To invite someone to a party.

What are 2 pieces of information given?

1. The party is on Friday, May 25.
2. The party is going to be in a restaurant.

Intermediate Low

Can-do Statement:

I can understand messages in which the writer tells or asks me about familiar topics of interest.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains an email sent from your friend in Russia. Read the email and answer the questions below the email. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Text Provided by Instructor:

Привет!

Завтра в 16:00 известный историк Иван Печален будет читать лекцию в нашем университете.

У меня есть лишний билет. Ты хочешь пойти со мной?

Жду ответа.

Пока.

Наташа

Hi!

Tomorrow at 4 PM the famous historian Ivan Pechalen will give a lecture at our university.

I have an extra ticket. Do you want to come with me?

I'm waiting for an answer.

Later.

Natasha

Student Submission:

What is the purpose of the email?

To invite a friend to a lecture.

What are two details given?

1. A famous historian is speaking.
2. It will be at the university.

What does the friend offer?

A ticket.

Intermediate Mid

Can-do Statement:

I can understand the main idea and many details when reading for personal enjoyment.

Task:

Look at the word file attached. It contains a listing of television shows on television with short descriptions of the shows. Read the television listing and chose one that you would be interested in watching! Answer the questions below the television listings. Upload the attached word file as evidence or paste the completed questions directly into the system.

Text Provided by Instructor:

01:00	МИНИСТЕРСТВО КУЛЬТУРЫ (16+)	Каждую неделю самый демократичный министр, Анна Монгайт, вызывает на ковер деятелей культуры. В самом жестком ток-шоу о мире искусства «Министерство культуры» - только правда и никакого художественного вымысла. В Кремле не врут.
02:00	КАПИТАЛИСТЫ (6+)	КАПИТАЛИСТЫ на ДОЖДЕ — это не интервью, а деловой разговор ведущей программы Марины Малыхиной с гостем.
03:00	ГОВОРИТЕ С ЮЛИЕЙ ТАРАТУТОЙ (12+) ПОВТОР	Говорите, мне интересно. Это и название и кредо нового дневного интервью на ДОЖДЕ. Мы приглашаем тех, кого хочется слушать, тех, кого редко услышишь, а иногда и тех, кого бы уши не слышали.
03:30	ИСКУССТВЕННЫЙ ОТБОР (16+) ПОВТОР	ИСКУССТВЕННЫЙ ОТБОР — ежедневный арт-проект Дениса Катаева. В программе — рассказ о самых передовых культурных событиях в стране и мире.
03:40	НАСТРОЕНИЕ НА ДОЖДЕ (12+)	
04:00	ВЕЧЕРНИЙ ГЕРАСИМЕЦ С РОМАНОМ РОМАНОВИЧЕМ (16+)	Каждое воскресенье в гости к восходящей звезде Роману Романовичу приходят самые интересные знаменитости — политики, актеры, бизнесмены, представители шоу-бизнеса, спортсмены. Мы говорим и шутим с гостями обо всем, что интересно им и зрителям ДОЖДЯ, и, конечно же, обсуждаем актуальные новости прошедшей недели.
05:00	ИНТЕРЬЕРЫ С ГЕННАДИЕМ ИОЗЕФАВИЧУСОМ (0+)	Яркая, легкая и интеллектуальная программа про создателей интересных домов и их жителей. Экстравагантные решения, умный подход к пространству, оригинальный дизайн, новые материалы и необычные технологии. Частная жизнь с точки зрения интерьера.

Student Submission:

Which television show interests you most?

Interior with Gennadi Josefavichus

What is the show about?

Housing design using new and interesting methods and materials.

Why does this show interest you?

I enjoy shows about design as I am studying architecture and design in school.

APPENDIX B

Sample Test

The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies
Fall Semester 2011

Имя/Фамилия _____

Число _____

Test: Units 3 and 4

Контрольная работа: Уроки 3 и 4

I. Listening / Аудирование [8 pts.]


Сергей and Tanya occasionally meet downtown in between classes. In the following conversation, Сергей explains to Tanya why he is late. First read through the questions, then listen to the recording and circle the correct answer. Now listen a second time and check your work.

Да или Нет

Tanya says that she has been waiting for a long time.	Да	Нет
Sergey was late because he was working.	Да	Нет
Sergey and Tanya decide to have lunch together.	Да	Нет
Tanya indicates that she wants to eat at home.	Да	Нет

II. Writing / Письмо [44 pts.]

The following is an excerpt from a letter Kevin sent to his Russian friends back in the states. Fill in the missing portions with the appropriate Russian equivalents.



Дорогие Дима и Марина!

Это я, Кевин. Я сейчас в Москве. Гуляю, _____ на _____
dance dance clubs _____, ужинаю в _____, _____, _____, _____
restaurants of course _____, _____
говорю по-русски утром, днём, и _____! Я _____ в _____
in the evening live _____
квартире в _____ доме на _____ этаже. Здесь живёт _____
large fourth _____
семья. Сын - школьник в _____ классе. Он _____ всегда _____
fifth wants _____
говорить по-английски. _____ мы говорим? _____ Америке, _____
about what About about _____
_____ и _____
American music Russian books _____
Твой,
Кевин

III. Dialog [48 pts.]

Imagine that you are at a Russian Club meeting. Introduce yourself to one of the Russian students there. Ask the person what year s/he is in college and find out where s/he lives and what places s/he has visited in the United States or in other countries.

- Dramatize in a dialog of **at least 8 lines**.
- **Don't forget to mark all stresses and intonation centers!**
- Use any extra time you have to check your work.

• Extra Credit • [0 - 3 points added to final score]

Below, give the full conjugation of **хотеть** in the present and past tenses.

Я _____ Мы _____

Ты _____ Вы _____

Он/а _____ Они _____

Past:

Мамма _____; Анна _____; Они _____

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