

Learner-Centered Education Program
Arizona Board of Regents
Attachment A
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FORM

Proposal Title: Learner-centered Task-oriented Language Instruction:
Converging Technology and Immersion

Institution: ASU Dept./Unit: REESC/CLI, DLL

Multi-Campus/University Projects
(check other campuses or universities participating) List other participating agencies:

ASU Main UA _____
 ASU East UA South _____
 ASU West NAU _____

Briefly describe the program and the development plan.

The ASU Critical Languages Institute (CLI) and Department of Language and Literatures (DLL) Slavic Section are proposing to design, build, implement, and test a suite of learner-centered and task-oriented course units for Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Polish, and Russian. These three languages will constitute a test case with envisaged migration of the objects to other languages taught at the CLI and DLL. The deliverables include software, including templates transferable to other languages, other courseware (fact sheets, tables, compendia of links), unit lesson plans, instructions, as well as statistical data and assessments from in-class testing.

Funding Category

Indicate a primary (P) and, if applicable, secondary (S) funding category:

Professional Development _____ Program or Course Development/Modification P
LCE Research _____ Improved Assessment of Learning Outcomes _____

Authorizations
Project Director

Signature: _____

Mailing Address: PO Box 874202, Tempe, AZ 85287-4202

Name: Danko Sipka Title: Acting Director CLI/ Research Associate Professor

Phone: 480-965-7705 Fax: 480-965-1700 Email: Danko.sipka@asu.edu

Department Chair / Unit Director / College Dean / Provost (may not be PD)

Name: Stephen Batalden _____ Title Director,
REESC _____

Signature

Name: Pier Baldini Title Chair, DLL

Signature

Official Authorized to Enter into Contractual Obligations

Signature _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

c/o Arizona Board of Regents
2020 N. Central Avenue, Suite 230
Phoenix, AZ 85004
Phone: 602-229-2500 • Fax: 602-229-2555
www.abor.asu.edu

Learner-Centered Task-Oriented Language Instruction: Converging Technology and Immersion

Proposal Narrative

Part 1: Abstract:

Responding to national needs for more efficient instruction of less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), utilizing its technological potential and social environment, the Russian and East European Studies Center (REESC) Critical Languages Institute (CLI) and Department of Languages and Literatures Slavic Section are proposing to design, build, implement, and test a suite of learner-centered and task-oriented course units for Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS), Polish, and Russian. ASU's need parallels those of other institutions nationally and the necessity for instruction in these LCTLs complements internationalization of the ASU curriculum, "social embeddedness" issues as they relate to K-12 education, social services, etc., as well as national security concerns. These three languages will constitute a test case with envisaged migration of the objects to other languages taught at the CLI and Languages and Literatures Department. The deliverables include software, with templates transferable to other languages, other courseware (fact sheets, tables, compendia of links), unit lesson plans, instructions, as well as statistical data and assessments from in-class testing.

Part 2: Identification of Need:

One of the hallmarks of the early twenty-first century is the shifting locus of educational training from the traditional fixed classroom to the Internet and real-life immersion. Language instruction is not an exception in this respect. There is a demand for on-line and immersion language learning which will enable the student to act as an independent performer of various tasks in the target language (e.g., understanding authentic materials, engaging in on-line and face-to-face interactions, capturing cultural differences, etc.) In contrast to these needs, most available textbooks remain limited to traditional in-class instruction where rote learning detached from real life and learners as objects rather than subjects is perpetuated. Similarly, courses of foreign languages as a rule do not incorporate immersion or task-based e-learning. In effect, learning outcomes are reduced to passive knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary, rather than to linguistic and cultural literacy in multiple genres of the target language. This unfortunate state of the affairs is a frequent subject of concern in the academe (see for example Brecht, R. D. and W. P. Rivers. (2002) *The Language Crisis in the United States: Language, National Security and the Federal Role*. In: Baker, Stephen J (ed.) *Language Policy: Lessons from Global Models*. (pp. 76-90). Monterey: MIIS). **By providing a general framework, designing, implementing, and testing courseware, this project will be an important step toward empowering the learner with the ability to act as a performer of various tasks in the target culture and language**

While generally subscribing to content-centered and task-based modes of instruction, in particular a multiple literacies model (see <http://data.georgetown.edu/departments/german/programs/curriculum/intellectualsources.html> for further discussion), the project is highly sensitive to concerns voiced, for example, in Leaver and Shekhtman (*Developing Professional-Level Language Proficiency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002:28): "An educational philosophy of transaction has moved the goal of teaching from developing linguistic knowledge to being able to accomplish tasks, with or without a linguistic base. Unfortunately, many teachers of lower-level students argue over whether they should teach grammar when they should be asking how and when to teach it." BCS, Polish, and Russian have been targeted as languages offered by both the CLI (for nation-wide audiences), and the Languages and Literatures Department (for ASU students), as languages with populous and diversified heritage communities, and less commonly taught languages with less developed courseware. Solutions and general patterns developed using the material of these three languages will be transferable to other less commonly taught languages at ASU (e.g., Albanian, Armenian, Indonesian, Vietnamese, etc.) In Arizona, this has implications for K-12 teachers, social service agencies that deal with refugees, emergency services personnel, and military agencies.

In addition, this proposal will establish ASU as a leading national center for learner-centered task-based learning of the less commonly taught languages of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Traditionally there are low enrollments in these languages, which currently receive external funding support from the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies. The project will help balance available resources with the educational options provided to students.

Part 3: Technical Needs:

The project will utilize the existing hardware infrastructure (primarily the CLI Unix server) and open-source software (Perl, Java, etc.) A conscientious effort has been made to make ASU, as a public institution, independent from proprietary software. Numerous templates and applications have already been completed (available resources are linked from <http://cli.la.asu.edu>). All software produced within this project will feature cross-platform portability and will be fully operational on Windows, Macintosh, and Unix platforms without any additional modifications. This project will make all of its products available using the Unicode character standard, while at the same time enabling other pre-Unicode pages for Windows, Macintosh, and Unix operating systems. Most of these Internet delivered materials will also be made available on CD-ROM. A quarter-time ASU student worker will be hired as server administrator and no external consultants will be involved.

Part 4: Work Plan/Timeline:

The project will be realized in the following six phases.

Phase 1:	Fine-tuning BCS and creating Polish resources	March 1 – May 30, 2005
Phase 2:	Classroom testing of BCS and Polish resources	June 1 – July 31, 2005
Phase 3:	Development of BCS, Polish, and Russian resources	September 1 – November 30, 2005
Phase 4:	Classroom testing of BCS, Polish, and Russian resources	February 1 – May 7, 2006
Phase 5:	Classroom testing of Polish and Russian resources	June 1 – July 31, 2006
Phase 6:	Final classroom testing and modification of BCS, Polish, and Russian resources, final assessment, creation of the general templates transferable to other languages	August 20 – September 30, 2006

The activities and workload within each phase will be distributed in the following manner.

Phase 1: Fine-tuning BCS and Creating Polish Resources

The existing BCS resources (see <http://cli.la.asu.edu>), and in particular the CLITagger <http://cli.la.asu.edu/clitag2> will be finalized to be used during the 2005 CLI session. The CLITagger enables students to paste any BCS text and create a version with English glosses. The student can then read the text and click on any unknown word to get its English gloss. This enables an early immersion into authentic news and other materials. At the same time, the first rough version of the Polish tagger will be created. The templates from the existing BCS on-line course (<http://cli.la.asu.edu/scr101> - the id number 000000000) will be used to create task-based e-learning objects that prepare the user for real life immersion tasks (e.g., ordering food in an ethnic restaurant, paying a visit to a place of worship, etc.) and evaluating the results and experiences stemming from the immersion.

Workload: Šipka 100 hours, Mielczarek 100 hours, Moore 50 hours, Edgington 10 hours

Phase 2: Classroom Testing of BCS and Polish Resources

Resources developed in Phase 1 will be tested in BCS and Polish CLI classes. The two instructors will modify their syllabi to incorporate weekly use of these resources. They will organize immersion activities envisaged by the task-based software and they will monitor student use of these resources closely, keeping track of student feedback and progress.

Workload: Mielczarek 80 hours, Filipović 50 hours, Edgington 10 hours

Phase 3: Development of BCS, Polish, and Russian Resources

Summer testing data will be analyzed. Text tagger for BCS will be finalized, the work on the Polish text tagger will be continued, and the work on the Russian tagger will commence.

Workload: Sipka 50 hours, Owen 30 hours, Filipović 50 hours, Mielczarek 50 hours, Andreeva 100 hours, Edgington 10 hours

Phase 4: Classroom Testing of BCS, Polish, and Russian Resources

E-learning objects will be tested in Polish 202, BCS 202, and Russian 202 classes. The instructors will modify their syllabi to incorporate weekly use of these resources. They will organize immersion activities envisaged by the task-based software and they will monitor student use of these resources closely, keeping track of student feedback and progress. Most importantly these learner-centered resources will secure constant monitoring of performance measures.

Workload: Sipka 50 hours, Owen 30 hours, Edgington 10 hours

Phase 5: Classroom Testing of Polish and Russian Resources

E-learning objects will be tested in Russian and Polish 101-102. The instructors will modify their syllabi to incorporate weekly use of these resources. Both instructors will organize immersion activities envisaged by the task-based software and they will monitor student use of these resources closely, keeping track of student feedback and progress.

Workload: Mielczarek 50 hours, Filipović 50 hours, Andreeva 50 hours, Edgington 10 hours

Phase 6: Classroom Testing and Modification of BCS, Polish, and Russian Resources

E-learning objects will be tested in Polish 201, BCS 201, and Russian 201 classes. The instructors will modify their syllabi to incorporate weekly use of these resources. They will organize immersion activities envisaged by the task-based software and they will monitor student use of these resources closely, keeping track of student feedback and progress. Final modifications of all e-learning packages will be completed and all packages will be made available nationally. All statistical data will be gathered, assessed, and presented. Templates for all e-learning objects transferable to other languages will be created. Project data will be presented at national and international conferences. A workshop will be organized to train other CLI and Languages and Literatures Department instructors in using and transferring developed courseware to other languages. Lesson plan modules will be finalized; ASU and Arizona workshops will be conducted.

Workload: Sipka 50 hours, Owen 40 hours, Filipović 50 hours, Mielczarek 50 hours, Andreeva 50 hours, Edgington 10 hours

Part 5: Key Personnel:

Danko Šipka (danko.sipka@asu.edu), Ph.D. in linguistics and Ph.D. in psychology, ASU research associate professor, with twenty years of experience in teaching less commonly taught languages and in computational linguistics, will serve as the project director, developer, and tester of e-learning resources.

Jeanette Owen (jeanette.owen@asu.edu), Ph.D. in Russian language pedagogy, ASU assistant professor, will serve as the project co-director and she will test and assess e-learning resources.

Agnieszka Mielczarek (asam@amu.edu.pl), Ph.D. in Polish linguistics, will develop and test Polish resources.

Zlata Filipović (fmilna@aol.com), B.A. in BCS linguistics, will develop and test BCS resources.

Hafiza Andreeva (hafizaandreeva@earthlink.net), B.A. in Russian linguistics, will develop and test Russian resources.

Susan Edgington (susan.edgington@asu.edu), B.A. in Accounting, will manage the budget and logistics.

Bryan Moore (maurice.moore@asu.edu), graduate student in linguistics with knowledge of BCS, Russian, and Polish, will proofread and test the resources from the learner's perspective.

Part 6: Performance Measures:

The project will produce the following principle deliverables:

- Three web pages allowing the user to paste in BCS, Polish, and Russian text respectively and have it tagged with English glosses. BCS tagging will cover over 80% of an average newspaper text, Polish and Russian taggers will cover more than 50%;
- A series of web pages preparing the students for various immersion activities in BCS, Polish, and Russian and evaluating student responses about their immersion experiences;
- Unit lesson plans with guidelines for implementing the courseware and immersion activities;
- Quantitative and qualitative data about learner use of all created software and progress in language acquisition;
- Assessment of the courseware by instructors and language pedagogy specialists;
- Templates enabling transition of the courseware to other less commonly taught languages;
- New summer course devoted to Russian in Central Asia will be created
- On-site workshop teaching ASU and other instructors of less commonly taught languages how to use the objects transfer the templates to their respective languages;
- Conference papers and technical reports about the project.

All these project outcomes will be used and further expanded well beyond the project time frame. BCS, Polish, and Russian classes are currently offered and will be offered in the future in both the Languages and Literatures Department and the Critical Languages Institute. In addition there are numerous other less commonly taught languages in both aforementioned ASU units for which the need exists to create comparable resources.