

Utilizing Undergraduate Peer Teaching Assistants in a Speaking Program in Spanish as a Foreign Language

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Abstract: Peer teaching instruction has not received much attention in college second language (L2) learning. In this article, an L2 peer teaching program at the College of Charleston is discussed including the role, training, and supervision of undergraduate peer teaching assistants (PTAs). The article also explores the kinds of self-reported benefits students enrolled in the program and their PTAs receive. Data from 183 students and 12 PTAs were collected in the form of an anonymous questionnaire using a Likert scale and open-ended questions. Results show that a high percentage of students reported an improvement in speaking, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. PTAs reported practicing Spanish and reviewing the basics as the main benefit from the peer teaching experience.

Key words: foreign language instruction, peer teaching, second language instruction, Spanish supervision

Language: Spanish

Introduction

Enrollment statistics (Welles, 2004) have demonstrated that an increasing number of students study a foreign language in colleges and universities across the United States, with Spanish being the most common choice. In many of these colleges and universities, graduate teaching assistants often teach elementary and intermediate courses. For this reason, graduate teaching assistants in foreign language programs have received much attention from faculty, researchers, and administrators (Amores, 1999; Burkart, 1998; Prieto & Meyers, 2001, among others). However, more attention needs to be paid to a lesser-known but equally important aspect of foreign language programs: the role, training, and supervision of undergraduate peer teaching assistants (PTAs).

Peer Teaching

Peer teaching is "an approach in which one child instructs another child in material on which the first is an expert and the second a novice" (Damond & Phelps, 1989, p. 11). In the context of college-level Spanish, PTAs are advanced undergraduate students in a second language (L2) that teach fellow L2 students in lower level courses. Specifically, PTAs lead small classes to provide fellow students with additional opportunities to communicate in the L2. Although employing undergraduate PTAs is not as common as the employment of graduate teaching assistants in the L2 classroom, the use of undergraduate PTAs is starting to attract interest in higher education because PTAs are not very far removed from the novice students in knowledge, age, and status. As such, they can create an atmosphere where students feel free to ask questions and where learning becomes a creative process of trial and error with less anxiety.

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PTAs have been used successfully in a variety of disciplines such as science (Crouch & Mazur, 2001; Tessier, 2004), psychology (Osborne, Norman, & Basford, 1997), English as a second language (ESL) (Davies & Omberg, 1987; Statman, 1980), writing (Youngs & Green, 2001), Spanish (Rodríguez, 2003; Wright, Cavanaugh, & Sainato, 1995), and college-level German (Semke, 1975). These studies have shown that peer teaching instruction is effective because it increases the students' mastery of conceptual understanding and problem solving, and provides additional practice, especially when large classes may not offer enough personal attention to the students. For instance, Rodríguez (2003) found that in an L2 peer teaching program, students have ample opportunities to speak and practice the L2 because they feel comfortable in a small class atmosphere (thus lowering their affective filter), they reinforce older material, and they have the impression that they have improved their Spanish speaking skills. In fact, Hedin (1987) stated that the main factor of success in a peer teaching program is the pleasant classroom atmosphere.

Not only can peer teaching instruction benefit students, it can also benefit PTAs (Clifford, Jorstad, & Lange, 1977; Osborne et al., 1997; Rodríguez, 2003; Semke, 1975; Statman, 1980; Walz, 1986; Whitman & Fife, 1988; Wright et al., 1995) and institutions. Rodríguez (2003) found that there are benefits for PTAs such as practicing Spanish, learning to teach and lead a class, increasing confidence speaking in front of a group, becoming more organized, building a résumé, and being able to work on campus. According to Osborne et al. (1997), a peer teaching program also creates additional resources for the department and provides mentoring opportunities for PTAs who are planning to attend graduate school. In addition, Hedin (1987) stated that peer teaching programs may have the possibility of informally recruiting future teachers. Specifically, the goal of this article is to describe the components of a successful Spanish L2 peer teaching program at the College of Charleston including the selection, training, and supervision of PTAs in their new role, and the benefits for both PTAs and students involved in this program.

Second Language Peer Teaching Program

The College of Charleston is a state-supported comprehensive institution with a strong liberal arts undergraduate curriculum centered on student learning. It enrolls approximately 9,800 undergraduate students and 1,200 graduate students. At the College of Charleston, the study of languages plays an important role in the liberal arts education and all students are required to complete 12 credit hours of a foreign language. In the Department of Hispanic Studies, almost 3,000 students take Spanish each semester at the elementary and intermediate levels. Of these 3,000 students, approximately 200 choose to enroll in the optional L2 speaking program taught by their peers.

The faculty in the Department of Hispanic Studies is committed to the development of communicative skills in Spanish as an L2, making the communicative approach the preferred teaching approach. In other words, students learn an L2 best by communicating authentic and meaningful information. In addition, communication involves the integration of different language skills weaving together content language learning and interactive tasks in which information is exchanged (Lee, 2000; Lee & Van Patten, 2004; Melero Abadía, 2000; Rodgers, 2001). The textbooks used in the elementary and intermediate courses are *¿Sabías que . . . ? Beginning Spanish* (VanPatten, Lee, & Ballman, 2004) and *Punto y aparte. Spanish in review. Moving towards fluency* (Foerster, Lambright, & Alfonso-Pinto, 2002), which use the communicative approach.

The optional L2 peer teaching program at the College of Charleston consists of approximately twenty 1-credit speaking course sections per semester that accompany and supplement students' required 3-credit language courses. These 1-credit speaking courses meet once a week for 50 minutes and they are designed to provide students with additional opportunities to actively practice speaking Spanish in a small classroom atmosphere of 5 to 10 students outside of the required 3-credit course (see Appendix A). More frequently than not, it is a challenge in the required 3-credit course to have ample opportunities to exchange authentic information because course sections often have large number of students. Therefore, classroom activities in the optional L2 peer teaching program are tailored to encourage communication in the L2 under the leadership of 10 to 12 outstanding undergraduate PTAs who major or minor in Spanish and are under the supervision of a faculty member who selects and trains them.

The College of Charleston uses PTAs because peer teaching has been found to be an effective mode of supplemental instruction, there are no graduate teaching assistants in Spanish, and PTAs have the opportunity to work on campus in their major or minor area of interest.

Peer Teaching Assistants

Each semester, the supervisor of the L2 peer teaching program, in consultation with other members of the department, selects 10 to 12 interested outstanding undergraduate students who major or minor in Spanish to become PTAs.

Selection and Requirements

In order to become a PTA, candidates have to be at Intermediate Mid or higher in an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) following the guidelines of the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (Breiner-Sanders, Lowe, Miles, & Swender, 2000). The supervisor of the program, who has formal training in the administration of the OPI, conducts the interview. The level of Intermediate Mid was selected for PTAs in charge of elementary course sections because as peers they only need to be slightly above

their students. However, for those PTAs in charge of intermediate course sections, higher levels such as Advanced Low are needed. In addition to the OPI, oral or written references from faculty members are requested to attest to the students' level of organization, maturity, responsibility, seriousness, and commitment to the program.

Responsibilities

Because PTAs are undergraduate students, they work closely with the supervising faculty member in charge of the program. This does not mean, however, that they do not have serious responsibilities in the course sections they are assigned to lead by the program supervisor. In fact, they are the primary instructors in the classroom, and as such they carry out the curriculum the supervisor develops. In the classroom, they are language resources and facilitators, they take attendance and maintain grade records, they evaluate students' participation, preparation, and oral presentations, and they administer and grade oral exams using rubrics provided by the program supervisor.

Training and Supervision

The complex task of turning an undergraduate student into a PTA demands close attention to their training and supervision in the form of an orientation, workshops, periodic communication, and classroom evaluations and conferences. Supervisors of PTAs have to train them to ensure quality and uniformity in the program. This type of training may be challenging and time consuming depending on the level of experience and maturity of the PTA. For instance, some PTAs are also studying to become secondary education teachers and already have an understanding of classroom dynamics, whereas others do not.

Orientation and Workshops

The training of PTAs takes place at the beginning of the fall and spring terms and it includes a 2-hour orientation to the peer teaching program and a workshop on the communicative approach and performance assessment. In the workshop, PTAs learn how to use pair and group activities, and rubrics to assess different aspects of students' participation in class (see Appendix B), as well as their performance on presentations such as completion of task, quality of presentation, pronunciation, language use, and visuals and creativity (see Appendix C). The supervisor creates materials for the training following the communicative approach used in the 3-credit courses textbooks, as well as others based on his/her professional experience with curriculum and instruction, and applied linguistics.

During orientation, PTAs also learn practical and administrative information about the program, such as how to maintain class records, and how to access the Web course software WebCT to obtain lesson plans and other materials developed by the supervisor. During orientation, PTAs are introduced to their new role: to provide opportu-

nities for oral communication and to offer help in Spanish which is understandable to the students.

Another area of orientation includes expectations for first day of class, sample lesson plans, the use of visuals, and grammar. Walz (1986) pointed out that in order to communicate more effectively in the classroom, both PTAs and students need to use visuals, and that PTAs do not need to offer long grammar explanations. Often, PTAs want to offer grammar explanations in the way a traditional tutor would do, but during orientation, PTAs are reminded that the goal of the program is to communicate in a meaningful manner and that grammar explanations need to be left to the 3-credit course instructor.

In addition to orientation, each semester there is a 2-hour workshop on how to administer and evaluate oral exams. In this workshop, the supervisor explains the format of the exam, which consists of a brief conversation and two short topic presentations based on the material previously covered in class. For example, if a course covered the family, a possible topic presentation would be to talk about a student's family including the relationship to the student, ages of the family members, and their professions. During the workshop, grading procedures with performance assessment rubrics are used, and the schedule for the exams is given. PTAs administer oral exams of the sections they do not lead to add objectivity to the exam.

Communication

In order to help PTAs and ensure a quality program, there is periodic communication via e-mail about different aspects of the courses, such as how to lead the class more effectively, how to deal with concerns or problems, and how to keep pace with the material or give more efficient feedback. Another way to communicate with PTAs is via the Web course software WebCT. Although WebCT was designed to create and manage online courses, it can also be used to support the program by providing PTAs with information, materials, and tools needed to lead their groups. For instance, on the WebCT page for the program, PTAs can find fellow PTAs contact information and e-mail capabilities, as well as a calendar with information about meetings and deadlines. In addition, lesson plans, teaching materials and visuals are uploaded by the supervisor to WebCT in order for the information to be available to the PTAs at all times from any location.

Classroom Observations

Another important aspect of training and supervision is classroom observations. The supervisor observes new PTAs twice a semester and more experienced PTAs are observed once. The supervisor shares with the PTAs the classroom observation form used in order for them to know which behaviors and practices are observed (see Appendix D).

One of the areas of evaluation is planning and organization, including following the lesson plan provided,

informing students of the objectives for the lesson and the assignment, following a logical sequence with smooth transitions, starting and finishing on time, and having a conclusion to the lesson. Another area of evaluation is attitude and learning atmosphere, including being a competent, fair, courteous, patient PTA, being enthusiastic about the language, involving all students, and having a positive learning atmosphere. The last area of evaluation is time management and instructional techniques, including being organized, giving clear instructions, informing students of amount of time to work on activities, offering help when needed, monitoring group and pair work, encouraging participation, giving constructive feedback, using rubrics to grade, speaking Spanish, and paraphrasing when needed.

After the classroom observation, the supervisor and the PTA meet in a conference session for feedback. The supervisor points out the strengths and weaknesses and offers suggestions for improvement. These conference sessions usually last between 30 minutes and 1 hour.

Benefits for Students and Peer Teaching Assistants

In order to find out the perceived benefits of the L2 peer teaching program for students enrolled in it, data from 183 students were collected at the end of spring 2003 in the form of an anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire had a series of statements on a Likert scale and an open-ended question. This scale was used as a way to measure how students felt they had benefited from this experience. In order to do that, each statement was assigned a number from 6 to 1. A 6 means highly agree (HA), 5 agree (A), 4 slightly agree (SA), 3 slightly disagree (SD), a 2 disagree (D), and 1 strongly disagree (SD).

The questionnaire contained the following statements: (a) the PTA gives ample opportunities to speak Spanish; (b) the PTA makes me feel comfortable in class; and (c) the PTA provides constructive criticism. In addition, the following open-ended question was used to obtain a list of the perceived areas of improvement: "Do you feel you have improved your speaking skills? If so, please explain." (See Appendix E.) The higher the number, the better the evaluation on a statement. An average of each statement (1–6) is given in Table 1, and a percentage and number of students in parenthesis who felt improved their speaking skills is given in Table 2 together with a list of self-reported areas of improvement.

Similarly, data were collected from 12 PTAs at the end of spring 2003 in the form of an anonymous questionnaire using the following two open-ended questions: (a) "Do you feel you have improved your speaking skills in Spanish?" and (b) "List the benefits of engaging in this activity." Table 3 shows the percentage of PTAs who reported a specific benefit.

As other programs using peer teaching instruction have shown, both students and PTAs benefit from this

Table 1

AGREEMENT SCORES FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN L2 PEER TEACHING PROGRAM

Item	Level			
	SPAN 101	SPAN 102	SPAN 201	SPAN 202
Practice the L2	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9
Comfortable in class	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
Constructive feedback	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.5

Table 2

STUDENTS REPORTING IMPROVEMENT IN SPEAKING AND AREAS MENTIONED

	Level			
	SPAN 101	SPAN 102	SPAN 201	SPAN 202
Improvement	93% (46)	92% (58)	90% (51)	100% (28)
More comfortable speaking	X	X	X	X
More confident			X	X
More fluent			X	X
Better pronunciation	X	X	X	X
Increased vocabulary	X	X	X	X
Better grammar	X	X	X	X
Better listening skills	X	X	X	
Reinforcement	X	X		

experience in the classroom. For students taking these courses (SPAN 101, 102, 201, and 202), Table 1 shows the level of agreement, 6 being highly agree and 1 highly disagree, of the three statements mentioned above, that is having ample opportunities to speak and practice their Spanish, feeling comfortable in the class, and receiving direct feedback that is just addressed to the student.

As can be observed in Table 2, a high percentage of students in all four levels (SPAN 101, 102, 201, and 202) reported a perception of having improved. Particularly, students mentioned improvement in being more comfortable and less hesitant speaking Spanish, having better pronunciation, increasing vocabulary, and having better grammar (especially with word order and tenses). Students in the lower levels (SPAN 101 and 102) found the conversation class to be a reinforcement of their regular class, while only students in the higher levels (SPAN 201 and 202) reported feeling more confident speaking Spanish in front of others and being more fluent. Students in the first three levels (SPAN 101, 102, and 201) reported an improvement in listening skills.

All PTAs reported practicing Spanish and reviewing the basics as a benefit from the peer teaching experience. In addition, as can be observed in Table 3, other benefits were

Table 3

PTAS REPORTING BENEFITS FROM THE PROGRAM AND AREAS MENTIONED

Benefit	Percentage
Practice L2	100% (12)
L2 review	100% (12)
Leadership	25.0% (3)
Confidence	41.7% (5)
Organization	33.3% (4)
Role model	8.3% (1)
Rewarding	50.0% (6)
Interaction	33.3% (4)
Resume	16.7% (2)
Money	8.3% (1)

mentioned by some of the PTAs which included learning how to teach and lead, being more confident speaking in front of others, being more organized, feeling the responsibility and flattery of being a role model, having a rewarding experience and interacting with other students, building a résumé, and earning some money on campus.

Conclusion

The L2 peer teaching program at the College of Charleston is a model that has been successful both for students taking these courses and the PTAs in charge of them. Because peer teaching is a positive learning and/or personal experience, more colleges and universities may be interested in establishing a similar program. In order to have a successful program, to assure excellence and curriculum uniformity, supervisors must pay close attention to the selection, training, and supervision of PTAs, not only formally during orientation and workshops, but also individually through classroom observations, individual conferences, and frequent e-mail communication. In doing so, both students taking the courses and their PTAs would notice an improvement in their Spanish speaking skills. Therefore, the use of undergraduate PTAs in foreign language classrooms is a valuable way to supplement the required course with extra opportunities to help students develop their speaking ability in a relaxed atmosphere.

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Appendix A

Syllabus

Spanish Conversation Practicum
Spring 2004

Instructor: _____ E-mail: _____

1. **OBJECTIVES:** The Spanish Conversational Practicum has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to actively practice speaking Spanish. The practicum activities are tailored to encourage and develop oral communication skills in Spanish.
2. **ABOUT THE PROGRAM:** The conversation practicum is an optional course that accompanies and supplements students' 3-hour Spanish courses. It must be taken in conjunction with a corresponding 3-hour course. The practicum meets once a week for 50 minutes; upon successful completion of the practicum, students earn one (1) credit hour. There is no required text.
3. **REGISTRATION:** All students are responsible for their own registration in the practicum. Students must be registered in SPAN 101, 102 or 201 to register for the respective SPAN 101-C, 102-C, 201-C or 202-C course. Students registered in SPAN 150 or 250 may also register in SPAN 101-C and 202-C, respectively. Students are also responsible for maintaining or dropping their registration according to published schedules. Please note that ceasing attendance in a conversation practicum does not automatically drop you from the course.
4. **REQUIREMENTS:** The conversation practicum meets for 12 weekly sessions. Successful completion of the practicum requires consistent attendance, thorough preparation, and active participation. There are weekly homework presentations and a final exam at the end of the semester. Specifically:
 - Attendance is the single most important requirement for this course since the objective of the Conversation Practicum is to speak Spanish. When a student is absent, s/he is not speaking Spanish in class and therefore receives a zero (0) for the day. If attending all 12 sessions will be problematic, this may not be the appropriate course for you. You can make up a maximum of TWO classes. To make up classes, students must attend another session of the same class they are taking, during the same week of the absence. It is very important that all students be fully aware of the attendance policy and, as such, of the make-up policy. Since classes may and should be made up, no excuses, regardless of their origin, will be accepted for absences. No extension of Spring Break is permitted.

- Homework: Students will be assigned homework at the end of each class. All assignments involve preparing an oral presentation on an assigned topic with no notes or reading of any kind (in addition, for SPAN 202-C preparation of an assigned debate topic). All homework assignments are to be thoroughly prepared ahead of time, with appropriate vocabulary looked up before class. Preparation and homework assignments constitute $\frac{1}{3}$ of your final grade. Clearly, you must be present to be assigned a homework grade.
 - Participation: Students are expected to participate actively in class. Specifically, you are expected to communicate in Spanish, participate in pair, group, and whole class interaction. Your daily grade for class will be based on five areas: speaking, listening, use of Spanish, group work, and whole class interaction.
 - Final Exam: Students will conclude the semester with a final oral exam consisting of a brief conversation and discussion of topics. The exam will not be conducted by your instructor and will take place during your regular class time, in your regularly scheduled classroom. They will begin on Tuesday April 20 and conclude on Monday April 26, 2004. Any student missing the final exam will fail the course. The final exam constitutes $\frac{1}{3}$ of your final grade.
5. GRADING: You will receive two daily grades, one for your homework presentation and another for your participation in class.
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Daily participation grade (12) | 33% |
| Daily homework grade (11) | 33% |
| Oral Final Exam (1) | 34% |
- The following scale is used to assign a letter grade at the end of the semester:
90–100 A, 87–89 B+, 80–86 B, 77–79 C+, 70–76 C, 60–69 D, 0–59 F
6. PROGRAM COORDINATION: Your instructor's role is to provide you with a forum for developing your oral skills in Spanish. S/he follows a standardized program. S/he is responsible for facilitating the class according the guidelines provided. Questions or concerns about any aspect of the course or program are to be directed to the Program Supervisor.

Appendix B
Participation Grading Criteria

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations 5 points	Meets Expectations 4 points	Does Not Meet Expectations 2 points
Speaking	Student spoke very often	Student spoke often	Student did not speak much
Listening	Student listened carefully to the peer teacher and classmates	Student generally listened to the peer teacher and classmates	Student did not listen to the peer teacher and classmates
Use of Spanish	Student used Spanish 100%	Student used mostly Spanish (80%)	Student did not speak often
Group Work	Student participated very actively and was the leader in getting tasks done	Student participated actively and contributed as much as other group members	Student was somewhat interested but participated passively
Whole Class Interaction	Student volunteered often	Student volunteered occasionally	Student did not volunteer

TOTAL POINTS:

A = 25–23 points

B+ = 22 points

B = 21–20 points

C+ = 19 points

C = 18 points

D = 17–16 points

Appendix C*Presentation Grading Criteria*

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations 5 points	Meets Expectations 4 points	Does Not Meet Expectations 2 points
Completion of task	All required points included	Most of the required points included	Only a few of the required points included
Quality of Presentation	Clear and effective presentation	Unclear at certain points	Difficult to follow
Pronunciation	Few pronunciation errors and easily understood	Frequent mispronunciation causes some misunderstanding	Poor pronunciation interferes with being understood
Language Use	Overall accurate grammar, word order, and/or vocabulary	Little accuracy at certain points in grammar, word order, and/or vocabulary	Overall little accuracy in grammar, word order, and/or vocabulary
Visuals and creativity	Extensive visuals and/or props; two additions to original assignment	Limited visuals, and/or props used; one addition to original assignment	No visuals or props used; no creative additions to original assignment

TOTAL POINTS:

A = 25–23 points

B+ = 22 points

B = 21–20 points

C+ = 19 points

C = 18 points

D = 17–16 points

Appendix D

Classroom Observation

Name _____ Date _____

Class _____ Start _____ End _____ Size _____

I. PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

- Peer teaching assistant (PTA) followed lesson plan.
- Students were informed of the objectives for the lesson.
- The class followed a logical sequence and transitions were smooth.
- PTA did not start late or finish early.
- Students were informed of the assignment.
- The lesson had a conclusion.

II. ATTITUDE AND LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

- PTA appeared competent.
- There was a positive working atmosphere.
- All students were involved.
- PTA was fair.
- PTA was courteous at all times.
- PTA was not impatient.
- PTA had good rapport with students.
- PTA seemed enthusiastic about the language.

III. TIME MANAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES

- PTA demonstrated organizational skills.
- PTA gave clear instructions.
- PTA informed students of amount of time to work on activities.
- PTA answered students' questions.
- The class was well-paced.
- PTA monitored group work.
- PTA encouraged participation.
- PTA did not engage in grammar explanations.
- PTA used materials and board effectively.
- PTA offered help when needed.
- PTA gave constructive feedback after presentations.
- PTA used rubrics to grade.
- PTA spoke Spanish at the students' level.
- PTA paraphrased when needed.
- PTA spoke too slow/too fast.

Appendix E*Student Questionnaire*

You are encouraged to provide written comments. Gracias.

HA = highly agree

A = agree

SA = slightly agree

SD = slightly disagree

D = disagree

HD = highly disagree

1. The PTA gives ample opportunities to speak Spanish. (Circle).

HA A SA SD D HD

Comments:

2. The PTA makes me feel comfortable in class. (Circle).

HA A SA SD D HD

Comments:

3. The PTA provides constructive criticism. (Circle).

HA A SA SD D HD

Comments:

4. Do you feel you have improved your own speaking skills? (Please explain).

Language Learning Interest at a New Management University in Multilingual Singapore

Glenn Wharton
Singapore Management University

Abstract: *The purpose of this article is fourfold: first, to report on a university-wide survey assessing demand among bilingual undergraduates for foreign language study in a management university in Singapore; second, to determine those factors influencing students' foreign language choice and also those influencing decisions not to pursue foreign language study; third, to discuss how the results contribute to curricular planning for foreign language provision; and fourth, to provide readers with a non-U.S. or European perspective on the issues of foreign language learning interest and choice. Using an online survey, results from 708 respondents indicated that, although already bilingual, an overwhelming majority demanded more opportunities for foreign language study, particularly for Japanese, French, and Spanish. Students' primary motivations were a desire to learn about the target culture and enhance employment marketability.*

Key words: *Asia, business, education, language planning, multilingualism*

Languages: *English, French, German, Japanese, Malay, Mandarin, Spanish, Tamil*

Introduction

In the new global world, English has emerged as the de facto international language of business (Bruthiaux, 2002; Graddol, 1997; Koch, 1997; Vande Berg, 1997). Consequently perhaps, in most English-dominant settings, monolingualism in English is often seen as being an adequate, if not preferred, language model and sufficient for operation in the global marketplace.

However, despite an increasingly homogenized world culture dominated by English, we also see both a trend for groups around the world to emphasize their own cultural and linguistic uniqueness and also an increasing recognition of the world as a bi/multilingual context where monolingualism is the exception and linguistic diversity the norm. It may thus be time to begin to view the future in multilingual terms, a future in which English alone may well become insufficient. Indeed, a good number of researchers (Domke-Damont, 2001; Koch, 1997; Panella, 1998; Gump, 2003; Uber Grosse, 2001, 2004) have stressed the importance of developing cultural and foreign language fluency as one goal of international business communication instruction in the 21st century.

Recent evidence (Beyer & Ebeid, 2003; Rogers & Arn, 1998; Rose & Wood, 2004; Schorr, 2000) seems to suggest that even in the traditionally monolingual culture of the United States, some business schools are now paying more attention to foreign language and culture training and requiring that students be exposed to at least one foreign language and its culture. However, given the increasingly competitive international job marketplace, one wonders whether enough is being done now to insure that students from predominantly monolingual cultures (e.g., the United Kingdom and particularly the United States) are as prepared as they could be for what lies ahead. Are they perhaps at a competitive disadvantage compared to their business student

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