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# The Development of Two Units for *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*: "Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences" and "Understanding Students' Learning Styles"

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The Development of Two Units for *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching  
English to Speakers of Other Languages: “Teaching Styles and  
Cultural Differences”* and “Understanding  
Students’ Learning Styles”

Kyle Frank Johnson

A selected project submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

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Brigham Young University  
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## ABSTRACT

### The Development of Two Units for *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*: “Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences” and “Understanding Students’ Learning Styles”

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To create a much-needed program for training novice and volunteer English teachers, Dr. Lynn Henrichsen put together a team of interested TESOL graduate students who developed materials and resources for this purpose. Under his supervision and mentorship, each student helped with the development of units for a website and book titled, *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (BTRTESOL). Recognizing the target audience as novice teachers with little or no training in teaching English as a second language, each graduate student approached the development of each unit for this BTRTESOL program with this in mind. These untrained teachers are filling the gap that exists in areas of the world that are in need of well trained, certified TESOL teachers but lack resources because of poverty and the large quantity of students wanting to learn English. Owing to the great demand for English skills and the lack of trained teachers, there is a great need for the resources that this program and project provide.

My part in this program included the design and development of two units, “Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences” and “Understanding Students’ Learning Styles.” These two units seek to help novice teachers understand teaching styles, learning styles, the role of culture, and the cultural mismatches that may exist between a teacher’s style of teaching and a student’s style of learning. These training units help novice teachers learn how to identify, teach, and expand students’ learning styles in order to help them improve students’ learning. Additionally, the units include information directing users to other resources for more information on these topics.

Key words: TESOL, teaching style, learning style, teacher training, cultural mismatches

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the problem and rationale behind this project. It also includes details on why I chose this project, and why I chose my two units—“Teaching Styles and Cross-cultural Differences,” and “Student Learning Styles.”

### **Overview**

The purpose of this project is to give minimal yet valuable training through video, Internet, and book formats, to novices or volunteers who need assistance teaching English. The program, of which these two units are a part, is titled *Basic Training and Resources-for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More (BTRTESOL)*.

Novice and volunteer teachers and the organizations that use them, are the target audience that the program and project seeks to better equip to effectively teach English to speakers of other languages. These novice volunteers usually have education levels at or slightly above a high school education, but some may also have advanced education or be retired. They volunteer through humanitarian organizations, religious service experiences, or with other groups that seek to aid in the education of developing countries. They are often asked to teach with little training except for their own knowledge of the English language.

The training included in this program presents basic information on research, principles, and techniques helpful to teaching English as a second language. This project will provide training through the use of Internet tutorials, example videos, and descriptive text for individuals and organizations seeking knowledge of basic TESOL principles to improve their skills and abilities to teach English effectively in different situations.

## **Personal Background**

As missionaries serving in the poor, European country of Albania, my companions and I were asked to set up and begin teaching free English language classes. We did not have any training, resources, or places to go for information on how to teach English classes. We never received any “how to teach English” or linguistic training other than our own experiences trying to learn the Albanian language. Some missionaries had had second language learning experience in high school. We missionaries set up one-hour English classes twice a week. We placed students into two classes, one for adults over 20 and one for everyone else 19 and younger. The classes had anywhere from 12 to 50 students, and students were not placed according to English proficiency. I was challenged every day to create lessons that I felt would best help my students learn English adequately even though I had no training on how to effectively teach English to non-native speakers. As I taught these students, it became apparent, because of the low student retention rates and little improvement in their English proficiency, that I needed training and resources to better meet the needs of my eager students.

Like my fellow missionaries and myself, there are many other volunteer English language teachers who are part of many organizations. These organizations rely on volunteers to teach English classes around the world, and they typically receive very little training and material support to help them be effective English teachers.

## **Description of the BTRTESOL Program and This MA Project**

Many volunteer, novice, English teachers from organizations, companies, charities, churches, and other groups are sent throughout the world to teach English classes. However, no one tracks all these teachers, so we do not know the exact number of this population. Some statistics are too old to give an accurate number. We do know that there are a lot of these

volunteers teaching English (Henrichsen, 2010; Henrichsen, 2011). Many of these individuals are often minimally trained without any pre-requisite knowledge of how to teach a language or a background in language learning. Because they have no modern professional teaching development in the area of teaching English as a second language (EFL) or English as a foreign language (ESL), they often face a daunting task when teaching others English. Some of these individuals do prepare and often seek the ideal book that can train them in everything, but they never find such a book or solution to this problem. The BTRTESOL program was developed to help these novice teachers who have no training or background in TESOL or linguistics, so that they can be better teachers and their learners can be more successful in acquiring and using English as a second language.

*BTRTESOL* is a program in the form of a paper book and website (both supplemented by video clips) that utilizes a minimalist, connectivist approach to helping, untrained novice and volunteer ESL/EFL teachers to be more effective, professional, and successful. The program is usable in two ways: in a traditional, face-to-face class with a teacher trainer and regular meetings, or by independent self-study, according to an individual's particular interests, needs, and schedule. The program consists of nearly 50 units designed to help novice teachers learn many of the vitally important principles and procedures for teaching English.

BTRTESOL is designed to help fill the gap that exists in the training and knowledge of volunteer and novice teachers and to offer materials for those who teach English but do not have the proper professional resources. The program uses a minimalistic approach to its design and the amount of content in each unit. Minimalistic, in practice, means selecting and focusing on the points most beneficial to a novice volunteer.

Some TESOL veterans, who recognize the complexity of teaching English to speakers of other languages, may object to the provision of minimal training for novice teachers. These experienced TESOL educators may feel that “a little knowledge may be a dangerous thing” and that only fully trained people should engage in teaching English as a second/foreign language (Pennycook and Coutand-Marin, 2003). The reality, however, is that many untrained or minimally trained people are already teaching English language classes. Many of them work in situations where the students can’t afford to pay for a fully trained, experienced teacher with an advanced degree (Henrichsen, 2010). Further, after their initial experience as English teachers, many novice volunteer teachers do pursue advanced degrees in TESOL. In this way, the minimalistic training they receive through programs like BTRTESOL becomes the gateway to more advanced training in teaching.

Each BTRTESOL unit also offers direction and instructions to lead the audience to additional resources that will continue to help them develop their teaching skills. Novice and volunteer teachers are defined as those individuals, alone or as part of an organization, who have not received any academic degree or taken academic classes in TESOL, and/or who have no background in this field. They may or may not have learned a second language and may or may not have college experience. This target audience may be teaching English in a country where most people speak English or where English is used only in the classroom.

Each unit of the program is designed around a template established by Dr. Henrichsen, who is the program director. Although each unit does have some minor variations in formatting and structure, all units follow the same template. Each unit includes an opening scenario connecting the audience to the topic, sections that describe major areas of content related to the topic, interactive activities, and end with a section of resources explaining where the reader can

go for more information on the topic because each unit uses a minimalistic approach and may not include detailed information. Even though the project is minimalistic, the sections on where to go to learn more provide links and directions that guide readers to other more in depth and important information on the topics of the unit. All of the units' sections are designed to help the BTRTESOL program users gain knowledge important for novice teachers in the TESOL field.

For my MA project, I created two units for the BTRTESOL program. The two units are "Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences" and "Understanding Students' Learning Styles." These two units focus on two principles of teaching English that have significant value because of the cultural misunderstandings that often occur between teaching and learning styles. These misunderstandings can and do cause difficulties for the students and the teacher when the two are in conflict. These two units also reflect important current theory on language learning and teaching that is essential to understand in order to help English learners learn more efficiently.

### **Rationale for Choosing This Project**

I first became interested in cultures and language while living in Albania. The Albanian language and culture first piqued my interests in cultural issues because of the vast differences in how I understood, viewed, and interpreted the world compared to how Albanian people viewed the world. After completing my service time in Albania, I took two classes at Snow College in Ephraim, Utah, that would further draw me towards language and culture. Those classes were ENGL 2660-Introduction to Language and TSFL 2650-Language in Society. These classes introduced me to basic principles and theories in second language acquisition and the influence of society and culture on language. It was in those classes that I first learned about how we cognitively process, acquire, and produce language, as well as the significant roles that language and culture have on one another.

Upon completion of my degree, I decided to further my understanding of language acquisition by obtaining an undergraduate degree in linguistics from Brigham Young University. During that time, I enrolled in several linguistic and anthropology classes that continued to help me explore the areas of culture and language, with an emphasis on English. These classes were Ling 330-Introduction to Linguistics, Anthr 420- Language and Cultural Insight, ELang 325-Grammar of English, and ELang 468-Varieties of English.

After completing my degree in Linguistics, I felt I needed to have a more direct and personal influence on language learners. I wanted to be able to interact with and teach people who wanted to improve their life situations by learning English. This desire is what made me want to help others learn English. I wanted to understand the methodologies of teaching others to learn and acquire the English language. I also knew teaching English would introduce me to many different unique cultures and people, and would eventually further my understanding of the world.

I was then able to continue my education through coursework in the TESOL MA program, also at Brigham Young University. During the program, I worked on a research paper in Ling 500 that required research on teaching styles and the role of culture. Originally this was to be used as a MA thesis proposal. However, due to the time constraints and resources needed for the proposed thesis, I was unable to continue with that paper. Dr. Henrichsen, one of my professors and a faculty member in the department, informed me of another opportunity involving the same topic of differences in culture, learning and teaching. It was his BTRTESOL project on developing resources for novice and volunteer teachers.

While discussing this project and learning the different areas on which the project would focus, I became interested in two of the units then titled “Developing an Awareness of Teaching

Styles and Cross-Cultural Differences” and “Students’ Learning styles and Cross-cultural Differences.” Both of these units were in line with my areas of interest and my original MA thesis proposal.

### **Delimitations**

Due to the nature of this project and the target audience, Dr. Henrichsen explained several constraints and principles, which each unit of the program needed to follow. I also learned more about these delimitations through pilot testing and evaluations that will be discussed more in Chapter 3. The constraints and principles I was first given included, deciding on the most important information that should be included in a 5-7 page unit of each of the two topics for my units, using language that was at or below the readability level of the targeted novice audience, using a minimalistic approach to the content of the units, writing to and not above the target audience’s understanding, and including sections for reflection and where to go for more information.

In summary, the BTRTESOL program and my MA project are designed to help train novice volunteer teachers to be more effective in their efforts to teach the English language. I became interested in teaching English as a second language after being a volunteer myself. When I learned of BTRTESOL I found a perfect opportunity to help others become better teachers so that they might have a more productive experience compared to my own volunteer experience in Albania mentioned earlier. Working with the delimitations previously established I learned many things about the research and development of training materials for novice teachers. In the next chapter I will review research and materials developed by scholars on the topics of teaching, learning, and related areas particular to the content found in my MA project like style dimensions, cultural influences, and mismatches of styles in the classroom.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will discuss previous research on learning styles, teaching styles and the related cultural gaps that frequently exist between teachers and students of different cultural backgrounds. Given the specific delimitations of this project, this literature review seeks to determine what aspects of teaching style, learning style and the cultural differences are most important for the BTRTESOL program designed for novice or volunteer English teachers to understand.

The literature review begins with a broad view, starting with definitions of teaching and learning that then lead to models in teaching styles. A review of learning styles and strategies follows because of the strong connection learning strategies have with teaching and learning styles. It is also important to clarify and untangle some of the more confusing and overlapping terms that exist in defining and classifying dimensions in learning styles. In order to do this, I discuss the more prominent aspects and dimensions of learning styles. These include the cognitive, psychological, and sensory aspects. Other dimensions and style explanations that are particular to TESOL, like the “Perceptual Learning Styles” inventory designed by Joy Reid (1987), are reviewed here as well. Because my units are designed to help novice volunteers understand the cultural element in style differences, I also discuss the mismatches between students’ and teachers’ learning and teaching styles and how culture plays an important role in style mismatches based on the research. Finally, I review suggestions for implementing learning styles in classroom teaching, how to assess students’ learning styles, and disagreements in the research.



## **Introduction**

Scholars have conducted many research studies in hope of finding answers to the question: what makes a good language learner? Many viewpoints and theories from people like Skinner, Chomsky and Krashen are concerned with the behaviors, personalities, and other factors in the process of learning, teaching, and how the mind acquires or learns a second language. The research most important to this MA project revolves around three points of intersection in language learning theory and what is most important to pass along to a novice or volunteer language teacher. These three points are teaching styles, learning styles and cultural differences between styles that cause difficulties in the learning process.

Over the last 20 years, Brown (1987, 2007) has discussed the difficulty defining the terms *learning* and *teaching* in his multiple editions of *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. He points out that the definitions of these two words are interconnected and cannot exist independently (1987, p. 7). They are inseparable because with teaching there should inherently be learning; they have a coactive relationship. Although Brown points out that when there is teaching there is learning, it is probably more congruous to say that quality teaching is the foundation so quality learning can take place.

## **Improving Teaching**

In order to improve teaching and learning scholars have sought for a better understanding of the interaction between teachers and students in the learning process. As a consequence, research has developed and divided into many different areas in order to understand the many different elements involved in learning and teaching (Brown, 2001). Scholars want to improve teaching through continued development in research in order to understand the process of

acquiring English as a second language and the associated difficulties (Richards and Lockhart, 1996).

It is important to understand that teacher improvement is based on the idea that there are better ways of teaching and helping learners attain greater success in learning. In order to develop and improve teaching practices, teachers need to understand their own sense of improvement when teaching and the effectiveness of their teaching choices on students' learning. They need to be conscious of the relationship they have with students. According to Wheatley (2005), this relationship between the student and teacher needs to be a "power relationship where learners take a more active role in their learning" (p. 748). This means that teachers can empower students to take more responsibility in their own learning process and thus improve students' learning.

It is safe to say that students play a critical role in the learning process and that it is vital we understand students and what is going on inside their heads as they learn and interact with teachers so that teaching can be more effective. However, research has also helped us to learn that certain teaching methods or styles do not always fit every learner (Wu and Alrabah, 2009). Therefore teachers need to understand style differences between themselves and their students.

### **Teaching Styles and Parallel Dimensions in Learning Styles**

Teaching styles may be another important element in understanding the difficulties that some students in a classroom face while other students in the same classroom do really well. This section will look at research regarding what teaching styles are and the role teaching styles have in a classroom in order to show why it is important for teachers to understand their style of teaching. This section will also review scholars' use of parallel terms and dimensions in distinguishing and comparing teaching styles to learning styles.

A teaching style is based on decisions a teacher generally makes regarding the instructional methods and procedures he/she uses in the classroom (Hsu, 2000; Mosston and Ashworth, 1990). Although there is no agreed upon definition to teaching styles (Peacock, 2001), teaching styles are often characterized along the same dimensions as learning styles as was done by Dreyer (1998), Hsu (2000), Oxford and Lavine (1992), Tobias, (2001) and Peacock (2001). The purpose for having similar definitions and dimensions between teaching and learning styles allows researchers to distinguish and readily identify differences and mismatch problems between the teacher and students' styles. It is those mismatches in styles that often equate to problems students have learning. Sometimes these mismatches have also been interpreted, when not understood, as student behavior problems (Oxford and Lavine, 1992; Oxford, Ehrman and Lavine, 1991).

As an example of equating definitions of dimensions of learning styles to definitions in teaching style dimensions, Hsu (2000) created a teaching style inventory using Reid's (1984) Perceptual Learning Styles Preferences Questionnaire (PLSPQ). By defining and explaining teaching and learning styles along the same dimensions an analysis could more easily be done in order to correlate learning styles to teaching styles and the place them into a framework that could then be studied according to mismatches between learning and teaching styles (Hsu, 2000).

Additionally, many researchers believe that teachers tend to use methods that follow their preferred learning style (Cohen and Weaver, 2006; Ehrman, 1996; Gabriel, 2002; Oxford, 1990; Oxford and Lavine, 1992; Reid, 1987, 1995). However the influence of a teacher's learning style on his or her teaching style is much more complex and more research is needed Hsu (2000). Most likely this is because a teacher's teaching style is influenced by many additional factors that will be discussed below (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Mosston and Ashworth, 1990).

In the book *Teacher-Centered Professional Development*, Diaz-Maggioli (2004) discusses factors that help to mold teaching style. He points out that six categories of factors affect teaching style, and some are fundamentally different from factors that influence students' learning styles. These influential factors he classifies under the categories: career, curriculum, knowledge, personal, professional, and institutional. Each of these categories points to an area in a teacher's life that impacts how and why decisions are made in the classroom. These are important because they influence teaching style and can cause changes to a style over time.

Diaz-Maggioli's (2004) explanation of factors that affect teaching styles correlates with the findings and model of teaching styles developed by Mosston and Ashworth (1990) in their book *The Spectrum of Teaching Styles*. They say that teachers' decisions, and reason for those decisions, define the style of a teacher. In addition, there exist factors like continued education, administration oversight, and others that impact the decisions teachers make and those decisions can be seen in patterns in different teaching styles.

Grasha (2002) also developed a construct to help explain teaching styles. However, he categorized teaching styles into five types; *expert*, *formal authority*, *personal model*, *facilitator*, and *delegator*. The *expert* style is when the teacher is considered as the source of expert knowledge. *Formal authority* style describes the teacher as being seen as the authority because he/she focuses on the expectations, rules, and the most correct way for different classroom procedures. *Personal model* style is when the teacher is the model for how students should mimic and complete different tasks. The fourth teaching style, *facilitator*, explains the relationship of teacher-student interaction. The teacher guides and directs students by choosing activities and tasks that help students to learn independently. The final style, *delegator*, is described as a teacher who encourages and helps the students to work without teacher input

unless the student requests it. The students work alone or in groups without any input from the instructor.

Grasha (2002) observed that teachers didn't fall into just one of these five styles but in fact that every teacher possesses some qualities of each style but favor a combination of the five styles. According to Grasha the most common cluster is *expert/formal authority*. He explains that this cluster is found in the typical college level classroom. The professor prefers didactic lectures, technology-based presentations, teacher-centered questioning and discussion. Other common cluster styles include style clusters *personal model/expert/formal authority* and *facilitator/personal model/expert*. These blends of styles explain the different levels of instruction and styles teachers have across multiple lessons.

The Grasha (2002) model provides for a different set of terms and explanations compared to traditional language learning style models in the L2 field. This model provides clear understandable styles that are more familiar to many and may help teachers see the distinction of their own style of teaching as related to their experience in current L1 education systems.

### **Understanding Learning Styles and Strategies**

This section reviews studies in the research that help us to understand students, their different learning styles, strategies, and different learning style constructs that are also compared to teaching styles. This section also discusses learning style theory across many fields but will primarily focus on the models developed in the field of second language acquisition.

Felder and Henriques (1995) explained that, "no finite number could encompass the totality of the individual student differences" (p. 27). This comment points to a problem regarding the many different models being used and developed to explain how students learn best. Felder and Henriques also point out that what is important is not necessarily the use a

perfect model but to use at the least, a type of learning style model to help improve classroom learning and interaction between students and teachers. As mentioned, learning and teaching are extensively connected and in order to understand one, it is necessary to look at both. Two important areas of interest in this area are learning styles and learning strategies.

Although many factors contribute to students' understanding and in turn affect their learning, learning style is one major factor that plays a significant role in the learning process (Oxford 1989). The belief that students have preferences to how they learn that are based on specific patterns is also called the learning style hypothesis (Kratzig and Arbuthnott, 2006).

*Learning styles* are commonly described and defined as the generally, consistent, enduring and preferred, tendencies and approaches to learning that make us different from one another in how we acquire information and a new language (Brown, 2001; Cohen, and Dornyei, 2002; Cohen, and Weaver, 2006; Oxford and Lavine, 1992). Learning styles are also described as “natural, habitual, and preferred ways for absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills” (Reid, 1995, p. viii). They are also the general approaches, tendencies, behaviors and preferences in handling and processing new information consciously or subconsciously.

*Learning strategies*, in contrast to styles, are defined by scholars as specific steps, techniques, or behaviors students will use in order to improve learning through the acquisition, storage, recall, and recital of new knowledge or information. Common strategies include different ways of taking notes, asking questions, planning and other methods that help the student to learn (Brown, 2001; Ehrman and Oxford, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Oxford and Lavine, 1992). Learning strategies are what the students learn and acquire, usually consciously, that help

them learn or process information and usually follow the patterns of their preferred learning style.

The two terms, *learning styles* and *learning strategies*, are interconnected. Both describe the acquisition and processing of new information. According to Oxford (1989), learners that are characterized by a specific style of learning will also use specific strategies that are associated with that particular learning style. Cohen and Dornyei (2002) also explain this fact by pointing out that students may often come to the same conclusion in processing information but they will have a different style, and in that style use different strategies to get to the answer. Students with certain style preferences will enjoy some tasks more than others because of the strategies they use in processing the new information.

Joy Reid (1995) explains that learning styles are internal and often subconscious while strategies are skills that are taught and used outside of those internal preferences. Oxford and Lavine (1992) add that that styles, along with gender, tasks and other factors determine the individual's choice of language-learning strategies. These terms and their definitions help us to understand differences students demonstrate in the classroom and how some students do well with one activity while other students in the same class do poorly with the same activity.

### **Overlapping Elements in Learning Styles**

Often there are many overlapping terms that are associated with different learning styles. In an effort to untangle some of the overlap, this next section will explain several elements and dimensions as well as research that has been done to identify the overlapping areas. This section focuses on three major learning style aspects and the dimensions found under those aspects.

Many scholars have reported on the messy nature of learning styles and the different frameworks researchers have created to identify and explain them (Ehrman, 1996; Reid, 1995;

Shipman, 1985). This problem can be linked to the difficulty of identifying and strictly labeling abstract and changing elements of the learning process that have influence and patterns based on other elements in the same framework. When a researcher labels and defines one characteristic of a learning style, another characteristic emerges that relates to some other style element or dimension. According to Shipman and Shipman (1985) these issues of overlapping terms are frequently apparent.

Some styles appear to overlap, among the remainder some appear to have been made purposely distinct, whereas others have no apparent connection with other styles in the list. This irregularity is primarily the result of styles having been identified on a one-by-one basis by different groups of researchers, at different points in time, in pursuit of addressing different research questions (p. 232).

In her literature review Hsu (2000) analyzes many style dimensions and terms and compares what she says is the most overlapping dimension, *analytic* and *global* to several other learning style dimensions. In one example of overlap she explains how “The left hemisphere of the brain deals with language sequential through analysis and abstraction, while the right brain recognizes language as global patterns, either auditory or visual” (Hsu, 2000, p. 10). This strongly correlates with the *analytical* and *global* style definitions. Hsu finds other different points in definitions that relate to the *global* or *analytic* dimension. Her analysis and literature review point out several more cases of overlap in different style models.

Accounting for all variables and explanations of students’ learning preferences can be confusing and a maze of words across different dimension classification systems. This is not to say that the categorizations and explanations of learning styles are severely flawed or that there is a perfect answer. Each learning style dimension often relates to one learning aspect or another



a little differently and offers insight and explanation of other important variables in the learning process.

### **Aspects and Dimensions of Learning Styles**

Oxford and Anderson (1995) point out that there are six aspects of learning styles that encompass most learning style dimensions. The six aspects they mention are *cognitive*, *executive*, *affective*, *social*, *physiological* and *behavioral*. Of those six aspects, the most commonly discussed are *cognitive*, *behavioral* (also labeled psychological or personality in some systems), *affective*, and *physiological* (related to sensory). Often the aspects *affective*, *cognitive*, and *psychology* have overlapping characteristics, and in different classification reports, placed under different categories for determining styles. Examples can be found in comparing the models and definitions found in Cohen and Weaver (2006), Oxford (1995) and Reid (1995).

Although some researchers agree that there are 4-6 different aspects or classifications of learning styles (Lawrence, 1984 as cited in Oxford 1989; Oxford and Anderson 1995), Cohen and Weaver, in their book *Styles- and strategies-based instruction: A teachers' guide* (2006), only use three major classifications for learning styles; *sensory/perceptual*, *psychological or personality type*, and *cognitive* styles. This approach provides a more balance between styles that are most relevant to the language classroom and particularly to those mentioned by Oxford and Lavine (1992) as more important to L2 learners. In fact, Oxford and Lavine suggest that there are 6 different style dimensions that play a more important role for L2 learners than some of the other dimensions. They are *analytic/global*, *sensory*, *intuitive-random/sensory-sequential*, *impulsive/reflective*, *open-oriented/closed oriented*, and *introverted/extroverted* dimensions (Oxford and Lavine, 1992). These dimensions of learning style, because of their importance to language learners, will receive the primary focus in the next sections.

**Cognitive aspects.** The cognitive aspect looks at the mental process during learning. An often-researched model in this area is one created by Kolb from his Experiential Theory (Kolb 1984). Other style categories are also often related to cognition in research articles. These include the terms field sensitivity, analytic versus global, and impulsive versus reflective.

In the 1970s, David Kolb developed what was called Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) as a way to describe and explain the learning process “consistent with how people learn, grow, and develop” (Kolb, Boyatzis, and Mainemelis, 2000, p. 2) This theory is based on the combination of two parts; understanding an episode of learning and recreating that information into something that can be processed (Kolb 1984). In her synthesis of his work, Reid calls the two parts *perception* and *process* (Reid 1995).

In Kolb’s model he describes *perception* as either *Concrete Experience* (CE) or *Abstract Conceptualization* (AC). *Concrete Experience* refers to when learners are confronted with new information; “they will use senses to gain understanding and “experience the concrete, tangible...qualities of the world” (p. 3). Those who are not CE are *Abstract Conceptualization* (AC) and use symbolism, planning, and analyzing when processing new information, rather than the use of the senses. The second part, or *process*, is recreating information into something that can be processed, which is based on either *Reflective Observation* (RO) or *Active Experimentation* (AE). It is from these two parts, *perception* and *process*, that four different learning styles were created for his model: *diverging*, *assimilating*, *converging*, and *accommodating*. These four styles are combinations of CE/AC and AE/RO.

*Field Independence/dependence* is a cognitive learning style dimension that is one of the more widely researched and studied (Ehrman, 1996; Shipman and Shipman, 1985). This dimension explains primarily how learners “rely on themselves...and whether they use internal

or external referents as they perceive and process information” (Chapelle, 1995, p. 159). In the language learning classroom, a learner that is *Field Independent* (FI) is often defined as able to “understand parts of language along with the whole without being distracted” (Cohen and Weaver, 2006 p. 14) and can handle multiple language elements. *Field Dependent* (FD) refers to someone who “needs context to focus and understand and may take in language one part at a time” (Cohen and Weaver 2006, p. 14). Because of these defining terms Shipman and Shipman state that, “FD & FI show the widest application to educational practices” (1985, p. 237). In Ehrman’s book, *Understanding Second Language Difficulties* (1996), an entire chapter is devoted to the discussion of these two styles. Often the two terms are linked to the cognitive aspect (Chapelle, 1995) and have overlapping elements with *analytic* and *global* dimensions (Ehrman, 1996; Hsu, 2000; Oxford, 1989). The wide use and explanation of FI/FD has led to a lot of different research studies and definitions in different research.

The *analytical/global* dimension, also of the cognitive aspect of learning styles, has been one of the most overlapping dimensions in learning style theories and models (Hsu 2000). In its simplest terms an analytical learner looks at a learning situation and prefers to separately analyze characteristics of individual parts to come to an understanding. A global learner views the whole and surrounding elements to come to an understanding by looking at the picture holistically (Oxford, Ehrman, and Lavine, 1991). This learning process is similar to top down theory and offers many elements that can explain learner behavior.

Another cognitive aspect dimension, *reflective/impulsive* primarily deals with the speed of processing information and accuracy of understanding (Reid 1995). A reflective person tends to take more time to process and has a higher degree of accuracy where as an impulsive learner might take more chances and guesses in order to quickly move through the information (Reid

1995). As a result these individuals are less accurate in being correct with the information processed.

**Psychological or personality aspects.** The psychological aspect is often the most confusing and divided aspect of style, having many different dimensions and branches of research in different fields of study. Some experts list some styles under psychology, while others list them under cognition. This category deals primarily with understanding personality and behavior aspects associated with some affective aspect elements. This problem and confusion may also be attributed to the terminology and definition of psychology, cognition, and affect as they are used in the field of psychology. One of the most prominent models used to explain personality comes from the research by Jung, Myers, and Briggs.

The Myers-Briggs model for understanding personalities has been used extensively over the years to help people understand personalities and the tendencies in situations that come with different personalities. This model was based of the work of Carl G. Jung and describes the personality and psychology of people and the relationship to choices and experiences (Oxford, 1989). The framework for the Myers-Briggs terms centers on the idea that the learner's personality is a combination of one part of each of the four dimensions *Extraversion-Introversion, Sensing-Perception, Thinking-Feeling, Judging-Perceiving* (Reid 1995). These personality dimensions are often equated to learning styles because of the relationship between personality and choices that are involved in the learning processes.

**Sensory aspect.** Many people identify more with sensory styles for learning than they do with other styles (Ehrman, 1996). The sensory aspect includes *visual, auditory, tactile* and *kinesthetic* dimensions. As titled, the *visual* dimension refers to those who have preferences learning through visual references, and *auditory* learners prefer learning through hearing

information. *Kinesthetic* usually refers to what is called a whole –body movement approach to learning and is often associated with the *tactile* dimension, which is a hands-on approach to learning (Reid 1995). Because of the close relationship in meaning, *kinesthetic* and *tactile* dimensions are sometimes combined and referred to as the *haptic* dimension (Ehrman, 1996; Reid, 1995). The *sensory* aspect is the least difficult to explain and identify for teachers as an area of influence on preferences for learning. The sensory dimensions are often the most recognized yet debated areas of learning styles (Kratzig and Arbuthnott, 2006; Reid 1995).

Joy Reid (1987) further developed and explained the sensory aspect. She created a widely used (Peacock, 2001) learning style identification questionnaire previously mentioned called the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ). PLSPQ was developed to identify not only the sensory dimensions but other models' dimensions associated with the ESL/EFL learners. Her work was directly related to and adapted from the Center for Innovative Teaching Experience. In her categorization she uses the classic verbal, visual, tactile and kinesthetic styles. She also includes a sociological style category with the dimension *group/individual* to identify student preferences when they work in groups or as individuals (Reid, 1995).

Although a very widely used system for identifying learning style preferences, especially in EFL/ESL contexts, it does not account for other cognitive and psychological aspects that also play a role in learning. However, PLSPQ has faced a lot of scrutiny in language classrooms and has been tested for validity and reliability (Ehrman, 1996). Reid's PLSPQ has also been shown to be successful in classrooms for identifying and explaining student learning styles (Peacock, 2001).

One other dimension that explains peoples' preferences for learning is that of brain hemisphericity. Although brain hemisphere classification has value, many other terms and

dimensions better explain similar concepts regarding learning style theory. According to Ehrman, what depicts behavior and learning cannot be defined as simply the right brain does one part of the learning process and the left brain does another (1996). The brain and language learning process are much more complex. As was mentioned, many classifications, terms, and dimensions exist; however, those reviewed above explain the elements most researched and understood to have connections to preferences in learning language. They are also the elements that describe language learners.

### Overview of Different Dimensions

In her research Reid (1998) created a Table that helps explain and categorize many of the dimensions reviewed earlier in this chapter. An adapted table can be found below. Her table of different learning style dimensions also shows the overlapping in terms and explanations of different learning dimensions or learning styles as can be seen when comparing the descriptions of field independent, analytic, extraverted, judging, and right-brained terms in the table.

Table 1

#### *Overview of Learning Styles*

<b>Perceptual Learning Styles</b>	
Visual	Learns more effectively through the eyes (seeing)
Auditory	Learns more effectively through the ears (hearing)
Tactile	Learns more effectively through touch (hands on)
Kinesthetic	Learns more effectively through complete body experience
Group	Learns more effectively through working with others
Individual	Learns more effectively through working alone
<b>Field Independent and Field Dependent Styles</b>	
Field Independent	Learns more effectively sequentially, analyzing facts
Field Dependent	Learns more effectively holistically; sensitive to human relations
<b>Analytic and Global Learning Styles</b>	
Analytic	Learns more effectively individually, sequentially, linearly
Global	Learns more effectively through concrete experience and through interaction with other people
<b>Reflective and Impulsive Learning Styles</b>	
Reflective	Learns more effectively when given time to consider options
Impulsive	Learns more effectively able to respond immediately

<b>Kolb Experiential Model</b>	
Converger	Learns more effectively when able to perceive abstractly and to process actively
Diverger	Learns more effectively when able to perceive concretely and to process reflectively
Assimilator	Learns more effectively when able to perceive abstractly and to process reflectively
Accommodator	Learns more effectively when able to perceive concretely and to process actively
<b>Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)</b>	
Extraverted	Learns more effectively through concrete experience, contacts with relationships with others
Introverted	Learns more effectively in individual, independent learning situations
Sensing	Learns more effectively from reports of observable facts
Intuitive	Learns more effectively from meaning experiences
Thinking	Learns more effectively from impersonal and logical circumstances
Feeling	Learns more effectively personalized circumstances
Judging	Learns more effectively by reflection, deduction, analysis, and processes that involve closure
Perceiving	Learns more effectively through negotiation, feeling, and inductive processes that postpone closure
<b>Brain Hemisphere Styles</b>	
Right-Brained	Learns more effectively through visual, analytic, reflective, self-reliant learning
Left-Brained	Learns more effectively through auditory, global, impulsive, interactive learning

Note. Adapted from “Understanding Learning Styles in Second Language Classroom” (pp. x-xi), by Joy Ried, 1998, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice.

As can be seen in Table 1 above, there are many different overlapping concepts and ideas. In attempting to overcome and balance these many terms and styles, Cohen and Weaver (2006) created a teacher’s guide using many of these same terms and dimensions that most likely affect English language learners. Their guide includes explanations and examples of many style dimensions and models. Although their guide has some overlapping terms, the overall concepts and terminology of dimensions in Cohen and Weaver’s guide provide concise and simple terms for processing and then using learning style theory in the classroom.

In a review of different learning style models and style categorization systems, Felder (1996) explains that even though each categorization system of styles has its own unique characteristics and beneficial dimensions, whichever one is used for a curriculum is

“immaterial”. He points out that there is benefit to using almost any system of style dimensions if they are used correctly. When a system is properly used to identify a controlling feature of a student’s learning process in conflict with the teaching of an instructor there is room for overcoming the problem because it has been identified.

### **Mismatches in Learning and Teaching Styles**

Next, I explain different research that has looked at the problem that exists in mismatches between the teaching styles of teachers and conflicting learning styles of students. Mismatches between the teacher and student have been researched extensively in hopes of identifying and overcoming problems in the classroom that are attributed to the success or failure of students with different types of teachers (Felder and Silverman, 1988; Oxford et al. 1991). According to Oxford and Lavine (1992), “Unsatisfactory academic performance is, more often than we might like to acknowledge, the product of incompatible learning styles” (p. 39). Ehrman calls it a mismatch in curriculum or teacher approach (1996). This mismatch in styles is at the core of issues and problems many teachers have when trying to understand student behavior and student success.

Classifying all problems that occur between student and teacher as mismatches in styles can be inaccurate and misleading. In fact, there are many other factors that need to be considered like; issues associated with motivation, classroom management, curriculum or task use in lessons, and different cultural views of the roles of teacher and student. All of these issues interconnect with one another in some aspect or another.

It is also commonly believed that teachers tend to mirror their own favored learning styles as they teach (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Oxford and Lavine, 1992; Reid, 1995). This in part reflects on the teacher’s teaching style and is directly related to the discomfort and misattribution



of student problems in the classroom. In their article, Oxford and Lavine (1992) state that “Learners whose style preference is conspicuously different from the teacher's may be plagued by anxiety and respond negatively to the teacher, and classroom, and the subject matter” (p. 40).

Understanding these mismatches is part of what has fueled research in teaching and learning styles. These mismatches in styles have also been used to explain cultural related issues as well. As mentioned, a teacher’s classroom role is often distinguished by education, personal goals, beliefs, professional development, and other factors, which are also heavily based on culture.

### **Cultural Gaps**

As the previous section discussed the research of mismatches and issues associated with the teaching and learning styles of students, this section explains the impact that culture can have on the mismatches between teaching and learning styles.

In their studies of cultural issues and perceptions of teaching, Hu (2002) and Xiao (2006) point out that eastern or Asian students from China in classrooms of western teachers, did not understand what was to be expected and felt that the lessons were not clear. Instead the lessons seemed illogical. The studies claimed that Chinese students expect clear guidelines and key points written down and outlined. The teacher is viewed as an authority figure not to be questioned, where as in western culture, the teacher often plays the role of a facilitator and helps the students along, guiding them towards knowledge (Hu, 2002; Scollon, 1999). These studies point out that western teachers want students to discover knowledge, not just regurgitate what is taught in the classroom. Xiao (2006) also points out that Chinese students expected detailed explanations, key points outlined on the blackboard, and other clarifying techniques. In contrast, western teachers usually expect learners to find answers for themselves through reading,

discovering information, and analyzing what is uncovered without doing a lot of memorization or receiving explicit instruction.

It is commonly said that eastern or collectivist people view teachers as the source of all knowledge and that this belief stems from Confucius teachings associated with Asian cultures and communities (Hu, 2002; Littlewood, 2001; Xiao, 2006). In regards to Confucius teachings, it is believed that students rarely question the teacher, because the teacher is the authority and has all the knowledge the student would need. In the classroom, collectivist students are believed to have more concern for the group than the individual and therefore do not want their behavior to reflect poorly on the rest of their peers or group. Because of these attributes, they may not actively participate like western students in group dynamics (Nelson, 1995). However, in recent research it has been shown that this belief may also be changing and that students are beginning to view and understand the different roles that teachers are using in the classroom (Hu, 2002; Xiao, 2006).

In Hu's (2002) study of the use of the communicative language teaching method (CLT), Chinese students were having a hard time seeing the benefits of CLT in the classroom, which is also linked to motivation and learning style preferences. Hu mentions that because of the role of the teacher as a facilitator and not as a more dominate figure, students had difficulties relating to the CLT teaching style. He also reports that teachers in the East dominate the classroom and students are viewed as "empty vessels" and these roles are very similar to Confucius teachings (Hu, 2002, p. 98). In addition, these differences, in teaching and learning roles of Confucius teachings influence in classrooms, help researchers understand the nature of some behavioral patterns of students and teachers and how this affects language acquisition in cross-cultural settings.

In addition to these differences between cultural perceptions of students and teachers, a study was done in 2001 on teachers' views of grammar instruction and corrective feedback in the USA and Columbia (Shultz, 2001). Schultz explains that there are differences between these two cultures in what is viewed as correct methods of teaching of grammar by the teacher. The students in this study enjoy learning language subject matter through explicit methods rather than the CLT approach. She also points out that if the learners' expectations and teacher's behaviors "do not mesh" (Shultz, 2001, p. 256) there can be setbacks in the ability of the students to acquire the language.

These studies show that there are clear differences in beliefs among teaching and the roles of student and teacher. These cultural views, with associated behaviors, run along the same lines as the tendencies that explain teaching and learning style mismatches and problems. It is from this perspective that an understanding of styles and cultural differences will help students be better learners when given a teacher not of their culture. The research by Hu, and Shultz along with other studies by Cheng and Banya (1998), Kazu (2009), Oxford and Anderson, (1995), and Reid (1987) clearly show cultural differences in learning and teaching styles.

The next section will discuss the suggestions made by current teaching and learning style scholars for implementing teaching style and learning style theory into the classroom in order to overcome cross-cultural style issues. The section also includes a table dividing the suggestions into 4 categories. It will then discuss the importance of using multiple assessments in order to learn students' learning styles. The section will conclude with a discussion on other scholars' beliefs of flaws in learning style theory.

## Suggestions from the Research

Several different researchers have suggestions for dealing with cultural issues and student learning style differences. The most prominent suggestions can be divided into two camps, those that believe in matching teaching styles to learning styles so as to give the students the most ideal situation to learn and those that believe students should be taught learning styles directly in order to expand or “stretch” their styles (Dunn and Dunn, 1979; Oxford and Anderson, 1995).

One major issue is the logistics of matching students’ learning styles with similar teaching styles. It is a very challenging process for many organizations. Students who fall into less ordinary learning styles that do not match with dominant teaching styles are left out by that plan. It is difficult to find a similar teaching style for every different student. In some cases there may only be one or two students to a teacher. Organizations would need teachers with many different teaching styles that parallel the students’ learning styles. Logistically and financially, matching students to teachers is clearly a task beyond most schools or organizations.

With this challenge in mind, scholars have offered a multitude of suggestions for teachers in order to overcome the difficulties created by style mismatches in the classroom. One suggestion includes teaching students to stretch and acquire new styles so that they will be better equipped to learn a language. These suggestions, made by scholars, can be divided into four major categories (see Table 2); 1. learn what styles are, 2. learn your preferences and your students, 3. help students learn and change their perception, and 4. adapt your teaching methodology.

Table 2

### *Suggestions for Using Learning Styles in the Classroom*

<b>1. Learn what styles are</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about teaching styles and learning styles (Lockhart and Richards, 1996).</li> <li>• Learn about culture and expectations (Lockhart and Richards, 1996).</li> </ul>

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## **2. Learn your preferences and your students**

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- Learn your learning style preferences and how they attribute to your teaching style (Oxford and Anderson, 1995; Oxford and Lavine, 1992; Peacock, 2001; Reid, 1987).
  - Identify underlying styles and strategies (Nunan, 1995).
  - Learn students' learning styles (Oxford and Anderson, 1995; Oxford, 2003; Peacock, 2001; Reid, 1987).
- 

## **3. Help students learn their styles and change their perception**

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- Motivate and change students' behavior (Cohen and Dornyei, 2002; Oxford and Lavine, 1992).
  - Change the way style conflicts are viewed (Oxford and Lavine, 1992).
  - Make students aware of goals and content (Nunan, 1995).
  - Make students language researchers (Nunan, 1995).
  - Help students learn their style of learning (Oxford and Anderson, 1995; Oxford and Lavine, 1992; Reid, 1987; Reid, 1995).
- 

## **4. Adapt your teaching methodology**

---

- Teach students about learning styles and strategies (Oxford and Anderson 1995).
  - Design instruction to meet the needs of individuals with style differences (Oxford, 1989).
  - Encourage students to expand or stretch and diversify their styles and strategies (Oxford and Anderson, 1995; Oxford, Ehrman and Lavine, 1991; Reid 1995).
  - Change the way group work is done helping students to work in similar groups of similar styles and others to see other strategies (Oxford and Lavine, 1992).
  - Change the curriculum (Mosston and Ashworth, 1990; Oxford, Ehrman and Lavine 1991).
  - Teach a balanced (variety) or individualized style (Felder and Henriques, 1995; Oxford, 2003; Oxford, Ehrman and Lavine, 1991; Peacock, 2001; Reid, 1987).
  - Reflect on teaching (Lockhart and Richards, 1996).
  - Match teaching styles to learning styles (Oxford and Anderson 1995; Oxford, Ehrman and Lavine 1991).
  - Use a wide range of communicative activities (Oxford, 2003).
- 

Scholars have primarily focused on the four areas in Table 2 as suggestions for implementing learning style theory. The first category is *learn what styles are*. The teacher needs to understand what the learning style terms and dimensions are in order to use learning style theory effectively. Lockhart and Richards (1996) point out that by knowing style dimensions the teacher can then avoid or handle different style conflicts in the classroom.

The second category, *learn your preferences and your students*, relates to learning more about a teacher's tendencies, habits, choices and beliefs regarding learning and teaching. Again, Oxford and Lavine (1992) point out that teachers usually teach along the lines of their own

learning style. Thus it is important for them to understand their own behavior and beliefs before they can seek to change their teaching to meet the needs of the students.

The third category, *help students learn and change their perception*, includes the suggestions related to motivating students and changing how they view learning. This category is closely related to the final category but focuses directly on the students and then leads to curriculum, materials, and other methodology changes. By helping students to change their own behavior and beliefs, a more understanding and compromising atmosphere can be established in the classroom. The students can then set and achieve goals associated with learning styles. When students are aware of what the expectations are in the classroom and the goals they use, they can be better prepared to fulfill their needs (Nunan, 1995). They can also become more accountable for their own learning.

The final category, *Adapt your teaching methodology*, is the changing of the teacher's methodology, activities, and materials. Oxford (2003) says "styles can be in conflict with a given instructional methodology if there is not harmony between the student (in terms of style and strategy preferences) and the combination of instructional methodology and materials" (p. 2). Teachers need to change instruction and activities so that they help individual students with different style difficulties and stretch students with other styles and strategies that will help them learn better and more efficiently (Oxford and Anderson, 1995). Methodology is difficult to change but it is important to the learning style theory. Some ways to change teaching methods include analyzing teaching practices (Richard and Lockhart, 1996), using different teaching techniques for different learning styles and strategies (Peacock, 2001; Oxford, 2003; Oxford and Lavine 1992), and designing instruction to meet the needs of students (Oxford, 2003).

In order to follow some of these suggestions and make changes, teachers will need to understand how to recognize learning styles as well as being careful of stereotypes and overreliance on narrow judgments of students' learning preference.

### **Assessing Learning Styles**

In order to help teachers use learning style information, different learning style inventories, for identifying the traits and behaviors of students' and teachers' learning styles, have been created. These inventories are sometimes called questionnaires or surveys and are usually self-administered. Critics of these forms of assessment of learning styles have expressed problems with validity and reliability (Kratzig and Arbuthnott, 2006). However, proponents feel that although not perfect there is still great value in these inventories and surveys (Oxford, and Lavine, 1992; Reid, 1995). Reid also points out that many inventories still need to be tested for validity and reliability (1998, p. xiii). In fact, Reid's PLSPQ has gone through some validity and reliability testing (Peacock, 2001) to help strengthen its validity and use. Other inventories also provide a good understanding of the learning styles and teaching styles when used correctly and without prejudice towards certain groups, even though they have not faced as much testing as PLSPQ.

In her book, *Understanding Second Language Difficulties*, Ehrman (1996) suggests using inventories because they help teachers understand teaching and learning styles and include valuable information about what students' prefer and what styles teachers might usually favor when teaching. However, she says that the use of just one test instrument, like a questionnaire, can be too narrow to affirm true representation of students' learning styles. The use of multiple methods of assessing learning styles can help reduce inaccurate assessments of styles. Reid also agrees, when teachers rely too heavily on one instrument they risk stereotyping and or "pidgin

holing” the students into one style when other factors or variables need to be considered with specific learning styles (Reid 1987; 1995). Reid (1987) points out that because there are so many other factors that attributed to a student’s learning, overreliance on any assessment instrument can be inaccurate. Inventories have great value but they need to be used correctly, wisely and not by as the only form of assessment.

Although these dangers of misuse are important to know and be aware of, learning style assessments tools offer large benefits for understanding students and helping them overcome difficulties in the classroom and across cultures (Oxford and Anderson, 1995; Ehrman,1996; Ehrman, Oxford and Lavine, 1992; Reid, 1987, 1995; Richard and Lock, 1994). It is important that teachers use these instruments wisely and repeatedly along with other means for measuring styles. The next section will discuss disagreements with the actual theory behind learning styles.

### **Disagreements with this Research**

There are several disagreements concerning the reliability and validity of learning style theory. In the field of psychology, Kratzig and Arbuthnott (2006) point out problems with the lack of validity and reliability assessment in the underling theory of learning styles. In their study, they looked at the sensory learning dimensions lists and administered several standardized tests based on visual, audio, and kinesthetic information with memorization (Rey-Osterrieth Complex Figure Test, the Babcock Story Recall Test, and Tactual Performance Test). Participants, before beginning the test, were asked what they believed their dominant learning style was. They were also given a Barsch Learning Style Inventory. The study was primarily memory based on how well the students could recall, in the standardized tests, and if they did better with the sensory test that corresponds to their inventories. A second qualitative study looked at the information people consider when responding to a learning style questionnaire.



Their results showed that the inventory and self-reported style only matched 44% of the time and therefore refuted the theory that people have a preferred learning style in which they learn best. They do acknowledge that the test needs to be replicated with other learning style instruments (Kratzig and Arbuthnott, 2006). However there is one large problem with the limitations in this study and the primary focus on only the sensory learning style dimensions. Without an inclusion of the many other dimensions it is difficult to blanket all learning styles as being not reliable.

Coincidentally, the reported flaws in the study (Kratzig and Arbuthnott, 2006), based on self-reporting data, explain other learning style dimensions beside the sensory styles. Some of the responses showed that students' recognize learning as being influenced by sensory styles but also had other reasons for their preferences as well. The authors of the research report that a self-reporting inventory and data have a lot of bias and error. It would be interesting to further analyze the data against the cognitive dimensions of learning styles and use other methods of assessment in order to replicate their findings across other dimensions. However, it is important to note that this study only focused on the sensory dimensions of learning styles. It does not necessarily refute other theories and models associated with of learning styles.

## **Conclusion**

There are many teaching and learning style categorizations, terms and dimensions and each has a specific focus that contains a lot of value for understanding problems in the language classroom. Each learning style explanation offers interesting and important information for dissecting students' learning difficulties in the ESL/EFL classroom.

The suggestions offered by researchers provide considerable help for dealing with and overcoming mismatches associated with cultural style differences. By understanding these

elements and dimensions, novice teachers will be better prepared to identify and teach students to overcome those difficulties. However, after extensive searching the author has not found research to explain exactly which learning style description and dimensions are best for novice teachers or which information is most important to them in their specific situations. Because there is not a perfect learning style categorization system for novice volunteer teachers the suggestions ESL/EFL researchers have given for implementing learning style theory is currently invaluable for helping these teachers to being more effective.

### CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

The development of this project took place in five stages: 1. analysis of the BTRTESOL program audience, 2. establishment of the content and sequence, 3. establishment of the format and presentation, 4. monitoring and assessment of each unit through pilot tests, and 5. evaluations and revisions. I had limited knowledge about cultural differences, teaching styles, and learning styles in language development from previous research and development while in my undergraduate linguistics classes. Although that knowledge was important to my initial research, it was not the primary influence for the majority of the development of the final units.

Although many development models for creating materials follow a strict linear process, this is not always the case in real-life development scenarios. Each of the development stages of my project corresponds to the model developed by Paul Nation and John Macalister in their book *Language Curriculum Design* (2009). As designed in their model, some stages will not follow a perfectly chronological order. Instead, stages will be presented at different times in relation to other stages and subsequent changes as a result of evaluations. This method of progression through the development steps is done in order to clarify and distinguish the stages of development of my two units in correlation with Nation and Macalister's design. In this chapter, I will explain why I chose to use Nation and Macalister's design model, what the models different parts are, and how my two units were created through the use of Nation and Macalister model.

While attending the Ling 677 class Curriculum Development in winter 2010, I was introduced to several different instructional design methods for developing curricula, including Nation and Macalister's *Language Curriculum Design* (LCD) model (2009) and the ADDIE model. I had already become somewhat familiar with a few other approaches to curriculum

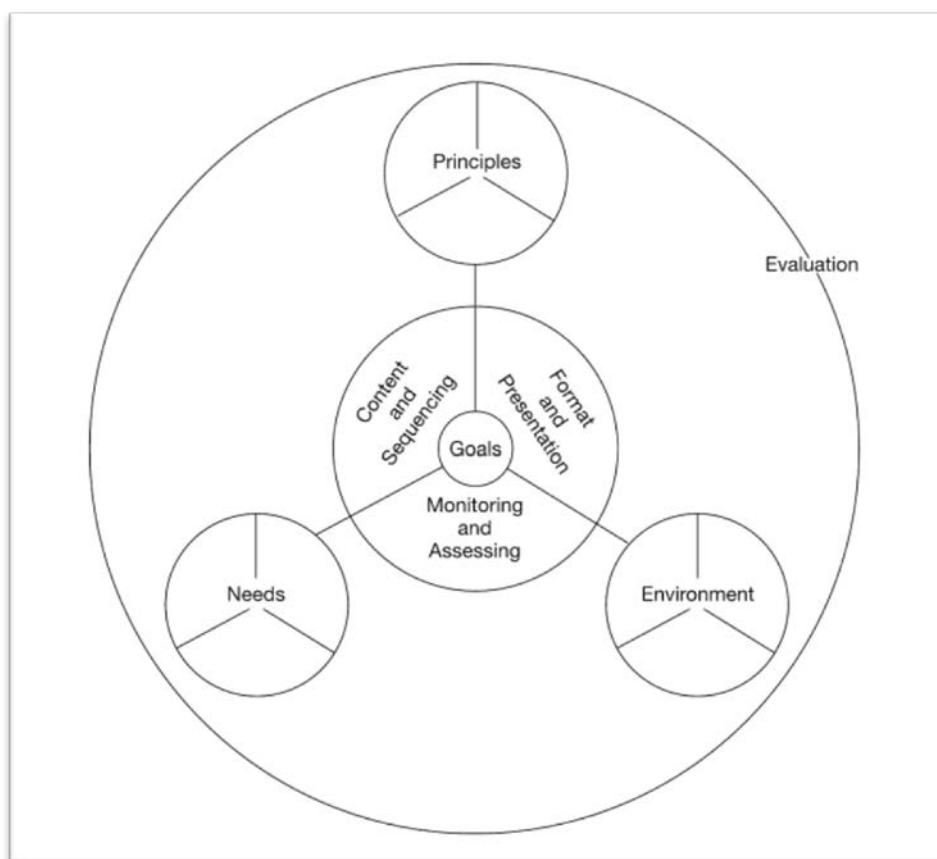
development, including the ADDIE model, from another class, Ling 678, Advanced Materials Development.

I had learned that the ADDIE model was designed to help those in instructional design progress systematically through structured development steps in order to create or improve on the design of a product (Molenda, 2003). The ADDIE model is usually listed with five steps or stages for the creation process. The stages are 1. analysis, 2. design, 3. development, 4. implementation, and 5. evaluation. The developer ideally progresses linearly through each stage with the exception of the evaluation stage. Each of the five stages should receive evaluation at some point before the designer moves on to the next stage in the model.

In contrast, Nation and Macalister's LCD model was designed for curricula. However it does present a clear strategic pattern for developing materials much like the ADDIE model. Although the ADDIE model is very systematic and helpful to development, it fails to address the cyclic nature of materials development and its stages are very restricted to the linearly. This is a strong contrast to Nation and Macalister's LCD model, which allows for recycling back to previous steps as a designer progresses from stage to stage. The Nation and Macalister LCD process is more like a weave going back and forth revisiting stages and revising information based on results from evaluations at different stages. In addition, Nation and Macalister present fundamental principles behind the design that are important to the L2 Field. I decided to use Nation and Macalister's LCD model as a guide because of the ability to move back and forth in a non-linear approach that was more natural to the process I went through.

Initially there was some concern in using the Nation and Macalister LCD model because it was created for designing materials and curricula for L2 learners. The BTRTESOL program is for teachers wanting to learn how to teach L2 learners. Even though the Nation and Macalister

LCD model is for L2 curriculum development, the overall principles of the design model are “supported by research and theory in... general educational research and theory” (Nation and Macalister, 2009, p. 38), as well as second language research, and can be used to develop training materials for teachers even if it isn’t L2 focused.



*Figure 1.* Nation and Macalister’s Language Curriculum Design Model

The Nation and Macalister LCD model, as seen in Figure 1, is composed of several layers of circles or spheres that correspond to important points in the design and development process of curricula, materials, or other types of projects. In this model, everything fits within the circle of evaluation, indicating that evaluation needs to take place at all levels or stages of development. This is why the evaluation encompasses all categories and circles as seen in the diagram in Figure 1.

This model for developing materials does not follow a linear step-by-step process. Each circle or development stage is completed or given the attention it needs at the necessary time, depending on the project, starting with the outer stages of development, *principles*, *needs*, and *environment*, and continuing inward toward the final goal or desired design of the project. Every sphere or stage is influenced by the other stages in the model.

Obviously, some of the inner circles or stages of the model rely on the analyses and results of circles in the outer parts of the model. For example, the three outer circles (environment, needs, and principles) are all elements of analysis that will directly affect the largest inner circle, which contains monitoring and assessing, format and presentation, and content and sequencing. Without some analysis of those outer areas, the decisions being made in the central components are weakened and may cause serious problems in the design and development of the project. The lack of analysis in outer areas can critically hamper a project or curriculum, or even make it useless.

In an ideal situation, each of the outer analysis stages, or circles would have clear and sequential results that contribute perfectly to the overall goal and flow of the project's development, but that is rarely the case in real-world situations. The lack of a perfect one-to-one relationship to real-world projects is also one of the reasons the authors have designed their model into levels of circles starting from the outside and working inward. This allows the project developer to examine different parts at different stages and see how they may impact the project in different areas without having to rely on perfectly linear and chronological results. Each element or result of analysis and development impacts the others, but at different levels, and can change drastically given different uncontrollable and unforeseen factors and variables in the development process. Because of this interconnectedness, and because projects can vary, it is

necessary to have a model such as this that is very adaptive but that also contains all the necessary elements for language learning curricula and that covers important points in project development.

The next sections in this chapter will discuss the stages I went through for developing this MA project and how they relate to Nation and Macalister's LCD model. Even though the model was not used in the early stages of the program's development and my MA project, the analysis stages of the BTRTESOL program, and my units', were equivalent to what the Nation and Macalister LCD model calls for in project development.

### **Stage 1: Analysis of the BTRTESOL Program Audience**

In a first step, I along with the BTRTESOL research and development team looked at the analysis of Dr. Henrichsen's previous work on this program: the audience, their needs, and the main principles we needed to follow in developing each of our units. These three areas correlate to the three outer circles found in Figure 1, and the initial analyses in these three areas represent the first stage of development for my MA project. The first stage of development was the analysis of the environment, the needs, and the establishment of the methods and guiding principles for the BTRTESOL program and my two units.

The environmental analysis, as explained by Nation and Macalister (2009), includes looking at the "situational factors that strongly affect the course" (p. 15), or in this case the BTRTESOL program and each of its units. These factors are the learners, the teachers, and the situations in which the BTRTESOL program will be used. They contribute directly to the delimitations that have to be taken into account when designing and developing units for the BTRTESOL program. Additional information is explained in the prospectus found in Appendix A. In the prospectus developed by the BTRTESOL team, 2009-2010, we point out reasons why

novice teachers have need of this program. We also explain the rationale for our work, the audience we created our units for, our competitors, and several distinct features of the BTRTESOL program that set it apart from other similar programs already on the market.

A great deal of initial development was already under way with the BTRTESOL program by Dr. Henrichsen previous to my involvement in 2009. It was from his work that many of the initial environmental constraints surrounding the teachers, learners, and situation were analyzed, established, and adapted. In order to further investigate the audience for the program, as well as to develop each individual unit, several TESOL MA candidates along with myself formed the BTRTESOL development team. We met each week to do additional research on the constraints and needs of the audience and to allow for collaborative feedback and input. These weekly meetings helped us understand the many environmental constraints and needs for the BTRTESOL program and allowed for evaluation of individual units as they progressed through development stages.

From early research work done by Henrichsen (2011), it was established that the BTRTESOL program needed to be designed so that groups or individuals could use it as an instructional manual for a class or as a self-study program to help individuals teach English. The audience could also use BTRTESOL units in any particular order they were interested in based on their needs and desires. We learned that it was also important to recognize that the volunteer teachers would in many cases be young and inexperienced in teaching ESL/EFL. Also, in our weekly meetings, we looked at the delimitations in order to ensure our product would be usable and then presented our units to the group for feedback.

We also determined that the text of our program needed to be at a level that was easily understood for more accessibility and greater value to the audience. This determination was



made because the BTRTESOL program audience may be very eager for some ESL/EFL teacher training, but because they are not paid and probably do not receive compensation for any training, they may have less motivation and commitment to a full TESOL training course. These individuals are probably looking for a quick training course to help them to teach reasonably well, to enjoy the experience, and also to survive. Therefore, each BTRTESOL unit's text needed to be at a readability level consistent with the audience's attention for self-instruction, retention of information, and desire for training. We established that 5-7 pages per unit and a ninth- or tenth-grade reading level would be most appropriate for the audience. At that level, we would still be able to accomplish the purpose of the program.

We also considered the different situations the novice volunteers would be faced with, the different locations throughout the world in which they would be teaching, their accessibility to additional resources, and the attention and time available to prepare for their teaching experience. Essentially, we tried to analyze and come to an understanding of the learners, the teachers, and the situations they would be in when using and implementing the principles of the BTRTESOL program and how they would use the units we were developing. From these analyses and discussions of the learners, teachers, and situations, the constraints and guidelines of the program and individual units were reconfirmed, established, or expanded.

The second area of analysis explained by Nation and Macalister (2009) is an analysis of the needs of the learners. They explain that this area includes what the learners lack in knowledge, what they want to learn, and what they will have to do when they teach. In his work, Henrichsen (2011) mentions some of these needs and constraints. He points out that "untrained novice teachers are left to rely on their own instincts" (p. 1320) and that the lack of teacher

training in TESOL along with financial, geographical, and other constraints, limit the volunteer and novice teachers ability to teach adequately.

As part of the overall evaluation and while looking at the characteristics of novice volunteer teachers, our BTRTESOL group presented our results in October 2009 at the Intermountain TESOL conference. During this presentation, we explained the characteristics of the program, the need for the program, and its overall goal and objectives. We also highlighted several elements we wanted to include the development of the program, including links to videos, questionnaires, and sources for more information on each unit's topic. After our presentation, we asked for feedback from the audience by giving them a questionnaire. We then received some feedback on the overall project and, reassuringly, some of the information pointed to the need for the program and the interest of the listeners in what we were doing. One audience member pointed out that in her program, there was a great need for this type of training.

With that feedback, the BTRTESOL group continued to meet weekly to discuss our analyses and further research. We began to research volunteer ESL/EFL institutions and other training programs that did similar things to what we wanted to accomplish. From this work, we were able to better identify and understand our audience. We highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of each program. We learned what worked well in other teacher training programs similar to ours and what those other programs lacked.

We also tried to find a concrete number for how many volunteer novice English language teachers there were in the world at any given time. We began to look at many different volunteer and nonprofit humanitarian organizations like the Peace Corps. Unfortunately, not a lot of hard statistics exist. Many of the organizations and volunteer groups do not provide such statistics. However, a study of adult literacy/ESL programs in 1986 gave us valuable information as is

explained in the prospectus. The study pointed out that about half of the 2,900 adult education programs at that time used volunteers and 88% of those were for ESL programs. It was during these initial meetings that we made different assignments to group members to examine the need for this program by looking at the lacks, wants, and needs of our audience.

The third area of this first stage, and a part of Nation and Macalister's LCD model, focuses on the method and principles a curriculum or project should employ in relation to the constraints established from the previous environmental and needs analysis stages. In the Nation and Macalister LCD model, the principles and methods should all follow the research and theory of language teaching and learning. These are the principles that project development should try to follow in order to do well, and they are divided into three sections: content and sequencing, format and presentation, and monitoring and assessment.

The guiding principles mentioned were important to the two units I developed because they established boundaries and focal points that were critical to the development process. These principles helped set and establish the most critical and important areas of language learning in relation to the previous analyses and second language acquisition research and theories. These principles acted as some of the most important guiding points for other stages of the process and led to accomplishing the overall goals and objectives of my MA project units and the BTRTESOL program.

At this stage, and based on the analysis of the environment and needs, the BTRTESOL program constraints were outlined and developed for the units as I used them. As was mentioned, much of this work was done previously, but as a group we were able to further evaluate and adjust the program as we analyzed and chose principles important to BTRTESOL. Because Nation and Macalister's principles target materials and curricula for L2 learners, and the

BTRTESOL program is primarily for native English-speakers or those with high English proficiency, the principles were adapted to the BTRTESOL audience. Many of the original principles of Macalister and Nation's LCD also needed to be changed because of the nature of the BTRTESOL program and different environmental constraints and needs that had been identified.

Table 3 compares some of the principles that Nation and Macalister suggest for the creation of a project and how they were changed for my project. These principles have been related to the BTRTESOL program and follow most of the basic constraints and influences found in the analysis done by Dr. Henrichsen, the BTRTESOL development group, and myself. These principles are the guidelines that I tried to follow for the development for the rest of the stages.

Table 3

*Using Nation and Macalister's Principles in Developing Units 4F and 5C*

<b>Some of Nation and Macalister's Principles</b>	<b>As Used in My BTRTESOL Units</b>
<b>Content and Sequencing</b>	
A language course should train learners in how to learn a language, so that they can become effective and independent language learners.	A teacher-training course should train the teachers how to teach, so they can be effective and independent teachers.
Learners should have increasingly spaced, repeated opportunities to give attention to wanted items in a variety of contexts.	Learners should have increasingly spaced, repeated opportunities to give attention to units in a variety of contexts through clear objectives and reflective questions after the opening scenario and reflective questions throughout the units.
A language course should progressively cover useful language items, skills and strategies.	A teacher-training course should cover useful ESL teaching helps, activities, skills, strategies, and terminology based on current ESL teaching research and theory.
The teaching of language items should follow a favorable sequencing of items and should take account of when the learners are most ready to learn them.	The sequence of the units and content in the units needs to be grouped and follow patterns of interest. The needs of the audience by having an opening scenario and subsequent sections in each unit that define different terminology and offer explanation for dealing with issues in the classroom.

The course should help the learners to make the most effective use of previous knowledge.	The units in the program should help the learners to build on previous content in other units or allow the learners use units they are interested in and most need without any prerequisite knowledge from other units.
<b>Format and Presentation</b>	
As much as possible the learners should be interested and excited about learning the content and value this learning.	As much as possible the learners should be interested and excited about learning the content and value this learning by understanding the text with little complex vocabulary and readability levels easily understood and comfortable to read.
There should be substantial quantities of interesting comprehensible receptive activity in both listening and reading.	There should be at least one quality interactive activity (video clips or inventory) that includes reflection and correlation to the unit's content.
Learners should process the items to be learned as deeply and as thoughtfully as possible.	Learners should process the content as deeply and as thoughtfully as possible through reflection and comprehension exercises.
The course should be presented so that the learners have the most favorable attitudes to the language, the teacher's skill in teaching, and to their chance of success in learning.	The learners should be motivated in their learning and have favorable attitudes to the content and presentation of each unit.
<b>Monitoring and Assessment</b>	
The selection, gradation, presentation, and assessment of the material in a language course should be based on careful consideration of the learners and their needs, the teaching conditions, and the time and resources available.	The selection and presentation of material for this teacher training course should be based on careful consideration of the learners and their needs, the teaching conditions, and the time and resources available.
Learners should receive helpful feedback, which will allow them to improve the quality of their language use.	Learners should receive opportunities to participate in activities meant to allow self-evaluation of their understanding of the topics in each unit.

In the next sections, I will discuss each stage I went through in connection with constraints and principles outlined above.

## **Stage 2: Establishment of the Content and Sequence**

This next stage, the establishment of the content and sequence, was revisited several times over the entire development process. After going through several levels of evaluation and after receiving feedback, it was necessary to do additional research while adding to and subtracting from the content in each unit. Therefore, some elements of this stage were done at

different times and did not follow a strict linear pattern of development. I first began this stage by doing research in Ling 678 and then continued by doing more research as advised by my committee and as influenced by pilot users and other means of feedback and evaluations.

First, I enrolled in Ling 678, Advanced Materials Development, under the advisement of Dr. Henrichsen. I took this class in the fall of 2009 at Brigham Young University. In this class, I designed and developed advanced materials, and this is where I first began the research for unit 4F “Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences”; this also led to areas of research for my other unit, 5C “Understanding Student’s Language Learning Styles.” I also developed several guiding questions for my research: What are the different teaching styles? How do I identify teaching styles? and Why is that information important to a novice volunteer teacher with no experience? These questions then guided my research and my decisions as to what content I would consider for inclusion in each unit.

Although both teaching and learning styles are intricately related, especially in the development of this project, I began with unit 4F due to the fact that I had already completed some research in this area in Ling 500; this research allowed me to immediately focus on specific areas and authors regarding culture and teaching style differences. It was during this time that I revisited an old proposal I had written in Ling 500 and used the research I had done on cultural differences in group work. That research led to many theories on differences in teaching styles, and consequently led to the learning style theories that are outlined in the literature review.

It was also during the Ling 678 class that the preliminary selection of content for unit 4F was developed, the first set of videos for the activity section were selected, several books were chosen as additional resources on the topics, and a basic preliminary outline of my first unit was made. I also wrote the first draft of the opening scenario and questions for reflection. I had

established a base for the content and sequence of my first unit and how it would then relate to my second unit. Although at that point I had only begun to research, it was not the end. I continued to adapt and develop the content and made multiple changes based on evaluations at different stages in the development process over several months. I even re-wrote several major sections based on additional research and feedback from my MA committee members.

During fall semester 2009, I presented the first version of the teaching styles unit and received preliminary feedback at the Intermountain TESOL conference. Along with classmates, I also presented our prospectus and the rationale of the BTRTESOL program to the other members of the Ling 678 class. The prospectus can be found in Appendix A and provides a glimpse of the early work that I, along with others, did for our units. The feedback from those presentations led to additional changes in the content and sequence of my units.

Through the summer and fall of 2010, it was necessary to continue researching the topics to identify the most important ideas surrounding learning and teaching style theory. After finding additional materials relevant to the design and after further discussions with my committee, it became necessary to invest additional time in researching the literature for my project. Additionally, based on feedback from pilot testing and recommendations from my committee, the text was adapted to better suit the needs of novice and volunteer teachers.

Initially several difficult decisions had to be made regarding the content and depth of information in each unit. After a meeting with Dr. Henrichsen and an informal meeting with Dr. Tanner regarding the depth and research of each unit, I found it was necessary to reexamine the literature review and the rationale behind the content for these two units. Although most of the information was eventually retained, including the tables and basic definitions of different style dimensions in each unit, there were several major changes. These changes included revisions of

definitions, reduction of text, elimination of redundant phrases and content, and a few other changes to the text and order. I then changed the titles of sections in each unit to better align with basic outlines of other units and to establish more continuity between my units. This change in titles highlighted the connectedness of learning-style and teaching-style issues in ESL/EFL classrooms.

Because the initial research did not include many important authors and the synthesis of their information, additions and deletions were necessary. I needed to go back to the research and complete a more in-depth review of literature; then I needed to review my units and offer a more complete justification of the content within both units.

After receiving additional feedback from piloting done in Ling 377 and in meetings with Dr. Anderson, I began to change the units to focus on three to four of the most important points within the main topic. Because the audience is primarily made up of novice and volunteer teachers looking for basic, easy-to-grasp information, only three sections were created for each unit. Only three sections were necessary because of the likely hood of novice volunteers' shorter attention span and lesser desire to spend years studying before going to teach English for two to three months. It is far more likely that these individuals will more effectively grasp three well-described principles from research on learning and teaching styles than extensive information that they cannot retain or apply given the nature of their teaching situations. In conjunction with the previous analysis and guiding principles, I then identified four of the most important areas that novices would need to understand in order to gain a basic understanding of the key concepts of teaching and learning styles that they would be able to apply effectively in their teaching. The four important points from research are outlined in Table 2 of the literature review. They are 1.



*Learn what styles are, 2. Learn your preferences and your students', 3. Help students learn their styles and change their perception, and 4. Adapt your teaching methodology.*

### **Stage 3: Establishment of the Format and Presentation**

Dr. Henrichsen had already established the format and presentation and had developed a template for the rest of the BTRTESOL units. However, several changes were made in my units based on research and other analyses of the environment and the needs of the audience.

All BTRTESOL units, including my units 4F and 5C, follow a predetermined format for both the paper and website versions. Each unit has three or four major sections. Each section of the units begins with bold and lined headings to clearly present the materials in an easily comprehended, professional, and attractive manner. The major sections include an introduction, a scenario, and the objectives of the unit, followed by three sections introducing and explaining the most important principles of the unit's topic. The unit then continues with an interactive video or style inventory activity, followed by comprehension or reflective questions. In unit 4F, users are asked to review videos of example teaching styles and answer several questions. In unit 5C, in place of a video, there is a reflective activity with a learning style inventory link, where readers can discover their learning style preferences. In both units, these sections are then followed by reflective questions designed to elicit continued thought and internalization as well as comparison with the user's own situation or experiences regarding the main principles of the unit. If readers are interested or would like more details on the principles presented, they are directed to websites and books where they can obtain additional materials or where they can find more information

Both of my units had similar topics and definitions that could correlate with each other and thus expand principles within them that eliminated redundancy and focused on the most

applicable principles for the audience. I coordinated both inventories for the learning and teaching styles in each unit so that the audience could use the results in their teaching.

I knew that the video activity was important to engaging the audience and keeping their interest; however, I also knew that helping them to see what a learning style was through a video would be difficult. I instead decided to include another activity in unit 5C where they discovered their own learning style. This correlated well with the activity in unit 4F and allowed the audience to compare the results of the learning style inventory to that of their teaching style inventory and be researchers themselves if they used both units. It was from this activity that some of the format was changed.

Additionally, I decided to make changes to the presentation of the reflection questions; I did this to connect the audience with the shared content between the two units and with the content in the opening scenarios. Dr. Henrichsen suggested I use a story about a cultural group in the opening scenario and then later in the unit identify, as examples, what their learning styles were. This would help the audience relate the information to the teaching issue in the scenario. By doing this, the audience would be more engaged with the overall problem associated with learning style and teaching style differences, and they would see how to identify and use information in the unit to the issue in the classroom.

Finally I decided to include photos and videos that I had received from Dr. Henrichsen that would capture the eye of the audience and relate the topic to a classroom setting. By doing this, I could appeal to different users of the BTRTESOL program and help prepare them for their experience teaching in a different culture. The photos and videos were all taken in EFL teaching contexts. The videos showed contrasting teaching styles. I also used Joy Reid's inventory for Perceptual Learning styles in unit 5C "Understanding Students' Language Learning Styles"

because of its wide use in ESL/EFL contexts (Peacock, 2001). All of these changes and developments were made in hopes of establishing a strong format and presentation that would engage the audience.

#### **Stage 4: Monitoring and Assessment**

There were several times throughout the development process when some monitoring and assessment was done. These included presentations at ITESOL (previously mentioned), BTRTESOL group meetings, and the international TESOL convention in Boston in March 2009. Monitoring and assessment was also done in a major pilot test consisting of several 25–30 minutes lessons in the Ling 377 Basic Training in TESOL class.

At ITESOL in 2009, as mentioned previously, we presented our initial program and parts of our units. It was here that we were able to present preliminary outlines and scenarios of some of the content of our units and the BTRTESOL program. Given the feedback, some of this assessment led to changes in content and presentation of the materials. One major area that changed was the name of the program itself, previously titled TLYSK.

After presenting at ITESOL, the BTRTESOL group began meeting. Several suggestions and ideas came out of our discussions as we assessed the success of the presentation at ITESOL. Originally we had titled the program “Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Find Out More, abbreviated TYLSK. However, because of some negative reactions and because we wanted to have something more eye-catching, we changed the name to Basic Training and Resources in TESOL and established the acronym BTRTESOL, pronounced “Better TESOL”.

The next assessment came in March 2010, when we presented our program at the 44<sup>th</sup> annual TESOL international conference in Boston. Each member of our BTRTESOL team

presented at the technology fair. I presented some details on where to go for more information and some of the links to online inventories I had included for my two units. There were about 35 people in the audience. We were able to get pilot users that would help us better enhance different parts of our units and the program as a whole. From here we made some slight changes to the logo, font, and other small cosmetic things. The BTRTESOL group also learned that some of the features would be a little different in each unit and that it would be a challenge to keep the writing style of so many authors similar for the whole program. This would be a challenge to the program's overall cohesion and needed to be addressed. We then began to look more closely at the language and vocabulary we were using in the text of our individual units.

After Boston, the BTRTESOL group met and established that we needed to use several different readability programs to ensure that our text followed similar language and would be readable and enjoyable for our audience. Next we established that we would use Paul Nation's Range program as a guide for identifying what words in the text would be too difficult and what words would be acceptable. This was an important and challenging point. There was not any research that could tell us exactly at what reading level our audience would do the best. We instead used information gathered by Dr. Henrichsen in the needs analysis to decide that a 9th to 10th grade reading level would allow the audience to read comfortably and still understand and retain important TESOL concepts, activities, and teaching methods and put them into practice within the established constraints.

Later during winter 2010, Dr. Henrichsen was instructing a Ling 377 Basic Training in TESOL class of students who were preparing for internships as novice volunteer teachers of English in foreign countries. At this point, both of my units had undergone several revisions to the text and content and were mostly complete. Because the students in this class were preparing

to go abroad for teaching internships, this context served as a perfect opportunity to pilot each of my units. Most of the participants were young, first- or second-year college students who did not have any training in TESOL and closely fit the demographic the BTRTESOL program wanted. Included in this class were several students from HELP-International, who were going to be teaching English in foreign countries. HELP-International is an organization that sends volunteers around the world to help improve education and development in third world countries. Along with these students, other young adults associated with HELP-International also participated.

Because of the large number of students, the class was divided into two sections. The first class had 15 students while the other had 16. This was also done so that two members of the BTRTESOL group could present their first units the same day for to the first class and then switch and present their second units to the second class, thus maximizing the use of the pilot test group.

I first created a PowerPoint of my units by following the outline and content of each unit as I had created them. I also created questionnaires for feedback. The first unit I piloted was “Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences.” I went through each of the three major sections of the unit, introducing them to the opening scenario, asking them reflective questions, defining teaching styles, and explaining different dimensions and types of teaching styles and the cultural issues that teachers might encounter. Each lesson was about 20 minutes long with a few minutes at the end for feedback. I had originally planned for a video at the end of the lesson, but due to a technical issue I was not able to pilot my original videos.

The feedback form that these pilot users filled out included 13 questions; the form can be found in Appendix B. Each question was designed to help me know what the audience learned

from the project, what they may have already known, and what they believed was not very useful for them. From the answers to these questions, I made several changes based on the analysis of the audience and the pilot tests. Some of these changes were immediately made to unit 5C “Understanding Students’ Language Learning Styles” before I presented it to the next Ling 377 class session a few weeks later.

Overall, each unit was evaluated and assessed. Major changes were then initiated based on feedback from the pilot test to better meet the demands and expectations of the target audience. However, because of other constraints, some changes were minimal. For example, I added a few more examples to the cultural issue section and changed the opening scenario to better reflect a real world situation. Other changes, like the addition of a new dimensions table that reflected the dimensions that probably most effect L2 students, were based on additional research, not just on the feedback from the Ling 377 class. It was at this time I had to ask myself if each unit was meeting the goals and objectives of the BTRTESOL program and whether the topics and content of each unit was based on quality, current research, and theory.

Through these assessment measures and through the pilot test, I was able to make necessary changes to both units. The next stage showed the results of many of the revisions based on the assessments. Some results were minor in importance because they were only editing and small word choice changes while others were more substantial. The major evaluations, revisions and changes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

### **Stage 5: Results of the Evaluations**

Evaluation is an important tool that is used to determine, what works well, what does not, and what revisions are necessary in relation to every stage of the development of the project. The evaluation process does not occur just at the end or at specific points in the design but is a critical

component throughout the design and creation of curricula or projects. Paul Nation and John Macalister (2010) in their book *Language Curriculum Design* describe evaluation as an all-encompassing part of design to see if the curriculum is the most advantageous it can be (p. 123). At every stage in developing this project, it was important to continue to evaluate and make changes based on those evaluations.

As mentioned in the discussion of the previous stage, several changes were made based on assessments, committee feedback, conference feedback and pilot users' needs and comments. This feedback was used to change and mold each of my MA project units. I now had a more streamlined project that fit well with the other units in the BTRTESOL program; it contained similar language reading ability levels to the other units and still focused on the most critical points of learning styles and teaching styles in association with cultural differences and issues. This evaluation and revision stage is further explained in greater detail in Chapter 5 where I discuss the revisions based on multiple evaluations and forms of feedback from presentations of my units, readability tests, and committee meetings to discuss how this project was developed to meet the needs of the projected BTRTESOL program audience.

### **Summary**

The Nation and Macalister LCD model provided an excellent development process for me to follow as I created my two units for BTRTESOL. Their model, because of its non-linear process fit perfectly with the nature of development my project required. As I went through all five of the development stages I was able to make revision and changes to my project that would better reflect the purpose and goals of the BTRTESOL program.

#### CHAPTER FOUR: FINAL VERSIONS AND RATIONALE FOR THE CONTENTS

This chapter will show the final versions of the units I developed, and explain the rationale for both units' contents. These units are 4F "Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences" and 5C "Understanding Students' Language Learning Styles."



## Final Version of Unit 4F

# Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences

## Introduction

Do you remember how your teachers in school taught you? Did they all teach the same way? Most likely they were very different in how they taught and in the strategies they used to teach. Each had a particular teaching style. Just as teachers have different styles of teaching, your students will have different styles for learning. Cross-cultural differences in teaching and learning styles can create conflicts when you teach unless you are aware of the potential problems and take steps to prevent them.

## Scenario: A Volunteer English Teacher in Asia



A young American volunteer in Japan, named Mike, was teaching a low-level English class to several eighteen- to twenty-year-old Japanese students. After teaching class for two weeks, he noticed that the students were often upset and seemed to have little desire to participate in his activities. He also noticed many students got low scores on quizzes. Mike was using the same teaching methods and activities he had enjoyed when he was learning Spanish in the USA. The activities included role-playing

and asking individual students to practice and demonstrate what they had learned. Mike did not know that his students were not used to this way of teaching. The students were not comfortable answering questions in front of classmates. The students felt they were “showing off their knowledge.” Also, they wanted some time to think before giving an answer. In contrast, Mike expected them to say the first thing that came to their minds. The students’ preferred learning styles were very different from Mike’s teaching style, and it was causing a problem in the class.

## Reflection Questions



1. What would you do in this situation?
2. What role do you think culture plays in teaching and learning style conflicts?
3. Have you ever experienced cross-cultural difficulties when you were teaching or learning?

## Objectives of this Unit

After working through this unit, you will be able to...

- Explain differences in teaching styles.
- Identify your own teaching style.
- Recognize basic cultural differences in styles.
- Change your teaching style to meet the needs of your students.

## Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences – The Least You Should Know

These next sections will help you learn what different teaching styles are, how you can identify your teaching style, and how cultural differences impact teaching and learning. They will also provide tips for handling cultural differences between teaching and learning styles.

### 1. Types of teaching styles

Your teaching style is the set of preferred patterns, methods, and practices you use for teaching. Your unique style of teaching may not be one particular behavior but a combination of one or more preferred teaching behaviors. Here are two tables of teaching types and their characteristics. The first one is an adaptation of the learning styles table used in Unit 5C, so you may already be familiar with it. The second one is based on teacher roles.

Notice that in the first table the style types in the *personality* and *cognitive* categories have opposites, while *sensory* styles do not. Some style types can be successfully combined with other types from multiple style categories.

Style Category	Style Type	Teacher Characteristics
<i>Sensory</i>	Visual	Prefer to use flashcards, videos, or other visuals
	Auditory	Like to let students listen to lectures, discussions, and conversations
	Tactile/ Kinesthetic	Like to give students hands-on experience understanding language using non-verbal strategies
<i>Personality</i>	Extroverted	Use outgoing social interactive games, discussions, debates, role plays, etc.
	Introverted	Allow independent work like studying, reading, working on a computer, or one-on-one between students
	Random- Intuitive	Have students focus on abstract terms; provide future-focused activities that call for language, such as guessing a possible answer
	Concrete- Sequential	Have students do tasks one step at a time; provide feedback from teacher or other students at each step
<i>Cognitive (mental process)</i>	Global	Want students to understand the gist of the lesson and that all the particulars are not always important to understanding; like communication activities; use activities that have students look for the main idea
	Particular	Like specific examples to help students understand; focus on details; have activities where students fill in the blanks with missing words
	Field- independent	Prefer using tasks that require checking and crosschecking; focus on multiple language parts in lessons like verb conjugation, word order, spelling, etc.
	Field- dependent	Prefer using tasks that focus on few language parts at a time; establish context and help students understand one part at a time (teacher does not correct every mistake)
	Impulsive	Prefer providing opportunities to speak that do not have students planning the conversation
	Reflective	Ask questions that cause thinking and reflecting; seek to guide learners to prepare for tasks like speaking

Adapted from Cohen and Weaver, (2006) *Styles and strategies-based instruction: A teachers' guide*. (See “**Where to go to learn more**” section at the end of this unit)

## Grasha's Styles

Here is another system for classifying styles developed by Anthony Grasha (2002). You may be more familiar with this system. It compares the role of the teacher to that of the students. Your teaching style may also a combination of several different teaching roles.

Teaching Style	Teacher's Role	Expected Students' Role	Example Situation
<i>Authority/Expert</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pass knowledge to students</li> <li>-Lecture and make content focused</li> <li>-Have no concern for your relationship with students or students with students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Listen and ask for clarification</li> <li>-Listen or receive knowledge</li> <li>-Take notes and follow along by listening</li> </ul>	The teacher explains and talks about the lesson. The teacher might even have handouts or write examples on the board. The teacher then explains the rules and exceptions and does almost all of the talking and explaining. All knowledge and learning comes from what the teacher presents and explains.
<i>Demonstrator/Model</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Model and demonstrate</li> <li>-Coach and guide students</li> <li>-Show by example the process</li> <li>-Help students master tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Observe the teacher as the model</li> <li>-Practice what they see from the teacher</li> <li>-Follow the example set by the teacher</li> </ul>	The teacher introduces vocabulary and tells several stories using the vocabulary. The students then follow the same pattern, in pairs or groups, by using that information to mimic what was said. The students use the teacher's language to produce and practice what the teacher said.
<i>Facilitator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Create a situation for students to practice what was taught</li> <li>-Center lessons on student learning</li> <li>-Focus lesson on group activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Seek help from peers</li> <li>-Learn according to their desire</li> <li>-Center on student activities</li> </ul>	The teacher explains the exercise and then divides the class into groups. Students have to figure out what they should say to order food from a restaurant. They must work together on what each will say and how they will act in the scene. In this situation students take responsibility for their assignments.
<i>Delegator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Have learning take place according to student motivation</li> <li>-Act as counselor or consultant</li> <li>-Center lessons on students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be responsible for their learning (as individuals or groups)</li> <li>-Learn through their own projects</li> </ul>	Students are given a project that they must film. They have complete freedom to choose the length and focus of the project. The students meet and work together, based on their own motivation and desires. The students are responsible for the completion of the project. The teacher acts only as a consultant.

Adapted from Grasha, (2002). *Teaching with Style*. (See **“Where to go to learn more”** section at the end of this unit)

After you have learned about different teaching styles you can identify and change the way you teach. Each teaching style has strengths and weaknesses. Good teachers use a variety of styles, methods, strategies, and materials that help students to expand their learning styles and use of learning strategies (See unit 5C “Understanding Students’ Language Learning Styles” and unit 5E “Language Learning Strategies” for more information).

## 2. Identifying your teaching style

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Teaching style is part of your personality and includes how you manage your classroom, how you present information, how you interact with students, what activities and strategies you use, and what choices you make as part of teaching. Your teaching style also changes over time and according to circumstances. Most teachers do not stick to the same teaching style all of the time. You can learn your teaching style through (1) style inventories and (2) by understanding what factors influence your decisions in the classroom.

Teaching style inventories are valuable tools that will give you a general idea about your own teaching style across multiple categories. In the “**Activity: Teaching Style Inventory**” section later in this unit, you will find Internet links to teaching style inventories.

### Factors That Influence Your Teaching Style:

**Education** is your level of schooling, how you were taught, and the materials used to teach you when you were a student. What you liked about teachers in school will influence your teaching.

**Environment** includes the actual classroom, location, lighting, available materials, and expectations of your leaders. The environment forces you to teach within specific conditions. For instance, if you do not have electricity in your classroom, you have to teach without many modern technological devices. Program administrators can also place restrictions and standards on your curriculum and methods for teaching. (See unit 1E “Working Within Foreign Educational and Administration Systems”)

**Personality** affects decisions and beliefs in many areas of your teaching, including classroom management and how you interact with students. This influences how much you like to talk and what types of activities you use for the class.

**Motivation** can make your experience wonderful or terrible. When you are excited, you will prepare and teach with more enthusiasm than if you are frustrated. Likewise the motivation of your students also influences your teaching. (See unit 3C “Managing classes of English Language Learners” to learn about personality and motivation.)

**Learning style** is the set of preferences you have for learning. These preferences influence your beliefs on how your students should learn.

**Culture** influences all of the factors mentioned above. It is important to remember that your culture and the culture in which you will teach will influence many things.

## 3. Culture and differences in styles

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The effects of culture are all around us and influence everything. When you come from a culture different from your students’, mismatches between your style of teaching and your students’ learning styles can cause difficulty in the classroom (See unit 1D “Understanding and Adapting in a New Culture” for more information on culture).

### Examples of Different Cultures and Styles

Culture influences your teaching and your students’ learning. Because your students come from a different culture from yours, they may have a **learning style** different from your way of teaching. In order to better help your students, you need to understand what the students need, what their learning preferences are, and how you can better teach them. Listed below are

five examples of different cultural groups and their learning styles. These are generalizations, of course, and do not explain all people in that culture group.

(Go back to section 1 to review different learning styles)

Hispanic: Impulsive, field dependent, extroverted, global, kinesthetic

Korean: Kinesthetic, tactile, visual, formal authority

Japanese: Field dependent, concrete-sequential, no major sensory

Anglo American: Field independent, intuitive-random, introverted

Native American: Concrete-sequential, reflective, visual, and extroverted in own culture group.

(Oxford and Anderson, 1995)

### Problems from Style Conflicts

When a teacher who has a **facilitator** or **demonstrator** teaching style, works with a group of students from a culture where they typically see the teacher as the **authority** or **expert**, a problem can occur. This is because of major differences in teaching styles and preferences in learning styles. **Visual** and **introverted** students like learning through videos, flashcards, or other visuals and like to work alone or on a computer. When a teacher uses a lot of group work and lectures in a lesson, these students will struggle if they are not used to the activities and methods of that teaching style. Also, if the students are not taught the strengths of different styles, tasks, and activities, the students may lose motivation. This puts a large amount of stress on the students and teacher. Below is an example of Mike's teaching style (from the opening scenario) and his students' preferred learning styles.

Mike's teaching style:

*Grasha's Style*: Facilitator/Demonstrator

*Sensory*: Tactile/Kinesthetic

*Personality*: Extroverted-----X-----Introverted

*Cognitive*: Global-----X-----Particular

*Cognitive*: Impulsive-----X-----Reflective

His students' learning styles:

Prefer a teacher with *Grasha's Style*: Formal Authority/Expert

*Sensory*: Auditory

*Personality*: Extroverted-----X-----Introverted

*Cognitive*: Global-----X-----Particular

*Cognitive*: Impulsive-----X-----Reflective

Notice that personality and cognitive style types are not just opposites but exist on varying degrees on a scale. Learning style preferences usually fall in between those opposites. The Xs on the lines mark where Mike and his students' style preferences fall on those scales. Still, it is easy to see that Mike and his students had nearly opposite style types. Mike liked to use hands-on activities and tasks. The students preferred listening to lectures so they could reflect and think about the information given to them. These opposites in styles were part of the reason Mike's class had problems.

## 4. Dealing with cultural style differences

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In order for you to manage cultural style differences that cause problems, you will need to learn about yourself, learn about your students, and then change and adjust your teaching style.

### **Learn Your Teaching and Preferred Learning Styles**

Use different teaching style surveys in books and on the Internet (See later sections of this unit). They will give you a good understanding of what your teaching style is. Your teaching style will change as you learn new skills, discover your own learning and teaching styles, and gain confidence in your teaching.

### **Learn about Your Students and Teach Them Their Learning Style**

See BTRTESOL unit 5C “Understanding Students’ Language Learning Styles” and 5E “Language Learning Strategies” for more information. As you evaluate your lessons, you will be able to see what activities/tasks students prefer and what activities/tasks they do not. Be careful of bias and over generalizations. Not all students from a specific culture learn and behave the same way.

### **Teach Students to Expand Their Styles**

Teach your students about learning styles and how they can be beneficial. Then as you teach, refer back to the benefits of specific styles and strategies you are using in the classroom. When your students understand the benefits of expanding their learning styles, they will be more open to your teaching style.

### **Learn about the Culture**

Research and read about your students’ culture. Never label your students and their culture based on negative stereotypes. Culture is complex, and you need to have an open mind. Some cultures have rules and guidelines teachers must obey (See unit 1D “Understanding and Adapting to a New Culture” for more information on this topic).

### **Use Observation and Self-reflection**

Observe local teachers’ classrooms; they have experience in the culture. You do not need to mimic everything you observe; in fact, you should not, but their examples may help you understand the local style. You can also ask a teacher to observe you and give feedback on your teaching style and the strategies you use. Write in a teaching journal and record how your lessons go; then reflect and make changes as needed.

## **Comprehension and Reflection Questions**

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1. Which style types are you more likely to have when you teach?
2. Which teaching style types do you prefer as a student?
3. What do you know about the culture of the students you will be teaching?
4. How do you think your students will react to your teaching style?

## **Activity: Teaching Style Video Review**

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Video Example: In the videos below are two examples of different teaching styles with the same group of students. Each video is an example of different teaching style types. The first video shows a teacher explaining to a group of Japanese students several different grammar points. The

teacher uses a whiteboard to illustrate the lesson as the students listen. The second video shows a teacher presenting and practicing a dialogue about food.

### Video 1

### Video 2

Time: 2:21 Styles types: visual, authority/expert, reflective, particular	Time: 3:06 Styles types: audio, demonstrator, facilitator, impulsive, global
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### Reflection and Response

After viewing the two videos, please answer the following questions.

1. What teaching styles do you think were being used in the two videos?
2. What differences between the two teachers stood out to you?
3. How do you think the students benefit from two different teaching styles?

### Activity: Teaching Style Inventory

Follow this link to learn more about your teaching style: <http://longleaf.net/teachingstyle.html>. This inventory was created by Anthony Grasha and Sheryl Riechmann-Hruska. The styles Formal Authority and Expert are combined into one style in this BTRTESOL unit.

### Where to Go to Learn More

Other units in the BTRTESOL program discuss factors that influence teaching styles. Also included below are online links and print resources that provide more information about teaching styles.

### Connection to Other Units in this Program

- 1D “[Understanding and Adapting in a New Culture](#)”
- 3C “[Managing classes of English Language Learners](#)”
- 5C “[Understanding Students’ Language Learning Styles](#)”
- 5E “[Language Learning Strategies](#)”

### Online and Other Electronic Resources

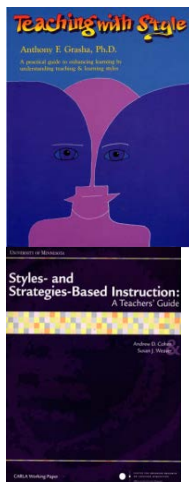


*Center for Research on Learning and Teaching* of the University of Michigan. <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tsts.php>. This website offers several helpful links on teaching styles and online surveys. These different surveys offer other perspectives and explanations of teaching and what might influence you in your classroom.

*Online Teaching: Have You Got What it Takes?*

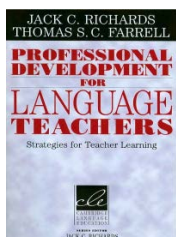
<http://members.shaw.ca/mdde615/index.htm>. This website is designed to give you a simplified explanation of teaching styles, learning styles, and some strategies. This is a simplified version of Grasha’s teaching styles. These surveys are based on the four teaching styles as listed earlier in this unit. It includes an inventory to help you learn your teaching style.

### Print and Paper-based Resources



Anthony F. Grasha. *Teaching with Style*. Publisher: Alliance Publishers. 2002. ISBN: 0964507110. Amazon- \$44.94. Also available at [http://ilte.ius.edu/pdf/teaching\\_with\\_style.pdf](http://ilte.ius.edu/pdf/teaching_with_style.pdf). This book provides more details of the teaching style dimensions developed by Grasha as mentioned in this unit. It also provides insights into enhancing your teaching styles and the other factors that may influence your style.

Cohen, A. and Weaver, S. (2006). *Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction: A Teachers' Guide*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). More information about this CARLA publication can be found at: <http://www.carla.umn.edu/resources/working-papers/> ISBN: 0972254544. \$22.50. This guide includes ideas and lesson plans for learning styles. There is a chapter on assessing styles through observation, interviews, and style inventories. The lessons will help you teach your students new strategies to stretch their learning styles.



Jack C. Richards and Thomas S. C. Farrell. *Professional Development for Language Teachers: Strategies for Teaching Learning*. Publisher: Cambridge University. 2005. ISBN: 0521613833. Amazon- \$24.27. This book will help you better understand the importance of keeping a teaching journal and using self-monitoring techniques. Although many of the topics are not directly related to teaching styles, many chapters will help you gain tools to improve and change your style of teaching. Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 12 offer more details on topics mentioned in this unit.

If you have suggestions for other resources (books, websites, etc.), please send them to [btrtesol@byu.edu](mailto:btrtesol@byu.edu)

### **Additional Sources**

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Oxford, R. L., and Anderson, N. J. (1995). State of the Art: A Cross-cultural view of learning styles. *Language Teaching*, 28, 201-215.



## Final Version of Unit 5C

# Understanding Students' Language Learning Styles

## Introduction

Learning styles are our preferences in how we approach learning. By knowing students' styles, teachers can change lessons and activities so that the students learn more comfortably. Students' learning styles can sometimes be very different from a teacher's teaching style. Understanding these differences in styles will help make your classroom better.

## Scenario: A Clash of Styles



Shortly after arriving from the USA Susan was assigned to teach a business English class to 15 Korean businessmen. For a week she taught lessons using a variety of activities with flash cards and pictures. Most of the activities used visuals or included some role-playing. Susan believed that by seeing and acting rather than having the rules explained to the students, they would be more successful. However, the students did not want to role-play and had difficulty. Later, after grading a quiz Susan found many of the students did not do well. Instead of

using just visuals and role plays she decided to try other methods. She began to write down all the rules on the board and give a handout with all the rules. She explained in detail the language rules and used repetition drills. Susan then found that all of the students did much better. Apparently the more formal the type of language and activities she used, the more comfortable the businessmen were with her teaching. This seemed to fit their style of learning. As she continued to teach the class she found a better balance between activities and strategies, both new and familiar to students' preferences.

## Reflection Questions



1. What would you do in this situation?
2. How do you think the students' learning styles influenced the class?
3. When a teacher's teaching style and students' learning styles do not match, who should adjust? How? Why?

## Objectives of This Unit

After working through this unit, you will be able to...

- Explain the characteristics of different learning styles.
- Describe your own learning style.
- Identify your students' learning styles.
- Handle problems resulting from differences between your teaching style and your students' learning styles.

If you learn the concepts in this unit well, you will be able to help your students improve their language learning ability by learning about their learning style and other styles so that they recognize the benefits of different learning styles.

## Student Learning Styles – The Least You Should Know

A language learning style is a student's preferences in learning. These preferences and characteristics are categorized into many different types. Learning strategies are defined as the methods a student uses to help with the understanding and use of the language. A learning style includes the preferred strategies, activities, and tasks of a student.

### 1. Types of learning styles

Here are a few examples and definitions to help you become familiar with the different types and categories of learning styles. Also included are tips that you, the teacher, can use when designing your lessons to fit and stretch the learning styles of your students.

Style Category	Style Type	Characteristics of Students	What You Can Do for These Students
<i>Sensory</i>	Visual	Prefer charts, graphs, something to read, or a picture	Use flash cards, videos, or other visuals
	Auditory	Prefer listening to conversations, tapes, lectures, etc.	Let them listen to lectures, discussions, and conversations
	Tactile/ Kinesthetic	Prefer aids that can be touched, manipulated, or written; may practice through drawing and tracing	Give them hands on experience understanding language with cultural interchanges using non-verbal strategies
<i>Personality</i>	Extroverted	Enjoy the outside world; prefer being active, like interactive type tasks, are outgoing, and have many interests; tend to reflect later	Include social interactive games, discussions, debates, role plays, simulations, etc.
	Introverted	Enjoy being alone; prefer concentration, focus on thoughts and concepts; have fewer interests but deep ones, like to be reflective	Include independent work like studying, reading, working on a computer or one-on-one with another person
	Random-Intuitive	Prefer finding the big picture; enjoy formal model building and abstract terms; focus on the future; look for possibilities	Use activities that call for language to focus on the future, like guessing possibilities
	Concrete-Sequential	Like to work step-by-step; follow directions carefully and focus on the here and now	Have them do tasks one step at a time so they can find ways to get feedback at each step (from other students, teachers, or native speakers)

<i>Cognitive (mental process)</i>	Global	Enjoy getting the main idea and are comfortable communicating even if they do not know all the words or ideas	Help them understand the main idea of the lesson and that all the specifics are not always important to understanding
	Particular	Want specific examples in order to fully understand; pay attention to specific facts or information; quickly pick up on new words or phrases	Help them understand that a focus on details can lead to understanding; have activities where they fill in the blanks with missing words
	Field-independent	Can handle language parts and the whole without trouble; can juggle a lot of language elements at once without problems	Provide tasks that require checking and crosschecking without getting confused
	Field-dependent	Need context to focus and understand; may take in language one part at a time; challenged if they have to juggle several elements of a language at the same time (e.g. verb, tense, number agreement)	Provide tasks that focus on few concepts at a time (talking with a native without being corrected on every mistake)
	Impulsive	Like to take risks and guess a lot, prefer to receive material at high speed with low accuracy of understanding	Give tasks that allow them to speak without planning everything out before hand
	Reflective	Prefer to think about material longer but with higher accuracy of understanding; avoid risks and guessing	Guide them and prepare them for high-risk tasks like speaking

Adapted from Cohen and Weaver, (2006) *Styles and strategies-based instruction: A teachers' guide*. (See "Where to go to learn more" section at the end of this unit)

These characteristics explain the different dimensions of students' abilities, thought patterns, personalities, and preferences. An individual's learning style is made up of combinations of these areas. Except for the sensory category, learning style types come in pairs and can be put on a scale with opposites at each end with many points in between. A student's learning preference usually falls somewhere between those two opposites, as indicated by the X in the example below.

Example student learning style

*Sensory:* Visual

*Personality:* Extroverted-----X-----Introverted

*Cognitive:* Global-----X-----Particular

*Cognitive:* Impulsive-----X-----Reflective

In this example, the student enjoys visual materials and interacting with other students in class. This student enjoys looking at the whole picture of the lesson to figure out the main idea. This student also likes to take risks and guesses a lot.

We all have a preferred learning style, but we also use bits and pieces of other styles on occasion. We often go back and forth using different strategies and different styles. However, we also have strong general tendencies and preferences.

## **2. Know your students' learning styles**

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There are several different methods for figuring out your students' learning styles. The chart in the previous section will help you learn the different style types you may see in your students. You can discover your students' learning styles through learning style inventories, observations of your students' behaviors and achievements, and interviews.

### **Learning Style Inventories**

A learning style inventory is a survey that asks the students several questions about their learning preferences. These inventories are much like the personality tests mentioned in unit 3C "Managing Classes of English Language Learners." The inventories are designed to indicate what style types students prefer. You may need to translate the inventories into their native language if their English level is low.

### **Observations and Evaluations**

Observe and then evaluate your students while and after you use learning tasks and activities with them. This will help you learn what worked well with some students and what did not. When you observe, have a specific focus. Look for particular student behaviors that are connected to learning styles. Take notes to identify what activities and strategies were being used and which students had difficulties understand, however that there are many reasons for different student behaviors. Consider how the physical and social setting, the role of the students in the situation, and the activities the students are participating in influence their behavior.

### **Interviews**

Ask the students questions about their behaviors, desires, opinions, feelings, knowledge, background, and how they use their senses in learning. Their answers will correlate with characteristics of different learning styles. Listen for tasks, strategies, and methods the students prefer. Find out why they enjoy some things over others. Their answers may show what type of styles they prefer.

## **3. Teach and expand your students' learning styles**

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You can help students want to learn and be more motivated by teaching them the differences and benefits to different learning styles and strategies. Create lessons using a variety of activities and tasks. Then you can better teach different learning styles and strategies in your classroom. By expanding your students' understanding of learning styles, you can help them have an improved learning experience.

### **Teach Your Students about Learning Styles**

At the beginning of a course, teach students about learning styles and the value of different style types. Help them understand what styles they can use to help them stretch. Find a balance in your teaching between stretching the students' learning styles and teaching to their preferred learning styles and strategies (See unit 5E Language Learning Strategies).

### **Prepare Your Lessons, Tasks, and Activities with Learning Styles in Mind**

When preparing your lessons, identify the tasks, materials, and activities you are going to use and the style(s) the lessons focus on the most. If you are concerned about certain students, change or use tasks, materials, and activities to reflect their learning preferences and needs. Alternate and use different strategies to help all your students and their preferred learning styles. This approach will also introduce new styles to students. Remember that constantly focusing on only one type of task or activity will quickly frustrate students and cause them to lose motivation.

### **Learn from Local, Experienced Teachers**

Observe and learn from teachers who have experience with your students or know their culture. By observing these teachers, you can gain an idea of what the students are used to in their regular classes. This does not mean that those styles of teaching and methods are necessarily the best for your class.

### **Ask for Feedback from Students**

Students' feedback helps you to adjust your teaching to your students' preferences. You will see what tasks and activities the students are more willing to try. After you have identified tasks that use a learning style, continue to monitor student motivation and evaluate the students' language growth as you try different approaches to lessons.

## **Comprehension and Reflection Questions**

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1. In your own words what are learning styles?
2. Why is it important to understand your students' learning styles?
3. In what way can you learn your students' learning styles?
4. How can you help your students expand their learning styles?

### **Activity: Learning Style Inventory**

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Learning style inventories are a good way to learn about your students' styles. How you prefer to learn also heavily influences how you teach (see unit 4F "Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences"). Follow the link below. It will take you to a learning style inventory. The link also provides definitions of terms and other styles not mentioned in this unit.

Perceptual Learning-Style Preferences Questionnaire by Joy Reid

<http://lookingahead.heinle.com/filing/l-styles.htm>

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### *Reflection and Responses*

After completing the learning style inventory answer the following questions.

1. According to this inventory, what is your learning style? Do you agree?
2. What did the results tell you about yourself?
3. How might your learning style affect your teaching?

### **Where to go to Learn More**

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Other BTRTESOL units explain other influences on students' learning styles. By understanding these influences you will be better prepared as a teacher to deal with learning style conflicts and problems.

## Connection to Other Units in this Program

Unit 1D "[Understanding and Adapting in a New Culture](#)"

Unit 3C "[Managing Classes of English Language Learners](#)"

Unit 4F "[Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences](#)"

Unit 5E "[Language Learning Strategies](#)"

Below you will also find additional resources that provide more information on learning styles. These resources include other inventories and explanations of preferred learning styles and strategies.

## Online and Other Electronic Resources

### Perceptual Learning-Style Preference Questionnaire

by Jo Reid

#### Directions

People learn in many different ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners), some people prefer to learn by experience and/or by "hands-on" tasks (kinesthetic or tactile learners), some people learn better when they work alone while others prefer to learn in groups.

This questionnaire has been designed to help you identify the way(s) you learn best (or the way(s) you prefer to learn).

Read each statement on the following pages. Please respond to the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH.

Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you strongly agree, mark:

SA	A	U	D	SD
Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
X				

### Learning Style Survey

#### Objectives

- To raise students' awareness of their own learning style preferences
- To encourage students to respect their learning style preferences
- To help students get to know each other and honor respect for and appreciation of diversity in learning styles

#### Materials Needed

Downloadable handout Learning Style Survey (p. 133), chalkboard, flipchart, or overhead

#### Instructions

- Have students complete the Learning Style Survey (on p. 133 of the handout) and give them a copy of the handout (see below). Have the survey taken approximately 30 minutes in class time. It is best to complete the handout in a classroom setting. You may want to discuss certain parts of the survey in small groups of three or so or do when gathered together as a group.
- Once the survey is completed, have the students identify their preferences for each of the eleven parts of the learning style and read through the explanations for each part.
- Depending on time available, you could have an open discussion where students share the manner in which the identified preferences ring true to their experiences. You could also have students consider and read about others whose responses were completely opposite to their own to reach their own conclusions regarding their learning differences. If you have time for an additional activity, there have students provide brief individual reports on their findings to the entire group, such as whether or you experienced any or difficulties to find another student with similar results to any categories or whether they noticed any patterns across the group.

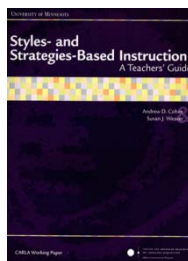
Related Pages to Student Center  
pp. 30-32

Request These Items  
All items to complete the survey. \$12.00  
return for discussion

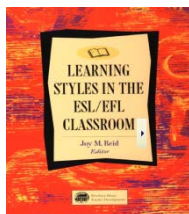
["Perceptual Learning-Style Preferences Questionnaire" by Joy Reid, from http://lookingahead.heinle.com/filing/l-styles.htm](http://lookingahead.heinle.com/filing/l-styles.htm). This is a learning style inventory that has been simplified to allow for easier translation and understanding. The web page provides questions and formulas for determining a person's learning style. The types of learning styles explained are visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group, and individual.

Learning Style Survey by Andrew D. Cohen, Rebecca L. Oxford, and Julie C. at [www.carla.umn.edu](http://www.carla.umn.edu) In the search bar of the webpage, type "learning style survey" for the link to the survey. This survey is an online version of an inventory also found in Cohen and Weaver's *Styles- and Strategies- based Instruction: A Teacher's Guide* (below). This survey is designed to help teachers diagnose their students' styles and then understand what those styles mean.

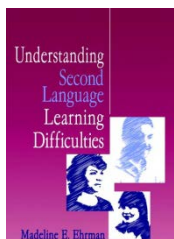
## Print and Paper-based Resources



Cohen, A. and Weaver, S. (2006). *Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction: A Teachers' Guide*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). More information about this CARLA publication can be found at: <http://www.carla.umn.edu/resources/working-papers/> ISBN: 0972254544. \$22.50. This guide includes ideas and lesson plans for learning styles. There is a chapter on assessing styles through observation, interviews, and style inventories. The lessons will help you teach your students new strategies to stretch their learning styles.



Joy M. Reid (Editor). *Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom*. Heinle and Heinle. 1995. ISBN: 0838461581. [Amazon-\\$18.41](#). This book contains work from ESL scholars on learning styles in the ESL classroom, classroom activities for learning styles, cultural differences and issues with learning styles, and learning style inventories to help teachers understand and teach students about their learning styles.



Madeline E. Ehrman. *Understanding Second Language Learning Difficulties*. Sage Publications. 1996. ISBN: 0761901904. [Amazon-\\$59.35](#). This book offers a complete guide to understanding learning style problems. Chapters 4–7 include different models and dimensions of learning styles along with sample case studies and practice questions. Chapters 2 and 3 are on observation and interviewing to assess learning styles. They include examples and forms that help teachers learn more about learning style differences.

If you have suggestions for other resources (books, websites, etc.), please send them to [btrtesol@byu.edu](mailto:btrtesol@byu.edu)

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## **Rationale for Units' Contents**

Understanding the rationale for what each of my units contains requires an awareness of the delimitations and constraints placed on this project at the outset. These restrictions included writing at a 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade readability level, keeping the length of each unit to 5–7 pages, designing the units to be used independently or along with other units, using video clips restricted to three to four minutes in length, and focusing on only the most valuable information for novice volunteer teachers with different levels of education. Additionally, in order to help the audience retain the most important information regarding the topics and themes of these two units, I limited the number of major content areas to only three or four. Although there are many important theories and ideas in connection with teaching and learning style theory, the BTRTESOL program is meant to be a minimalistic guide to understanding language learning and teaching theories for untrained novice teachers.

From the literature review, it was evident that there were several different possible approaches to selecting and presenting the knowledge about learning styles and teaching styles in a viable curriculum and teaching guide. It was also evident that there is a substantial amount of information on these topics and a variety of researchers and stakeholders in the area of language learning style theories. In response, I created Table 2 in the literature review (p. 36) by analyzing and synthesizing information based on many of these same scholars' theories and suggestions from the articles and books I had reviewed. Table 2 summarizes the suggestions for the use of learning and teaching styles in the classroom from scholars and researchers. I took their suggestions and categorized them into four main principles and then organized them into the Table.



After creating Table 2, I could more appropriately decide what three or four most important principles, based on the research I could use in each unit and what I could then leave out. The contents of units 4F and 5C directly relate to the four areas from Table 2. Also, because unit 4F and 5C are so similar in relationship to teaching styles, learning styles, and culture, there inherently was some overlap in the two units. I designed each of the sections to coincide with the suggestions and categories shown in Table 2 and to cover all the goals and objectives of the BTRTESOL program.

I will next explain the rationale for each of the sections in the units in connection with the four categories of Table 2. I will begin with the section “Opening Scenario” and end with “Where to Go for More Information.” I hope to establish a rationale for the contents of each unit by showing the connection between each of the four major content areas of the units and the four areas mentioned in Table 2 in the review of literature. It is important to point out that the major content areas of units 4F and 5C do not follow a strict one-to-one relationship with Table 2’s four main points.

Table 4 illustrates the relationship of each major content section in BTRTESOL units 4F and 5C in connection with Table 2 in the literature review of this work. After identifying and analyzing the many suggestions from research and scholars, I created each units’ major sections based on the four categories of suggestions I established in Table 2 of the literature review. Based on feedback and advice from Dr. Anderson, I focused on 3 to 4 content sections per unit in order to maximize the effectiveness of the novice teachers’ abilities and desire to retain the most valuable information that would help them to be effective ESL/EFL teachers. It is more likely that the readers will retain and use the information from 3 or 4 well-scripted sections.

Table 4

*Units' Sections and Their Relationship to Suggestions in Table 2*

<b>Unit 4F “Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences”</b>	
Unit Section Titles	Corresponding Table 2 Categories
1. Types of teaching styles	1. Learn what styles are
2. Identifying your teaching style	2. Learn your preferences and your students’
3. Culture and differences in styles	2. Learn your preferences and your students’
4. Dealing with cultural style differences	3. Help students learn their styles and change their perception
	4. Adapt your teaching methodology
<b>Unit 5C “Understanding students’ language learning style differences”</b>	
Unit Section Titles	Corresponding Table 2 Categories
1. Types of learning styles	1. Learn what styles are
2. Know your students’ learning styles	2. Learn your preferences and your students’
3. Teaching and expanding your students’ learning styles.	3. Help students learn their styles and change their perception
	4. Adapt your teaching methodology

The next pages will further explain how each major content section in my two units implemented the suggested principles for using learning style theory in the classroom from the literature review, as outlined in Table 4 above.

**Contents of opening scenarios.** Each unit first includes a scenario that is followed by several questions. Each opening scenario is directly related to the unit’s overall theme and introduces a problem associated with the themes of learning styles and teaching styles. The scenarios are meant to elicit reflection on the situation and engagement with the issue in each unit. They are also to lead into important concepts and themes of other sections in the same unit. The questions that follow the scenario help build schemata on the topics before defining and explaining the main principles of each unit. By working through a scenario and reflection questions, readers will be able to better grasp the importance of understanding and internalizing the topic and the information that follows in the subsequent sections of the unit. This was done in an attempt to include top-down and bottom-up learning for the audience.

**4F-Types of teaching styles and 5C-Types of learning styles.** The first principle from Table 2 is to learn what styles are, either teaching style or learning style depending on the unit. The first major content sections of the units, 4F “Types of teaching styles” and 5C “Types of learning styles,” begin with a definition of teaching or learning style and then introduce different models, dimensions, and explanations of the styles most associated with language learning. By using these definitions and terms, I was able to explain what different learning and teaching styles are. This helped to accomplish the first suggestion category to learn what styles are.

Although there are many different learning and teaching styles, it was necessary to use terms and dimensions of each style that would be more readily understood, observable, and related to language learning and teaching. This was directly related to the work and suggestions of Oxford and Lavine (1992), who identified six dimensions that seem to play a more prominent role with language learning students. After researching each of these dimensions and other style models, I decided to use five other dimensions that they identified along with the definitions, examples, and suggestions for implementing those styles as provided by Cohen and Weaver’s teachers’ styles guide (2006). These included, the *analytical* or *global*, *auditory* or *visual* or *hand-on*, *intuitive-random* or *sensory-sequential*, *reflective* or *impulsive* and *introversion* or *extroversion*.

Oxford and Lavine mentioned one other dimension *closure* or *open oriented* dimension, however I replaced it with the *global* or *particular* dimension. This was done in order to more readily appeal to the novice teacher who might better relate to and understand the language and explanation of the styles *global* and *particular* over the *open* and *closer-oriented* dimension as explained in Cohen and Weaver’s styles guide. I also felt that there was some overlap between these two dimensions. *Global* appears to be very open getting the main idea without having all

the particulars similar to *open-oriented*. Likewise, the *particular* style is similar to *closer-oriented*. Both styles prefer specific points of information to learn better. Although they both have important points, limitations forced me to choose just one dimension.

Cohen and Weaver's guide includes many more dimensions than the ones I used, but working within the constraint of 5–7 pages, I only included these dimensions as suggested by Oxford and Lavine (1992) that appear to influence language learning the most. I used and adapted Cohen and Weaver's terms, definitions and table because they were more concise and closer to the level of the potential readers of this program than those of other authors in their articles and books. However I still needed to edit and change several words and explanations. Cohen and Weaver's guide also listed many different styles across cognitive, affective, and psychological areas. This approach was very valuable and fit well with the BTRTESOL program's overall direction and limitations.

I then took Cohen and Weaver's (2006, pp.13-14) table of different learning styles and adapted it for both units. I made slight changes to some explanations and definitions in order to meet the standards of readability for these units. Those standards are mentioned in more detail in Chapter 5 of this report. I also wanted to make sure that both units followed similar patterns, terms, and definitions so that there would be a stronger level of continuity between them because of their close relationship.

In unit 4F, I also included Cohen and Weaver's table for learning styles but made changes to the descriptive language to reflect the styles and characteristics of teachers and not of learners. I followed patterns similar to what I had seen in Hsu's thesis (2000) when she created a teaching style inventory from a learning style inventory. Although this method and the terminology I used in adapting the Table have not been tested for validity or reliability, they do

establish a clear connection for users between both units; this connection reinforces the importance of the problem of mismatches in style and how to recognize different styles, both key points in learning style theory. This clear and comparable contrast of styles can result in an easier implementation process for learning style theory than if the readers were forced to compare teaching styles and learning styles across two different models and completely different dimensions.

I also added an additional Table to unit 4F to provide a better connection to the readers' own experiences in the classroom and different teaching styles they have probably experienced. The second Table explains four more styles from the model created by Grasha (2002). The two different tables were included so that a wide range of different users may relate to different approaches and explanations of styles. Grasha's table is based on information from the field of education as seen in teaching styles in the United States, while Cohen and Weaver's table dimensions uses a wide range of sources and focuses on the dimensions most associated with language learners. By having the two tables the audience can decide which relates best to them. This comparison also gives the audience a greater range of understanding of teaching style dimensions. Especially since the terms and adaptations of dimensions for Cohen and Weaver's table was adapted from language using learning style dimensions while Grasha's was developed to identify teaching styles directly. By using two tables of different models for teaching styles, I hope to fully capture and relate the readers' experience with different teaching styles.

Grasha's terminology and model are also tied to the inventory in the activity section and a link to a website explaining his teaching styles. The website in the unit section "Where to Go to learn More" has value because of its focus on understandable definitions in relation to Grasha's model. Having a place for the reader to go to learn more is a valuable tool for readers in

understanding the key concepts of the unit and is easily accessible through the Internet along with his book.

**4F-Identifying your teaching style and 5C-Know your students' learning styles.** The second principle of Table 2, *learn your preferences and your students' preferences* was primarily covered in the second major content sections of each unit. In order to establish this principle, I included “Identifying your teaching style?” in unit 4F and “Know your students' learning styles” in unit 5C. Both sections include explanations and ideas for discovering teaching styles and learning styles through different means based on the research. These second sections help users to learn how to find out their preferences and their students' preferences in learning. In addition, the main goal of helping teachers learn their and their students' style helps to build toward the fourth category of Table 2, *adapting your methodology*.

In unit 4F, I first wanted the readers to understand why they needed to learn their preferences in teaching and what factors influence those preferences. I mention only six factors from the research because of limitations in length and the anticipated value those six factors would have over others to the readers. Those particular six were included because of the likely issues the readers could face in connection with their experience. Although, to the knowledge of the author, there are no specific data to support which factors are the best for novice volunteer teachers, these six factors probably have a stronger connection to the experience the readers will have in the classroom across cultures. More research beyond the scope of this project, however, is needed to further verify this.

Inventories are also mentioned in both units as a primary means of understanding both teacher and student preferences. Although there are problems associated with self-report inventories, these are included because of the value they bring to the classroom when solving

issues related to non-defined but observable problems. These sections establish connective elements to the activity sections of each unit to help readers implement the use of inventories. Based on the literature, the units emphasize that readers not focus on one method of assessment. By including observations, evaluations, and one-on-one interviews, as other methods for finding out a student's learning style the information will help the teacher to improve instruction.

All of these ideas will help readers to understand themselves and their students better in connection with the suggestions made by scholars. This knowledge can ultimately help them to adjust and adapt their method of teaching, too. The second sections of both units help readers to accomplish the second principle of Table 2, that of learning their own preferences in learning and teaching as well as their students' preferences in learning. However, a special section was added in unit 4F to help readers more fully understand the element of culture in relation to student preferences. The fourth section addresses how users can adapt teaching methods to deal with cultural problems related to learning and teaching styles.

**4F-Culture and differences in styles.** Culture has a great influence on teaching styles and learning styles. By including sections that seek to help novice teachers understand and expand their students' knowledge of their styles, I hoped my units would allow readers to also see the benefits of other styles different from those common in their culture. The sections in unit 4F "Culture and differences in styles" and "Dealing with cultural style differences" are meant to address this main issue. These sections help teachers learn how to expand their knowledge of a culture and to prevent and overcome culturally related issues.

The "Culture and differences in style" section of unit 4F explains the differences among several cultures and gives examples of style conflicts in the classroom. The readers need to understand this important problem and how to recognize it. To help them with this and follow

the suggestions in Table 2, “2. Learn... your students’ preferences”, it was necessary to include this section, allowing the readers to know some of the differences among cultures and the problems that can occur because of these differences.

To help illustrate the differences in cultures, I took some example cultural learning style characteristics from the research done by Oxford and Anderson (1995). In their article, they gathered results from multiple sources that researched the style preferences of different cultures. I also created an example situation based on the opening scenario, explaining the teaching style of the main character, Mike, and his students’ common culturally based learning styles. That example helped establish a connection between the opening scenario and the core cultural style problem associated with the topic of these units. Because of the restrictions in creating these units and not being able to cover all cultures in the world, I included only a few cultural learning style examples. These sections give the readers a general idea of differences among cultures.

It is also important to address and identify the problems related to culture that occur in the classroom. However, because there is another unit in the BTRTESOL program on culture, unit 1D “Understanding and Adapting in a New Culture”, my unit was limited to the relationship of styles and culture. Additionally, another unit in BTRTESOL covers classroom management, another element to teaching styles; thus it was not necessary to include as much detail in my unit 4F. The third section also helps set up the fourth section of unit 4F, “Dealing with cultural style differences.”

**4F- Dealing with cultural style differences and 5C-Teaching and expanding your students’ learning styles.** The last two categories of Table 2 are “3. Help students learn their styles and change their perception” and “4. Adapt your teaching methodology.” These categories have overlapping principles and connections. Teachers will need to adapt their teaching in order



to help their students change their perceptions of styles. Unit 4F needed this additional section to help explain how the readers may be able to deal with the cultural element of the problems associated with differences between teaching and learning styles. “Learning to deal with culture and styles” in unit 4F has a strong connection to the third major section of unit 5C, “Teaching and expanding your students’ learning styles.” In order to deal with the problem, readers will need to adapt their teaching methodology and help students deal with style differences. Teachers can expand students’ learning styles by teaching them about the main principles and benefits of different learning and teaching styles.

Often the conflict between teaching styles and learning styles runs across cultures and is linked to many classroom problems. In Table 2, suggestions are given to help deal with this area. In order to help students see value in learning styles and the teacher’s style of teaching, it is very important that students be taught explicitly about styles and how their learning benefits from that knowledge.

These two sections, on culture and expanding learning styles, explain why styles and strategies need to be taught to students and the benefits of doing so. The sections also provide the majority of suggestions for dealing with and handling learning styles in the classroom. Although not every culture is explicitly mentioned, these sections will help novice teachers identify and deal with mismatches because of cultural differences in learning styles. Both of my project units suggest teaching the students about learning styles and stretching the students’ styles in order to improve their learning and overcome some cultural difficulties in the classroom. This is done in order to help readers adapt their teaching methods as suggested in Table 2 and deal with cross-cultural differences.

The final principle of adapting teaching methods is probably the most difficult to instill in BTRTESOL readers. Although they may understand the principle, actually adapting what they do in the classroom will still be difficult. In unit 5C, the last major section covers preparing lessons, tasks, and strategies in order to adapt the curriculum or materials and activities being used in the classroom by the teacher. Adapting and implementing classroom change will depend a lot on the availability of materials and the abilities of the individual.

Only a few suggestions are given to help the readers be prepared for mismatch problems because there are so many different styles, tips, and suggestions for dealing with specific culture related issues. In order to help the broader audience, general guidelines and rules for observing, taking notes, and using inventories were given instead of ideas for manipulating and changing actual lessons and activities for specific learning styles. I hope those issues will be dealt with in the other units of the BTRTESOL program. The last major content areas, 4F “Dealing with cultural style differences” and 5C “Teaching and expanding your students learning styles” were designed to help readers learn what tools they could use for designing lessons and changing what happens in the classroom so that the teaching of learning styles can be best implemented.

**Comprehension and reflection questions.** In order to accomplish the first goal, being familiar with and understanding what styles are, a reflection question section is included after each unit’s scenario. This is done to help readers do a self-assessment of what they know and understand about learning and teaching styles. These are also fused into other areas of the units as well. In unit 5C, users are encouraged to find out their own learning style so that they can better understand why they teach the way they do and how their students may be different. This concept is also implemented in the activities at the end of each unit where readers are asked to

participate in style inventories and reflect on the results. This allows readers to continue their reflection and, hopefully, internalize the contents and objectives of each unit.

**Activities: Videos and inventories.** The activities of each unit are important to interacting with the reading and in connecting readers with the content of the unit. BTRTESOL users are more likely to understand and use the content to their advantage when they fully understand the topic and themes of each unit and can successfully interact and achieve its goals.

Originally, I wanted each unit to have video examples, but due to the nature of the topic of unit 5C, it was difficult to have a short video of students with different learning styles. It is impossible to view a student's learning style in a few minutes and a short video would provide a very minimal experience for viewers. It is especially difficult to show a learners process in learning when the learning styles are cognitive elements that primarily involve mental decisions. It was more important to help the readers fully appreciate and understand differences in learning styles and the role styles have on the student and the teacher.

Instead of a video, therefore, it was decided that having readers use a learning style inventory would be far more effective. Also, because of the strong link between the two units, I wanted to make a clear connection between the content in each unit and the inventories in the activities. By finding out their learning style through inventories, readers could then reflect on how it impacts their teaching styles. After taking a learning style inventory, the audience could then look at unit 4F and take another teaching style inventory and see how the results of both inventories of commonalities in dimensions.

These inventories serve two purposes. First, they help the viewers discover their own learning and teaching styles; second, these inventories explain what the students would experience from a learning style inventory. Information from inventories also reinforces the

importance of expanding the students' learning styles. After users have seen the value of different learning and teaching styles in an inventory, they can then see, implement, and adapt their classroom teaching methodology accordingly. In this manner, novice teachers will be much more prepared for problems associated with style differences, even cross-culturally.

Each unit's activity section includes a link to an inventory. These two inventories are not related and are meant to be different so users have a wide range of experience with inventories, dimensions, and styles. However each unit does point back to the content of the other in order to augment the readers' understanding of these different dimensions and styles.

The teaching style inventory in 4F is used because of its connection to the work done by Grasha (2002), the readability level for the readers, and the connection to an easy-to-read website covering different teaching styles also based on Grasha's work. The learning style inventory PLSPQ created by Joy Reid (1987) covers other styles not mentioned in the units but offers dimensions that the readers might more readily identify in their students. This inventory has also been used extensively (Peacock (2001), and helps learners with understand their learning styles. Both of these inventories offer easy accessibility for users, assuming that they have online access. Considering the BTRTESOL program itself is online, this is a safe assumption unless users are using only the printed materials. This issue may need to be addressed in the future.

In addition to the inventory, unit 4F also has another activity where the readers compare two short videos of two different teachers with the same class of students. Although a short moment in a classroom does not represent the entirety of a teaching style, these two short videos showcase some teaching style differences. The first video shows a teacher with students at their desks taking notes on a grammar lesson. The teacher lectures and explains grammar rules as he writes them on the board with some examples. The second video has a teacher in the front of a

classroom with students in chairs semi-circle around the teacher. The teacher presents and explains dialogue about food he wants the students to practice. He models the dialogue and then proceeds to have different students play a role in the dialogue. Each video follows a short preview of the video that gives the audience an idea of the situation.

These videos help the readers reflect and practice identifying the different characteristics of teaching styles. After the readers have watched the videos they are directed to answer questions regarding what they have observed and learned from the videos. Through this activity, novice teachers will gain other insights into teaching styles and the differences between teachers.

**Where to go to learn more.** Finally, each unit points users to more complex and in-depth examples from books and online sources that can direct them to information that is beneficial for learning more about the unit's topic. The BTRTESOL program offers only a minimalist approach to many complex theories and ideas regarding English language teaching. The resources at the end of each unit have differing readability levels. Some are for those who have no college education; others are for those who have considerable academic reading experience. These resources provide materials for students and other ideas that can be used for implementing and applying the information in these units.

In summary, the development and content of these two units is based on principles explained in Chapter 2 of this work. Primarily, these units try to focus on the four principles from scholars' suggestions as outlined in Table 2. Through the use of reflection questions and activities that readers can use to learn about themselves, these units help BTRTESOL program users gain a basic knowledge of learning styles, teaching styles, cross-cultural style issues and where to go for more information on these topics. The next chapter will discuss the different evaluations and changes each unit went through in the development process.

## CHAPTER FIVE: PROJECT EVALUATION AND REVISION

This chapter will further explain the many levels of evaluation and major revisions carried out with units 4F and 5C. Following the curriculum design model developed by Paul Nation and John Macalister, evaluation was vital to the completion and success of this MA project and occurred at all stages of development. A short description of the evaluation stage was mentioned in Chapter 3. In this chapter I will further discuss the evaluation and changes to each unit.

Because many evaluations were done during different phases throughout development, some minor evaluations and revisions will not be explained here. They include small revisions, such as changes in punctuation that ultimately resulted in only minor alterations of each unit. Only the evaluation and results that offered significant revision will be discussed. This discussion will include revisions based on the feedback from previously-discussed lessons given in the Ling 377 class, from meetings with committee members, and from the results of different readability programs. These evaluations focused on the applicable content from research given the delimitations, readability level for the target audience, and the efficacy of helping the audience understand the basic themes of research in teaching styles, learning styles, and the difficulties that occur when culture and styles intersect.

### **Evaluations and Revisions from Ling 377**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I piloted my units in several lessons given in Ling 377 to novice volunteer teachers who planned to teach English abroad. After each lesson, I handed out forms for feedback and received many positive ideas for changes; I also found out what the students liked about the lessons and content I had shared. The feedback questions and sample responses can be found in Appendices B, C, D and E. It was from the pilot users suggestions that

several changes to the content, sequencing, and presentation were made. These changes helped establish a stronger, more usable project and will be explained further in the following paragraphs.

The first unit I presented and taught to the Ling 377 class was unit 4F, then titled “Teaching Styles and Cultural Impact.” The students’ feedback showed that they clearly knew the need to understand their own teaching style and what to do when they encountered cultural differences in styles. I taught the same lesson to two different classes. From their feedback, I learned that unit 4F needed to have more examples of teaching styles, examples of teachers dealing with cultural issues, and tips for dealing directly with specific cultural differences that a teacher might face.

In response to their feedback, I went back to unit 4F and made several significant changes. I added another Table of different teaching styles that directly relates to unit 5C “Understanding Students’ Language Learning Styles.” This second Table included additional explanations of teacher characteristics to help readers understand what to look for in identifying a teaching style and how this might conflict with an opposite learning style. The second Table was also meant to help teachers learn to deal with cross-cultural style conflicts by recognizing the differences among different style groups. I added the second Table so the audience would be able to make a connection between the learning styles and teaching styles of the teacher and how they influence decisions in the classroom.

I next added more information and examples of style variations in some common cultures based on the research compiled by Oxford and Anderson (1995). By including another section on culture and style differences, including examples, I hoped to help the audience see how styles

differ in different cultures. This led to the third major change in the area of helping the audience to adjust their teaching.

Originally I had a section titled “How do I adjust my teaching style?” Instead I renamed the section “Dealing with cultural differences” and included more specific and direct tips based on research on what teachers could do to change their teaching style. Unfortunately, because of length constraints, I could not identify every possible culture style difference and conflict to issues based on the audience’s many unique teaching styles. I could not possibly know every situation and include a solution for every possible cultural conflict. It would be beyond the scope of this two-credit project.

Instead I wanted to help the audience become sensitive and learn how, through their own research investigation and experiences, they could adapt based on the knowledge they gained from their students, the culture, and the situation they would be in. I then added tips to learn about the students’ learning styles, to teach the students about the benefits of different learning and teaching styles, and to use observation and reflection to help plan and adjust as the readers learn about the culture they would be in. I also included references to other BTRTESOL units that address areas such as classroom management, student learning styles, and culture.

Finally, I added an activity that allowed the audience to take an online teaching style inventory that would help them understand their own teaching style. These resources, coupled with the learning style inventory activity in unit 5C, were meant to help the audience learn about and then change their own behavior based on their experiences in learning and teaching styles.

I also presented and taught my second unit, 5C “Understanding Students’ Language Learning Styles,” to the Ling 377 class several weeks after teaching unit 4F. However, there were only 6 students for the second unit’s pilot test. I followed a similar outline using a



PowerPoint presentation with example situations, as done in the lesson for unit 4F, but I included changes to content based on previous feedback from the students. This time, instead of a video, I provided Joy Reid's PLSPQ as an interactive element that Ling 377 students could use. At the end of the lesson each student was given a questionnaire with reflective questions designed to provide feedback for the content of unit 5C.

In their feedback, the Ling 377 audience expressed that they wanted more examples of different learning styles and how a teacher could then help a particular student style or group of students in a specific culture. The Ling 377 students also wanted the lesson to be a bit more interactive with more questions. Another concept from the Ling 377 feedback was that the units needed to focus more on the tips for handling learning styles in relation to culture. It was from this feedback that I learned I needed to provide more advice on how a teacher might handle learning style issues in the classroom.

In response to their feedback, I began to make several changes. The first change I made was to include more examples of different styles, including those of different cultures as I had also done in unit 4F. I added several examples of different learning styles and changed the Table and content. Originally I had tables describing learning styles based on the model created by Felder and Silverman (1988); however, in response to the pilot lesson feedback, I knew I needed to change it. In order to do so, I did additional research to find style dimensions that fit closer with language learning. This is when I made the changes to use Cohen and Weaver's (2006) style model as examples for both units. I also included more information on how to expand and teach students about learning styles.

Eventually I took out the element that covered cultural issues in unit 5C and made it so that unit 4F covered the significance of cross-cultural issues of style. This was done to make unit

5C shorter because it was too long and needed to focus on stretching the students' styles rather than learning the differences of particular cultures. Other cultural issues were already being covered in unit 4F and unit 1D, which was completed outside of my project by another student. Including cultural issues in unit 5C would be too redundant. However, as mentioned, I included references to other units in the BTRTESOL program that would help the audience learn more about differences in culture and managing a classroom.

### **Committee Feedback and Revisions**

At several points in the development, I had Dr. Henrichsen read and critique my units to see if they were following the guidelines of the BTRTESOL program. He gave me several suggestions that then turned into large revisions. These suggestions were that the text be checked for readability and then revised (which will be discussed later in this chapter). He also suggested that changes be made to titles, sections, examples, length, activities, and other areas.

One major suggestion was that the scenarios and examples within the units should all be linked to the opening scenario. I then began to change the examples to reflect the teaching difficulties experienced in the opening scenario; I also created examples using the style types of the cultures of the students and the teachers in the opening scenario. I included questions that prompted the audience to reflect on what they understood and saw illustrated there.

I also changed and revised the content to fit within seven pages and to be more concise. I began to revise and delete large amounts of unnecessary text. In order to be more concise, I read each point in the units, identifying redundancies, circular writing, and unnecessary information. As I reviewed the language, I also read different articles and reflected back to my literature review in order to identify content that might need to be deleted or added. Several less important paragraphs, sentences, and redundancies in language and content were removed. These did not

add as much value to the topic and were a result of several cosmetic and word-level structure changes. These changes made the reading level closer to that of the target audience and helped me to fit the most important content into the 5-7 page limit. These included areas that went into more detail about different student learning styles based on culture and teaching the readers to understand methods, strategies, and tasks. One area of editing addressed the problem of lack of parallelism in the tables. After acknowledging and identifying the changes that needed to be made, I began re-writing several parts of the tables and other major sections of each unit in a way that increased coherence with the rest of the paper.

During the initial development process, Dr. Tanner had suggested that I revisit the research and then create the units instead of beginning with the creation of the units and then going to the research. I then revisited several articles and added significantly to the research I had already collected. Even though I still kept many of the units' main sections, several changes resulted from the additional research, and the sections and tables also changed.

One of these changes involved including more learning style examples and types for the readers to see in the Tables of each unit. Revisiting the original research and reorganizing Tables in both units, based on Oxford and Lavine's (1992) research that six particular learning style dimensions are more influential than others to language learners, I established more usable Tables with strong foundations in the research.

The new Tables also received cosmetic overhauls in order to provide clarity and increase legibility. The teaching style unit received the most change in this area. The learning style unit received several additional examples and a new diagram highlighting how styles are viewed on a continuum across several style characteristics. This was done in order to show that students have not just one style but many different styles; it was also done to provide readers with more tools to

use in learning about their own teaching style. I also added several more examples and explanations to the definitions.

In the beginning, Dr. Anderson had suggested that I focus only on the three main areas that I would want the audience to learn; this limit would keep their attention and help them retain the most important points of learning and teaching style theory. It was from this advice that I created Table 2 based on the research. I divided the suggestions into four categories and then changed the sections to correlate with those categories. For example, I added more information on stretching the students learning styles as part of adapting the teaching methodology rather than teach to the students' learning styles.

### **Readability Programs**

In addition to the revisions based on the feedback of the committee are those based on the readability programs I used on each unit. In order to make sure my units were at the desired reading level, I input each units' text through several programs designed to evaluate vocabulary, language, and readability. Each unit needed to have language that the target audience, volunteer teachers with a high school education, could readily understand, comprehend, and apply to their situation, without having a higher education.

Each unit needed to have text that was easily understood, around a 9th- or 10th-grade reading level. To check this, I used several online readability programs and then crosschecked the readability of my units with those of other BTRTESOL program units.

The first test I did was to take the units through online programs that calculate several different readability formulas. I took each unit through multiple formulas and through two different websites in order to analyze the results. I also took three different completed BTRTESOL units through the same process in order to establish a standard with which I could

compare my units. The most significant online programs I used were [www.online-utility.org](http://www.online-utility.org) and [www.read-able.com](http://www.read-able.com). These online programs used the Coleman Liau Index, Flesch Kincaid Grade Level, Automated Readability Index, SMOG, and Flesch Reading Ease formulas to test readability. An explanation of these formulas can be found in Table 5. The descriptions found in the table come from the same readability websites with additional information from Wikipedia and the article *Determining Readability: How to Select and Apply Easy-to-use Readability Formulas to Assess the Difficulty of Adult Literacy Materials* by Victoria Burke and Daphne Greenburg (2010).

Table 5

*Types of Readability Formulas*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
Coleman Liau Index	Uses characters to count and calculate readability using the following formula: $CLI=0.0588L - 0.296S - 15.8$ . Designed to be calculated by computers. Calculates characters to make it easier for mass amounts of text and materials.
Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	Most reliable when used with upper elementary and secondary materials. Adapted from Flesch Reading Ease to show grade level. Uses the following equation: $0.39(\text{total words}/\text{total sentences}) + 11.8(\text{total syllables}/\text{total words}) - 15.59$ . Sample size should 4-5 sentences and 100-250 words.
ARI (Automated Readability Level)	Designed to gauge the understandability of text. Uses the following equation: $4.71(\text{characters}/\text{words}) + 0.5(\text{words}/\text{sentences}) - 21.43$ . Uses formula to estimate grade level of readability of text.
SMOG	Unlike the other formulas, SMOG predicts the grade level required for 100% comprehension. $\text{Grade} = 1.043 \text{ square root of } 30 \times \text{number of polysyllables}/\text{number of sentences} + 3.1291$ .
Flesch Reading Ease	Normally used to assess adult reading materials, shows scores on a scale between 0 and 100. Uses the calculation: $106.835 - 1.015(\text{total words}/\text{total sentences}) - 84.6(\text{total syllables}/\text{total words})$ . The higher the score the easier the text is to read. 0 equals a 12 <sup>th</sup> grade level and 100 equals a 4 <sup>th</sup> grade level.
Gunning Fog Index	$\text{Grade level} = 0.4((\text{number of words}/\text{number of sentences}) + 100(\text{number of words with at least 3 syllables}/\text{umber of words}))$ . At least 100 words. Estimates number of formal education needed to comprehend text. Easiest formula to use.

I tested my units using several formula programs to calculate their readability and compared them to completed BTRTESOL program units that had established reading level texts at ninth to tenth grade levels. By comparing the results of other completed units to my own, I was able to determine how close to the BTRTESOL program units 4F and 5C were in readability. Table 6 shows the results of the formulas, previously mentioned, as used by the websites [www.online-utility.org](http://www.online-utility.org) and [www.read-able.com](http://www.read-able.com) on both my units in their final stage of development and results of three different completed BTRTESOL units.

Table 6

*Websites' Readability Results*

<b>www.online-utility.org</b>	<b>Readability Formula</b>	<b>Unit 1D</b>	<b>Unit 3C</b>	<b>Unit 4A</b>	<b>Unit 4F</b>	<b>Unit 5C</b>
	Flesch Reading Ease	50.57	47.21	49.78	46.17	46.30
	Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	10.26	11.88	10.41	10.31	10.41
	Gunning Fog Score	11.62	13.46	11.61	10.65	11.10
	SMOG Index	11.80	12.74	11.74	11.15	11.59
	Coleman Liau Index	11.53	12.16	12.40	13.38	13.57
	Automated Readability Index	10.06	12.54	10.81	10.63	10.98
<b>www.read-able.com</b>	<b>Readability Formula</b>	<b>Unit 1D</b>	<b>Unit 3C</b>	<b>Unit 4A</b>	<b>Unit 4F</b>	<b>Unit 5C</b>
	Flesch Reading Ease	63.5	60.8	65	64.6	64.9
	Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	8.5	10	8.3	7.8	7.7
	Gunning Fog Score	10.9	12.8	10.9	9.7	9.9
	SMOG Index	8.1	9.3	8.1	8	8
	Coleman Liau Index	12.8	13	13.8	14.9	15
	Automated Readability Index	9.8	12.1	10.5	10.3	10.4

Most of the formulas' results are given as the grade level needed to comprehend most of the text. SMOG is the only formula that calculates the grade level for 100% comprehension (Greenburg and Burke, 2010). In contrast, *Flesch Reading Ease* does not calculate a grade level but rather gives the text a score of 0 to 100. The numbers can then be compared to reading levels.

In fact the *Flesch Kincaid* is the *Flesch Reading Ease* redeveloped to give a grade level number as the result.

In the far left column of Table 6 are the different readability formulas. In the columns on the right are the results of completed units 1D, 3C, and 4A, compared to my units 4F and unit 5C after using the websites' program. These results show that the readability level for both units is from a ninth grade to eleventh grade ability and are comparable to completed units in the BTRTESOL program.

It was interesting to note that there were large differences between the two websites. These differences could be because of the internal programs used to capture and explain number, pictures, tables, and other variables from computer code that probably explain why the scores are different between the two websites. In their article, Greenberg and Burke (2010) explain that users need to be cautious of the results, especially when using just one method. They say that the Flesch-Kincaid formula often gives results that are low and SMOG gives results that are high and it is best to use two or more formulas and then average the grade scores for more accuracy in the results. This is part of why, during the evaluation stage, I ran several readability tests and comparisons.

In my comparison of results, there was also a large difference between Coleman Liau Index and the other formulas from both websites. The other formulas all calculate the text of both units at around the eighth to tenth grade level ([read-able.com](http://read-able.com)) and tenth to thirteenth grade level ([www.online-utility.org](http://www.online-utility.org)), while the Coleman Liau Index rated both units over the twelfth grade level.

The high-grade results may be due to the formula and not the websites since both my units' scores from the Coleman-Liau formula estimated higher grade levels than those of other

BTRTESOL units. It may also be how the program analyzed and dealt with the large tables I used in my two units that other BTRTESOL units did not have. The results may also be because Coleman Liau was designed to count characters instead of syllables. The formula was designed so that computers could easily analyze the text and be used by large organizations for large amounts of differing texts. The Coleman-Liau counts characters while the other formulas rely mostly on word length, syllables, sentence length, number of sentences etc. Counting characters may be a flaw in the Coleman Liau formula because it does not identify and eliminate unimportant factors to readability level. This may be partly a problem with the computer programs it is running under. My units have a lot of numbers, website pages and links to inventories that may have altered or inflated the score. This flaw may be a reason for the large difference with other BTRTESOL units as well.

It was also interesting to note that both my units had scores that were similar across all formulas and similar results on both websites, although online-utility.org consistently rated each unit 1-1.5 grades higher than the results from [www.read-able.com](http://www.read-able.com). Figure 2 shows the results of unit 4F after the text was input into the website's program.



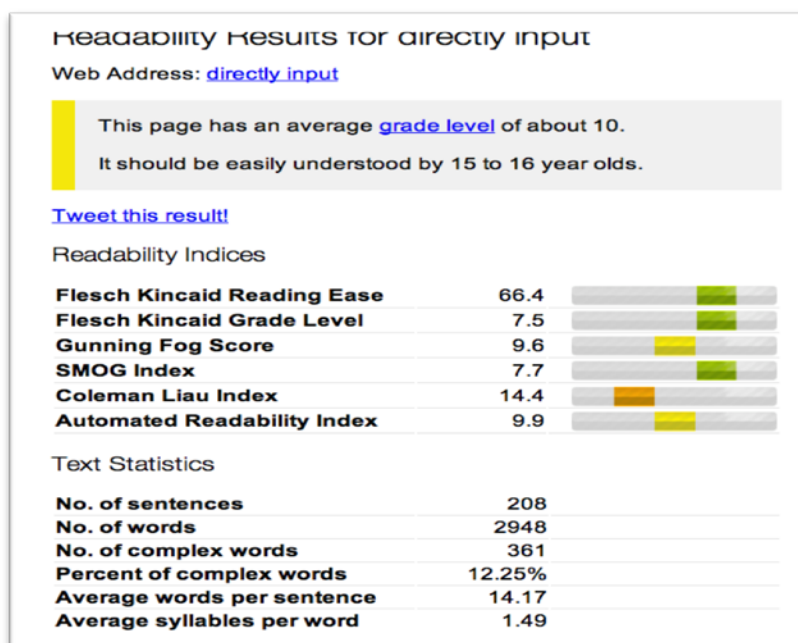


Figure 2. Screen Capture of readability Results for Unit 4F

When reading several articles on readability, I learned that there was considerable debate about the accuracy of these equations. However, because I was comparing my units to other completed units in the BTRTESOL program as well as running other random sample texts through the website's equations, I felt comfortable with the results. Although the results are not completely telling of the readability level because of the design of some of the formulas and the complexity of charting reading comprehension with a formula, the results did give me an idea of revisions I needed to make to the text. I was able to change my units to be more harmonious, in terms of readability, with the other completed BTRTESOL units.

After viewing and analyzing the results of the tests, I began to make changes to lower the reading level to something closer to a 10th-grade level. After identifying words that were more complex and some redundant language I began to re-write sections of each unit, replacing phrases and words with ones closer to the readability level we wanted for BTRTESOL. Instead

of using words with longer syllables or letter counts like *consider*, I replaced them with shorter, less complex words like *think*. Eventually I was able to get each unit to a level equivalent to other units in the BTRTESOL program. Interestingly, several of the final revision results showed minimal change; in fact some even indicated that the reading level had become more difficult. I then had to go through the process multiple more times because of other revisions and suggestions that came later.

The increase in readability could have also been because of the significant revisions to the units from the time of the first readability test to when the subsequent tests were carried out. But after doing some research I learned of several debates regarding the efficacy of these equations and that, although they did provide a good basis for readability, I could not rely solely on the formulas. Additionally, certain code from the text in the computer and different sections and tables in each unit are not in a sentence format. This can also cause a problem in the readability formulas.

### **Paul Nation's Range Program**

Dr. Henrichsen advised me to also run the text of both units through Paul Nation's readability program. Paul Nation created a program called Range in order to analyze and compare texts to frequency word lists of the 2000 most common English words and 1000 words found in academic language that are different from the first 2000 words. These frequency lists explain what words or vocabulary are most common. The first list contains the most frequent 1000 English language words and the second lists the next 1000 most common English words. The last list, or list three, uses 1000 words that are not found in the first two lists but are common in academics or university level text. These words are also called the academic word list (AWL).

By using this program to analyze the text of each of my units, I was able to see the frequency of each word I used and compare those words to the frequency lists.

The program uses three lists, previously mentioned, of words to which the text is compared. The words are then analyzed based on number of times they appear in the text and whether they are on the three lists or not. Each word is also displayed under one of the three lists to which it belongs or under the group “not in the lists.” The results of the final version of unit 4F and 5C can be seen in Table 7. The focus of my analysis was primarily on the words in the group “not in the lists” and word list three (AWL) because words in those lists might be too academic for the target audience’s readability level and too complex for my two units. Therefore it was necessary to identify and change words.

Table 7

*Readability Results from Range Program*

<b>Unit 4F</b>			
Word List	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
One	2958/78.75	475/58.71	317
Two	140/ 3.73	73/ 9.02	56
Three	433/11.53	132/16.32	103
Not in the Lists	225/5.99	129/15.95	Not available
	103/2.7		
<b>Total</b>	<b>3756</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>476</b>
<b>Unit 5C</b>			
Word List	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
One	2594/77.53	442/58.85	304
Two	159/4.75	79/10.52	58
Three	397/11.86	126/16.78	92
Not in the Lists	196/5.86	104/13.85	Not available
	95/2.8		
<b>Total</b>	<b>3346</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>454</b>

*Note.* “Not in the lists” is the number and percentage of words not found on the frequency lists as created by Paul Nation. 103/2.7 and 95/2.8 refers to what the number of words and percentage would be without proper nouns and other terminology important to the content of each of my units but which are not on the frequency lists.

When I first calculated the frequencies for my two units, I had looked at the wrong percentage and thought that I had a very high percentage of around 17% of high academic words. With the high percentage in mind, and the results showing which words I was using that were on the academic word list, I began deleting and replacing words and phrases with simpler words to keep the same overall meaning of the sentence. A screen shot of the differences can be seen below in Figure 3. I used features *track changes* with *compare documents* found in Microsoft Word for the screen capture to help illustrate the revisions that I made to the unit based on individual words I had used and then changed because they were not on the AWL.

Types of Teaching Styles

	Style	Characteristics
Sensory	Visual	Prefer to use flashcards, videos, or other visuals.
	Auditory	Like to let them listen to lectures, discussions, and conversations.
	Tactile/Kinesthetic	Like to give them hands on experience understanding language using non-verbal strategies
Personality	Extroverted	Use outgoing, social interactive games, discussions, debates, role plays, etc.
	Introverted	Allow independent work like studying, reading, working on a computer or one on one with another person.
	Random-Intuitive	Have students focus on abstract terms, provide future-focused activities that call for language, such as <u>guessing a possible answer</u>
	Concrete-Sequential	Have students do tasks one step at a time. Give feedback at each step from teacher or <u>other students</u>
Cognitive (mental process)	Global	Want them understand the <u>main idea</u> of the lesson and that all the <u>specific parts</u> are not always important to understanding. Like communication activities. Use activities that have students get the main idea.
	Particular	Like specific examples in order to fully understand. Focus on details, Have activities were they fill in the blanks with missing words.
	Field-independent	Prefer using tasks that require checking and crosschecking. Focus on multiple language parts in lessons
	Field-dependent	Prefer using tasks that focus on few aspects at a time. Establish context and to help students understand one part at a time (You don't correct every mistake students make)
	Impulsive	Prefer providing opportunities to speak that doesn't have students planning the conversation
	Reflective	Ask questions that cause for thinking and reflecting, Seek to guide learners to prepare for tasks like speaking

Adapted from Cohen, A., & Weaver, S. (2006) *Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction: A teachers' guide*.

Other Styles

Style	Teacher's Role	Students' Role	Example Situation
Authority/Expert	-Pass knowledge to students. -Lecture and make content focused -Have no concern for relation to students or students with students.	-Listen and ask for clarification -Listen or receive knowledge - Take notes and follow along by listening.	The teacher explains and talks about the present perfect tense. Might even have handouts or write examples on the board. The teacher explains the rules and exceptions. The teacher does almost all of the talking and explaining. All knowledge and learning comes from what the teacher presents and explains.
Demonstrator/Model	-Model and demonstrate -Coach and guide students -Show by example the process -Help master tasks	-Observe the teacher as the model. -Practice what they see from the teacher. -Follow the example set by the teacher.	The teacher introduces vocabulary <u>in</u> several stories. The students then follow <u>the example</u> , in pairs or groups, by using that information to <u>repeat</u> what was <u>said</u> . The students use the teacher's language to produce and practice.

Figure 3. Screen Capture of Revisions Using Microsoft Word "Compare Documents".

I made changes to phrases and words like *future-oriented* and replaced them with similar words like *future-focused*, and *speculate* was changed to *guess*. Later as I went through the Range calculations again, I learned that I had been focusing on the wrong percentage. Regardless of my initial mistake, after comparing and eliminating words found on list three with other words I was able to lower the number of words on the "not in the list" group along with the percentage on list 3. I also identified a problem with using the Range program in that although Range

identifies common words it fails to explain or calculate readability overall. Vocabulary or word choice is only one aspect that affects readability and doesn't account for comprehension of text.

There are many words in the first two lists that might still be too academic for the target audience. Fortunately, I used other readability formulas, as mentioned previously, to help compensate. I compared my word lists results to those of completed units in the program. I also went through each unit fifteen to twenty times, changing the text to simpler terms and explanations while removing the most complex words and phrases that may be difficult for the target audience.

The Range lists contained words that were of a higher academic level and that could hinder the target audiences reading ability and/or desire to read my units. I looked at the percentage of the words not on a list compared to the overall number of words. In the unit "Teaching Styles and Cultural Differences," 5.99% of the words were not on one of the commonly found word lists. I then manually recalculated the percentage after excluding complex academic words I used in my unit that were important and defined necessary terminology and proper nouns, like the words *introverted*, *extroverted* and *Mike*. Both *introverted* and *extroverted* are important to understanding personality and style in the units and are defined or explained in the unit. I therefore justified my units' range percentages by recalculating them after taking those types of words out of the equation. Several other words were also taken out of the original equation because they were not words but html addresses and titles of electronic codes for books in the last sections of the units. The new percentage was then calculated to be at 2.7%. Next, I performed the same process with the second unit. The second unit's first calculation was 5.86% and after eliminating important words and proper nouns, only 2.8% of the words were not on any

of the lists for commonly found words. I used these calculations to help determine how the target audience would be comfortable with the text and to justify the language level of unit 4F and 5C.

### **Summary**

The evaluation stage feedback and subsequent revisions and changes described in this chapter resulted in each unit including better examples, stories and in a justification for the content used. The evaluations also helped me to revise language and vocabulary to be more understandable for volunteer high school readers about to go abroad and teach English. From these changes, I was able to provide a better overall product that was more consistent with the overall BTRTESOL program and purpose. I was also able to use the revisions to make my units more comparable to other BTRTESOL units.

## CHAPTER SIX: LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter includes the lessons I learned from my experience developing these two units, the final MA project, limitations and recommendations for further revision and changes to the BTRTESOL program and project.

### **Lessons Learned**

As I completed this project, I reflected on the process, the product, and the people with whom I worked and those I hope to help with this project. This reflection helped me recall the many things I have learned and the complexities of research in learning and teaching styles, culture, and the proper steps in developing quality materials.

When I first learned of the project and of the units I would be working on, I was very excited. I had already read some research cultural issues between learning and teaching style because of previous projects on similar topics. However, after doing more extensive research, I was surprised at the evolving nature of the research on learning styles, especially the development of new models and dimensions for explaining learning styles in the 1990s. More recently, it appeared to me that the research in this area had shifted to strategy teaching in an effort to help overcome cultural style issues indirectly. My initial research was only the tip of the iceberg. As I continued my research, I learned that I would need to focus on specific areas and research around those areas. There are so many models, terms, dimensions, and viewpoints on learning styles that I found it a challenge to find terms and models that would be effective for this project. From this research, I learned that it would take a lot more work and time to provide a thorough rationale for so many important points.

As I prepared and developed my units I learned that the audience may not always understand the purpose of some sections, terms, and materials as I had planned. Often the



audience might be influenced by many factors that make their experience very different. For this reason, I had to consider many variables (such as age, education, etc.) that I had not anticipated early in the project. It was a challenge writing to the audience and trying to understand what their needs were. It was humbling to then revisit and make additional changes to what I had once believed was good for the audience.

Originally I thought the process of developing these units and writing this report would not take as much time as it did. I learned that the development process requires revisiting different stages several times. In sum, the development process is not easy or quick and requires a lot of discipline, time, and focus to be successful.

In addition and as previously mentioned, development was not a clear step-by-step process. I often circled back to the same point and revisited several stages of development many times. The Nation and Macalister LCD model and its stages of development fit very well with the nature of the cyclical development process I went through. I now believe the cyclic nature of development is common when dealing with changing and complex variables associated with training of people to do a specific task.

I also learned how difficult it was to put quality information into only a few pages. When researching teaching styles, I found a lot of similarities to learning styles. However, in the field of education it seemed that teaching styles had received considerable more attention than in the field of second language acquisition. This made it a challenge to analyze the ideas from the field of education with the models that were being used in the ESL/EFL areas of research. Untangling the ideas and analyzing the important features took much longer than I anticipated. However, the information and knowledge was very interesting and a great introduction into the diverse and intensely different research ideas people have on this one topic of learning styles.

I also learned, from the development of this project and from working with others, how difficult and challenging it is to make a product that targets your audience. There are many areas of project development I had not thought of or researched before, and including how the text of the project would read. I knew I needed to have a clear comprehensible product, but the amount of focus and detail on each word and how the word might impact readers was more intense than I had imagined. This opened my eyes to the detailed nature projects need in order to be successful.

Learning to delete and add content to my project after many hours of work was also a learning experience. Although I felt strongly about the knowledge I had been using concerning learning styles, teaching styles, and culture differences, I did not take into account the many different opinions and beliefs that research has produced, especially those that primarily focus on culture. Finding basic definitions of terms required me to navigate a great maze of confusing ideas and terms with multiple overlapping and counteracting theories and opinions. Every way I turned, there was a new definition, a new dimension, or a new aspect by which to judge style types or dimensions, and so forth. The gamut of differences at times was very difficult to process, categorize and evaluate. However, I had to learn to be specific, concise, and focused on the most valuable and useful information. I had to learn to set aside my beliefs and understandings that are often attached to a degree of higher learning and look through the eyes of a novice teacher who may not have a college education. From this experience I gained perspective into the feelings of these novice teachers. They face a challenging and exciting experience where they will want to do their best and enjoy the experience.

The next area I learned about involved the dynamics of receiving feedback from others about the project and appealing to many different opinions and voices of concern. Sometimes different individuals had different perspectives and ideas that did not line up with my own. It was

humbling to change sections and areas of each unit because they did not follow certain patterns that I often had not noticed or did not consider as relevant. However, I learned that sometimes there are areas that need to change. More importantly one needs to have an open mind when receiving feedback and criticism. It is not always easy to make changes based on advice and research of others who are behind the scenes during the development process. Sometimes it is hard to see their point of view, reasoning, and philosophies regarding research and different principles in TESOL. However, others have perspective and areas of expertise that can greatly improve the product.

And finally, I learned that the depth and expansive nature of this project was much larger and longer than I had originally planned. In Appendix F is my project log, where all my hours are accumulated and explained. This project took longer than I expected but I learned much more about curriculum development, working with others, and myself.

### **Limitations**

Although each of my BTRTESOL units has been through several levels of evaluation and changes, both units have several limitations that may need to be addressed and further evaluated in the future. One limitation was the small number of participants in the classrooms where each unit was piloted. Although unit 4F had significant numbers of students from Ling 377 and HELP International, unit 5C was piloted in a class that only six students attended. In addition, the pilot testing was limited to classroom settings and did not cover individual self-study. This problem limits my understanding of what challenges individuals will have with my units when learning on their own without and instructor.

Another limitation is associated with the multiple stages of changes each unit went through. Pilot tests for each unit took place in the middle of the development process, so several changes that were made later in the process still need pilot testing.

And lastly, the lack of on-line feedback limits the overall view of how BTRTESOL users might handle each unit online versus in paper or book form. There may be several unforeseen issues associated with the lack of feedback in these areas that could result in the need to adapt and change several elements of each unit. Additional pilot testing would help uncover additional needs or problems.

### **Recommendations**

For those who would create future units for the BTRTESOL program, I suggest a few things. First, have a clear objective for where you want to go with your project. Make sure you completely understand the viewpoints of the stakeholders and what preliminary suggestions they might have. It is difficult to change things after you have done a lot of work, only to find out that a ten-minute conversation with a committee member would have greatly helped the development.

Next, consider a realistic timeline that you can work towards. Do not overburden yourself and get discouraged from lack of productivity or changes that your committee might suggest. Gather your committee early and try to get feedback as best you can. Learn their schedules and timelines. Focus on the needs of your audience and your own ability. Try to stay within the bounds of the project and the time necessary for the project to be the best it should be. It is also important to consider having meetings often with your chair to help motivate and inspire you to move forward. Setting predetermined, weekly or monthly, meetings can be valuable to the

completion of your project in a timely manner. From specific objectives and goals you can progress much more quickly and efficiently.

When doing research, do not get overburdened by the amount of information you find. Focus on a few questions and ideas at a time. Make sure to take notes of what you read and then keep yourself organized with detailed records of what you have been doing. It is difficult when reporting, to go back and find all the articles and information that you used five months ago when you first started the project. Use your committee members to help you focus your research and get their advice regarding different articles they might suggest early on. Make sure you help remind your committee members of their suggestions as well. They may not remember everything they suggested several months later. Your committee can be very valuable if you remember them, use them often, and keep them and yourself on track.

## **Conclusion**

It is wonderful to feel you have made something useful for others who may be struggling to make an impact as a teacher. With this project, I strongly believe others will benefit and gain value from the synthesis of information and activities these units include. With the growing value of technology this project can help fill the gap in available materials that are accessible to novice and volunteer teachers.

Once again it is my belief that with quality teaching, quality learning can take place. It is important that novice volunteer teachers have some training in TESOL in order to help them be better equipped to make important decisions in the classroom. This training will, in turn, improve ESL students learning. After much research I found that there are four distinguishing points that novice volunteer teachers need to understand and practice in the classroom when managing difficulties associated with learning and teaching style differences. These points are that all

teachers should (1) learn what styles are, (2) understand their own and their students' style preferences, (3) help students learn their style preferences, and (4) effectively adapt their teaching styles according to the situation they are teaching in. I also believe that novice teachers can use these units effectively and with positive results after completing each unit. Although my units do not cover the entirety of knowledge in learning style theory, these basic principles of learning and teaching styles will benefit the classrooms of these novice teachers so that a higher quality of learning can take place.

If teachers are not qualified, it is difficult for them to find the success so many people desire when learning English. By developing a quality product for these teachers I hope it gives them an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those individuals striving to improve their circumstances by learning English. This is a great comfort and brings strong feelings of joy, knowing my BTRTESOL units can be a factor in the improvement of others in need.

Overall I learned a lot about myself and what it takes to stay focused and work through adversity to accomplish something as big as this. Although it took a long time, I learned how important it is to not get discouraged and work through mistakes and my own shortcomings in writing. It was challenging at times but I believe I grew from the experience and that the knowledge I gained about learning styles, the different models of styles, culture, academic writing and development of a project, will help me to be an improved teacher and materials developer as I try to create new projects and teach English to others.

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## Appendices

### **Appendix A: BTRTESOL Program Prospectus (as of January 2010)**

Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages; The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More

Prospectus prepared by Dr. Lynn Henrichsen and the BTRTESOL Team (names below)  
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#### **Product Overview**

*Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language; The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More* is a paper book and website (supplemented by video clips) that utilizes a minimalist, connectivist approach to helping minimally trained, novice ESL/EFL teachers be more effective, professional, and successful. It is usable in two ways: in a traditional, face-to-face class with a teacher and regular meetings, or by independent self-study, according to an individual's particular interests, needs, and schedule.

#### **Rationale**

Many countries in the world are lacking professional teachers of the English language. Because of this, many schools decide to employ untrained people or novices (mostly native speakers) who are willing to teach English in spite of the fact that they lack teaching education and experiences. Nevertheless, teaching English is more than just speaking the language (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003, p. 341). It requires knowledge and experiences in many areas such as curriculum design, material development, teaching methods for grammar, reading, listening, speaking, and effective writing. Gilbertson (2002) states that in some instances untrained teachers can do more harm than good (p. iii). That is why it is necessary to provide specific guidelines to help inexperienced and nonprofessional teachers with the challenges of this profession. Currently, as expressed by leaders in the linguistic field such as Diane-Larsen Freeman, very few materials are available that would serve as a guideline to novices who are teaching English as a second language (Henrichsen).

#### **Audience/Market**

Many untrained or minimally trained people teach ESL/EFL in community programs, commercial schools, public libraries, churches, homes, language schools abroad, etc. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language; The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More is designed for the thousands of untrained or minimally trained teachers of ESL (in the United States and other English-language environments) and EFL (in other settings around the world). It will also be attractive and useful for untrained people who on the verge of teaching ESL/EFL. For various reasons (finances, timing, location), most of these teachers are unable to

enroll in full-scale TESOL teacher-preparation programs, but they still need and want basic training in effective classroom procedures and materials, as well as in the teaching and learning principles behind them.

No one knows exactly how many novices or volunteers teach ESL/EFL around the world. No one tracks them, so data in this area is scarce. The number, however, is undoubtedly large. A 1986 study of adult literacy/ESL programs in the United States alone found that about half of the 2,900 adult education programs and nearly all the 1,300 English language and literacy programs used volunteers. Starting with these figures, simple mathematics results in an estimate of 107,000 volunteers in related ESL programs. The 2005-2006 Statistical Report of ProLiteracy states that 120,480 volunteers worked in its 1,200 affiliate programs, 88% of which provided ESL services. The number is undoubtedly greater today with the recent floods of refugees and immigrants to English-speaking countries and the growing demand for English around the world. Many companies advertise several tens of thousands of ESL/EFL teaching jobs in many locations around the world.\* Some of these programs, of course, provide at least minimal, in-house training for their volunteers. The number of untrained teachers who work independently or in other programs that provide no training is still very large. These people constitute a huge but invisible/ignored group of teachers needing preparation. That is the market for Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language; *The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More*.

\*For example: <http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/esl/index.shtml>  
[http://www.oxfordseminars.com/Pages/Teach/teach\\_services.php](http://www.oxfordseminars.com/Pages/Teach/teach_services.php)

### **Approach and Distinctive Features**

Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language: *The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More* employs a minimalist and connectivist approach to teacher preparation. It does not attempt to cover every teacher-preparation topic in great breadth and depth. Rather, in a large number of short chapters (5-10 pages each), it introduces teachers to key concepts and procedures related to a particular teaching topic and then directs them to other sources for additional, in-depth information.

In contrast to many TESOL teacher-education textbooks that present teaching/learning theories and practices in a didactic fashion and then hope readers will be able to apply them in actual classroom settings, each chapter in *The Least You Should Know* takes an engaging, highly practical, problem-solving approach to teacher preparation by beginning with short case studies and classroom scenarios situated in ESL (in the United States) and EFL (in Asia and Latin America) settings that illustrate the challenges that teachers face in the real world. In this way, each chapter immediately confronts teachers with authentic instructional challenges and involves them in realistic analytical and problem-solving tasks. To support the textual explanations in the book, many of these case studies and scenarios are also viewable on an accompanying DVD or at a designated Web site.

*The Least You Should Know* about Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language also focuses primarily on proven instructional procedures that can immediately be put into practice. In accordance with Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model, the book's underlying approach recognizes that the preparation needs of teachers vary depending on their levels of competence and commitment. Novice, short-term, volunteer teachers—in contrast with the committed, experienced, career-oriented teachers found in many graduate-level TESOL teacher

education programs—typically need and want simple, directive instruction of a “teacher training” sort. Therefore, *The Least You Should Know* provides specific instructions for classroom teaching strategies. Chapter one introduces the reader to the scope of this material, however there is no specified sequence to these chapters. Novice teachers are able to assess their needs and focus on relevant units that interest them. Each chapter carefully guides novice teachers through the process of identifying language-teaching problems, setting goals, developing action plans, carrying them out, and evaluating their success. At the same time, it helps them recognize and understand the underlying principles that affect success in language teaching.

## Competition

More Than a Native Speaker. Author: Snow Don. Publisher: TESOL 2006. ISBN: 0-939791-64-1. \$31.20. Audience: native English-speaking volunteer teachers.

Features: could be useful with other materials that will add more practical information, text is user friendly and readable.

Weaknesses: even though the book gives different examples of assessment, teaching principles and subjects to teach, it will be difficult for new or less experienced teachers to decide in what situation, for what level to use them, the title does not give us any hint that "More Than a Native Speaker" is a guide for volunteer native English teachers teaching abroad, contains only plain text, no graphic, pictures, very little about different proficiency levels, classroom management etc.

Basic Smooth Moves. Author: Hopkins Dave. Publisher: undecided-not published yet. Audience: teacher programs, volunteers, novice English teachers.

Features: topics with related video, useful references, tasks and questions for the trainers and teachers, online references, systematic sequences based on principles.

Weaknesses: it may not be easy for novice teachers to grasp some principles and do tasks alone because tasks and activities are designed to do some group discussion, page design is not structured in user-friendly fashion so it is not easy to follow and what the author wants or means.

Teach English: *A training Course for Teachers*. Teachers workbook and Trainer’s Handbook”. Author: Doff Adrian. Publisher: Cambridge University Press. 1990. ISBN for the trainer’s manual: 0-521-34864-1 for \$18.79 - \$32. ISBN for the teacher’s workbook: 0-521- 34863-3 for \$ 2.51-\$28.00. Audience: teachers and teacher trainers.

Features: step by step instructions, pictures, example lesson plans, activities to be used and copied in class, unit on the importance of assessment and how to use it effectively.

Weaknesses: it seems to be old, but it has been reprinted in several editions, and the cover does not look interesting enough.

“TESOL Core Certificate Program”. Author and publisher: TESOL website based resource. TESOL member: \$1000; TESOL global member: \$400; Nonmember: \$1000. Audience: current or prospective teachers and administrators with limited training.

Features: includes a 60-hour course on language skills and assessment, in the second course one has the option of focusing on adult or young learners, the course designers and teachers appear to be qualified, it has the TESOL name, focuses on ESL and EFL.

Weaknesses: it is costly- one must register months in advance so it is not immediately accessible, limited availability (limited number of openings), it is not necessarily connected to a real teaching position (limited applicability).

Colorin Colorado. Author: WETA- with funding from the American Federation of Teachers, National Institute for Literacy and the U.S. Department of Education. Publisher: no publisher-free web-based service launched in 2008. Audience: educators and parents of Hispanic and English speaking children K-12.

Features: good for an ESL, mostly U.S. setting, has online webcasts with professionals, good resources for parents and educators; good resources for boosting reading.

Weaknesses: mainly targeted to the Hispanic ESL learners, with only materials up to the third grade in Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Navajo, Russian, Tagalog, Vietnamese, only targets children K-12, not adults, would not always be as beneficial in an EFL setting, only targets reading specifically and not all skills.

A Training Course for TEFL. Authors: Hubbard Peter, Hywel Jones, Barbara Thornton, Rod Wheeler. Publisher: Oxford University Press. Published in 1983. ISBN: 0194327108 for \$15.00. Audience: teachers of English as a second or foreign language for anywhere in the world.

Features: offers discussion examples of dialogue between students and teachers; provides references for further readings, charts, graphs and symbols to illustrate principles and ideas, communicative teaching tasks, offers techniques for all skills to be taught.

Weaknesses: outdated, now there are other techniques and strategies that need attention, may be out of print, for more technical and graduate level students, not built for volunteers with little or no understanding of language jargon.

## **Project Rationale**

Many countries in the world are lacking professional teachers of the English language. Because of this, many schools decide to employ untrained people or novices (mostly native speakers) who are willing to teach English in spite of the fact that they lack teaching education and experiences. Nevertheless, teaching English is more than just speaking the language (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003, p. 341). It requires knowledge and experiences in many areas such as curriculum design, material development, teaching methods for grammar, reading, listening, speaking, and effective writing. Gilbertson (2002) states that in some instances untrained teachers can do more harm than good (p. iii). That is why it is necessary to provide specific guidelines to help inexperienced and nonprofessional teachers with the challenges of this profession. Currently, as expressed by leaders in the linguistic field such as Diane-Larsen Freeman, very few materials are available that would serve as a guideline to novices who are teaching English as a second language (Henrichsen).

## **Scope and Sequence**

The 45 units in *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages; The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More* cover a broad range of teacher-preparation topics and are divided into 10 major areas:

### 1. Introduction: Basic Concepts

- A. “The Least You Should Know” (the purposes and delimitations of this program and suggestions for follow-up TESOL courses, resources, and professional organizations).
- B. Differences between teaching English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL).
- C. Tutoring vs. teaching: How they are different.
- D. Dealing with cultural differences and culture shock (in your students and yourself).
- E. Working successfully within foreign educational and administrative systems.

### 2. Designing Language-teaching Programs, Courses, and Lessons

- A. Setting up and operating successful courses for adult English language learners (i.e., administrative concerns).
- B. Planning a curriculum that fits your students and meets their needs.
- C. Designing effective lessons for language learning and teaching (i.e., curriculum and lesson planning).
- D. Assessing your students' language proficiency (for course design purposes and for determining student placement).

### 3. Developing Fundamental Teaching Skills

- A. Developing a successful teaching personality.
- B. Adjusting your spoken English to make it comprehensible and helpful to English language learners at various levels of proficiency.
- C. Managing classes of English language learners (encouraging participation, maintaining discipline, building a supportive sense of community, avoiding demeaning or negative behavior, setting up groups, dealing with multiple levels of proficiency in the same class).
- D. Correcting language learners' errors productively, and developing their self-monitoring skills.

### 4. Understanding Key Principles Behind Successful Language Teaching

- A. Understanding basic principles of second language acquisition.
- B. Creating and using exercises for mechanical, meaningful, and communicative practice.
- C. Using communicative language teaching principles and information gap exercises.
- D. Encouraging cooperative and collaborative learning to increase student interaction.
- E. Creating activities that provide imitative, rehearsed, and extemporaneous practice.
- F. Developing an awareness of teaching styles and cross-cultural style differences.

### 5. Knowing Your Students: Learner Types, Styles, and Strategies

- A. Understanding, respecting, and appreciating adult ESL learners.
- B. Working successfully with young English language learners.
- C. Understanding your students' language learning styles—including cross-cultural differences in learning styles—and then teaching them accordingly.
- D. Recognizing multiple intelligences and their implications for language teaching.



E. Teaching your students to use language-learning strategies commonly employed by successful language learners.

#### 6. Developing Language Skills

- A. Developing English language learners' listening skills.
- B. Developing English language learners' speaking skills.
- C. Developing English language learners' reading skills.
- D. Developing English language learners' writing skills.
- E. Integrating multiple language skills in one class.
- F. Teaching content-based language classes.

#### 7. Teaching English Language Components

- A. The least you should know about English grammar and how to teach it.
- B. The least you should know about English pronunciation and how to teach it.
- C. Planned and unplanned vocabulary teaching.
- D. Vocabulary teaching and learning strategies that work well.
- E. Understanding and teaching about culture.

#### 8. Making Language Teaching and Learning Enjoyable and Memorable

- A. Conducting effective and enjoyable conversation classes.
- B. Using songs and chants to increase participation, recall, and enjoyment.
- C. Using games, and other fun yet effective activities for English language teaching.
- D. Using computers and Internet resources for English language teaching.
- E. Using video for teaching English.

#### 9. Testing English Language Skills

- A. Widely used general proficiency tests (e.g., TOEFL, BEST, CET).
- B. Developing valid and reliable local measures of student achievement.

#### 10. Choosing, Creating, and Adapting Language Teaching Materials

- A. Locating, evaluating, and selecting authentic, effective print/electronic teaching materials for language learners.
- B. Collecting and creating your own language-teaching materials.
- C. Successfully adapting existing materials for greater teaching enjoyment and success.

These units are designed to be used independently, in any sequence, according to users' interests.

### **Ancillary Materials**

Each unit includes video clips of ESL/EFL teachers in authentic classroom situations. These clips illustrate the principles and procedures described in the unit, and they provide the basis for observation and reflection activities. For the paper book, these videos will be provided on an accompanying DVD. They will also be available online as part of the website.

Current Status of the Work Number of units completed: 8 (video clips to be inserted later)

Number of units nearly completed: 4

Number of units under development: 22 (various stages) Number of units no one is working on: 6 with others posited as well Over the next year other units will be developed and finished available for use. As they become available they will also be posted to the website.

### **The Authors**

Lynn Henrichsen (Ed.D, University of Hawaii) has over 30 years experience teaching English to speakers of other languages in a variety of settings around the world. A former chair of TESOL's Teacher Education Interest Section, and former chair of the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Brigham Young University, he regularly teaches courses in TESOL methods and materials. He has authored 7 books and over 70 chapters in books and articles in professional periodicals.

Beth Anne Schnebly is currently a graduate student in the TESOL Masters program at Brigham Young University (BYU). She has had extensive experience tutoring and teaching ESL/EFL for six years in different locations throughout the world, including interning as an EFL assistant language teacher in Japan, tutoring several international ESL students in speaking, writing, and grammar and a professional businessman in ESL pronunciation, and teaching at the English Language Center at BYU in Utah, tutoring Korean students online, and tutoring Chinese writing students through an online program with the City University of Hong Kong.

Eleanor Clark is a graduate student in the Brigham Young University TESOL Master's program. She has had experience teaching in ESL contexts, with particular interests in reading and literacy. Eleanor has also had the opportunity to tutor in EFL and ESL contexts. She has lived on three continents and experienced various aspects of second language learning, both as a student and as a teacher.

Paul Scholes is currently a student in the TESOL Master's program at Brigham Young University. His experience with second language acquisition stems from teaching English in two different contexts. He taught for 1.5 years to adults in the Provo, UT school district's Adult ESOL Program and is currently teaching university-age students at the BYU English Language Center. He has also successfully completed a graduate course in Second Language Acquisition at BYU.

Kyle Johnson is part-time teacher at Brigham Young University's English Language Center where he has been teaching for the last year while completing an MA in TESOL from BYU. He has earned a Bachelor's degree from BYU in Linguistics. He has taught ESL classes in applied grammar and academic writing, which he is also currently teaching. He has helped organize and implement extracurricular activities at the ELC. His interests include ESL writing, ESL volunteer training, and language program administration.

Iva Crookston is a graduate student in the Brigham Young University TESOL Master's program. She earned her bachelor's degree in German Literature from BYU. She has experiences with teaching several languages such as German, English and Czech while being fluent in four. She has taught English listening-speaking class to prospective collage students of the ELC institute in Utah, as well as tutored English pronunciation classes to non-native university

students. She is currently teaching a Czech language class at the Brigham Young University.

Monty Colver is a graduate student in the Brigham Young University TESOL Master's program. He completed a BA TESOL at BYU-Hawaii in 2004 and has several years of experience teaching EFL in South Korea. He enjoys learning new languages and cultures and has lived in various multicultural environments. His primary interests are speaking/listening, using technology in the language classroom, and understanding and teaching culture.

Inho Jung is a graduate student in the Brigham Young University TESOL Master's program. He completed a BA TESOL and Secondary Ed. at BYU-Hawaii in 1999. He has more than 10 years of teaching experience in America as well as in Korea and he also has five years of running an English institute. He is currently working on developing teaching materials for his students. He is interested in vocabulary and material development.

Minhye Son is finishing a graduate degree in TESOL at BYU. She graduated from BYU-Hawaii majoring in TESOL education. Upon her graduation, she got Hawaii Teaching License and taught at Hawaii public elementary schools for a year. She is currently teaching at the English Language Center in Provo, Utah.

**Appendix B: Teaching Styles Unit 4F Questionnaires from Pilot Testing in Ling 377**Developing an awareness of teaching styles and cross-cultural style differences**Feedback**

Answer yes or no

1. The objectives of this presentation were clear.
2. The objectives were accomplished.
3. You will use this information on teaching styles.

**Rate on a scale 1-5 (1=very helpful & 5=not helpful)**

4. The role of culture in teaching and learning.
5. Explanation of what is Teaching Styles.
6. The role of teaching styles in the classroom.
7. How you can adjust your teaching.
8. Video of teaching styles.
  
9. What did you learn from this presentation?
  
10. What teaching styles did you become aware of?
  
11. How does culture impact teaching?
  
12. How can you adjust your teaching to culture?
  
13. How could this presentation be more helpful?

## Appendix C: Learning Style Unit 5C Questionnaire from Pilot Testing in Ling 377

### Learning Styles and Culture Impact

1. Did this unit meet its objectives listed below?

Write yes, no, or partially next to the objective.

	1. Become aware of types of learning styles.
	2. Develop an awareness of the cultural impact on learning styles.
	3. Tips for handling learning styles in the classroom
	4. Participate in a learning style inventory questionnaire and reflect on what you learn about your own style of learning.

2. If you marked no or partially above please explain.

3. What suggestions do you have for this unit in order to better prepare you as a volunteer English teacher in relation to learning styles and culture?

## Appendix D: Ling 377 class feedback example of unit 4F Teaching Styles

Developing an awareness of teaching styles and cross-cultural style differences

### Feedback

yes or no

1. The objectives of this presentation were clear. YES
2. The objectives were accomplished. YES
3. You will use this information on teaching styles. YES

Rate on a scale 1-5 (1=very helpful & 5=not helpful)

5. The role of culture in teaching and learning. 4 - more specific
6. Explanation of what is Teaching Styles. 2
7. The role of teaching styles in the classroom. 3
8. How you can adjust your teaching. 3
9. Video of teaching styles. n/a

10. What did you learn from this presentation overall?

what to be aware of while teaching concerning teaching & learning styles & how culture effects that.

11. What teaching styles did you become aware of?

i have heard them before so just a review

12. How does culture impact teaching?

tremendously - the way students learn & people teach is almost a learned experience

13. How can you adjust your teaching to culture?

be aware of the culture & students

14. How could this presentation be more helpful?

I just would have liked to know more specifically about Thai ~~the~~ culture but it's hard/impossible to be specific w/ this big & different of a group

## Appendix E: Ling 377 class feedback example of unit 5C Learning Styles

### Learning Styles and Culture Impact

1. Did this unit meet its objectives listed below?

Write yes, no, or partially next to the objective.

yes	1. Become aware of types of learning styles.
partially	2. Develop an awareness of the cultural impact on learning styles.
partially	3. Tips for handling learning styles in the classroom
yes!	4. Participate in a learning style inventory questionnaire and reflect on what you learn about your own style of learning.

2. If you marked no or partially above please explain.

- Didn't go into much depth on how to adapt to cultural differences. Maybe it would be nice to have specifics (of cultural problems) and that might help with the awareness aspect.

3. What suggestions do you have for this unit in order to better prepare you as a volunteer English teacher in relation to learning styles and culture?

Focus more on the questionnaire's results. It was **VERY** helpful.

## Appendix F: Project Log

Month	Hours	Work
		Choose topic and units
		Research began in Dr Henrichsens Research Class as part of different thesis proposal.
		Development of unit and initial topics
09/08-29/09	4	Weekly group meetings, choose topics title of program, discussed and planned as group different guidelines for the development, outline, and ideas for program
10/06/09	1	Prepared presentation of preliminary ideas of topics and each section for ITESOL. Created preliminary outline of units Teaching Styles and Culture
10/07/09	1	Prepared first presentation and slides for my units on learning styles to be presented at ITESOL. Also created feedback forms.
10/09/09	1	Presented preliminary units, idea of program and my project along with the rest of the group at ITESOL
10/13/09	1	Worked on prospectus developed ideas to use in prospectus
09/20-10/10/09	3	Weekly meetings with group on program. Received feedback from Dr. Henrichsen. Received assignments regarding research into different areas of the program including competition and audience.
11/15/09	2	Continued research of learning styles- read several articles including "Style Wars: Teacher-Student Style Conflicts in the Language Classroom" and article by Richard M Felder and Eunice Henriques. Worked on notes and journals that need further review. Researched competitor TEFL
11/16/09	2	Researched several online programs on teaching styles and information they present. Adjusting outline of project working on definitions and examples Update notes on Grasha and his categorization of different styles Made table to be used in 1 <sup>st</sup> unit Teaching Styles
11/17/09	2	Group discussion on prospectus what needs to be done <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. update on audience and how that is exactly. Can we get a number on how many people are out there that are novice or volunteer teachers.</li> <li>2. Ideas for presentation of units to class this coming Friday</li> <li>3. Discussed literature that needs reviewing and summarizing about need and justification of this area</li> </ol> <p>Continued development of examples of teaching styles Formal Authority: wrote teacher example situations</p> <p>Lesson Plans that a teacher with _____ style would use. Use words that distinguish between the styles so it is clear where they are different.</p>



11/18/09	2	<p>Revised and adjusted several fields. Edited parts of the paragraphs to reflect the readings. Researched and read more on the 4 styles.</p> <p>Presented project to class at 1:00. Printed and passed around preliminary example</p> <p>Asked for feedback on design from Dr. Henrichsen. Will use a table instead for the 4 styles. Discussed using a different focus when describing the cultural impact on style. Will point more towards other units but also with tips and things to help teachers become aware of the culture rather than explain every cross-cultural difference there is.</p>
11/20/09	3	<p>Revised and adjusted several fields. Edited parts of the paragraphs to reflect the readings. Researched and read more on the 4 styles.</p> <p>Presented project to class at 1:00. Printed and passed around preliminary example</p> <p>Asked for feedback on design from Dr. Henrichsen. Will use a table instead for the 4 styles. Discussed using a different focus when describing the cultural impact on style. Will point more towards other units but also with tips and things to help teachers become aware of the culture rather than explain every cross-cultural difference there is.</p>
11/27/09	2	<p>Worked on tables and putting the 4 styles into easier to read tables that would help clear up space and give more room for other important information. Re-wrote parts to make more concise and understandable. Read parts of articles in order to clarify information and correlate with text</p>
11/28/09	1/2	<p>Continued research and reading of articles revising sections to make clearer.</p>
12/2/09	1	<p>Finalized information for due date. Self-edited and re configured some parts so that it would work better with template.</p> <p>Added a picture for aesthetics</p> <p>Readings and reviewed websites and articles for teaching styles</p>
12/2009	3	<p>Research on topics</p>
01/2010	3	<p>Reviewed and learned about Paul Nation's curriculum development model. Began using that and ADDIE model as guide for development of project and units.</p>
02/2010	5+	<p>Wrote first part of introduction organized notes put things together etc. Reviewed several articles regarding learning styles and teaching styles and their relationship</p> <p>Wrote first few pages of write-up, introduction, started chapters 2: Rationale of Project, included first versions of units and log for committee meeting. Started unit on Students learning styles. Started basic outline and objectives. Developed scenario for 2<sup>nd</sup> unit.</p>
	8	<p>Committee meeting, met with Dr. Henrichsen and Tanner. Discussed outline and sections of project including how to focus on literature review Revised objectives of Teaching Styles unit. Created and expanded the section Cultural Impact on Teaching styles. Included pictures of book covers and some on formation about books for section where to go for</p>

		more information. Presented part of unit at TESOL convention in Boston Presented units to LING 377
04/2010	8	Review articles: Matter of Style and The Role of Styles and strategies in second Language Learning. Reviewed and took notes on Learning Style Implications, Felder and Silverman's article from 1988 and others
05/2010		Continued to revise Chapter 2
06/2010	4	Looked at Joy Reid's book and other authors in book <i>Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom</i> and <i>Understanding Learning Styles in the Second Language Classroom</i>
08/2010	35+	Reviewed and took notes on work done by Felder, Cohen, Dornyei, Oxford, Lavine, Ehrman, Brown, Nunan, Dunn & Dunn, and many others
09/2010	15+	Reviewed Cohen and Weavers work/ book on strategies and styles. Investigated learning style theory and strategies. Met with Dr. Anderson and reviewed feedback from Dr. Tanner on units. Met weekly with Dr. Henrichsen until Dec 2010. Revised and made more notes on work by Cohen, Dornyei and Weaver, and Anderson & Oxford. Reviewed Style Wars by Oxford
10/2010	20+	Worked on table of contents, literature review etc. Reviewed several books and articles on different models of learning styles including Joy Ried's work, Anthony Grasha, Rebecca Oxford, etc. Met with Dr. Tanner and Dr Henrichsen received feedback and direction non-literature Review. Revised project outline books to be used and websites for Section Where to go for more information.
11/2010	10+	Put each of the chapters into one write-up. Continued to develop chapters 3-6 and reference page. Put together notes from the reviews and most important sections of literature up to this point. Notes from Brown, Felder, Oxford, Ehrman, Nunan.
12/2010	35+	Did extensive research into areas where literature was lacking details and rationale for content in unit. Went back and reread several articles previously read. Read articles disputing learning style theory. Reviewed more literature on teaching and learning style theory. Looked at the synthesis of this information in Literature review. Finished Literature review and revised chapters 1 through 4. Completed writing Chapter 4 the development stages. Looked at experiential learning theory, and other theories.
01/2011	5	Worked and revised language in both units. Looked at different words and content to see what was most important and what could be deleted. Worked on write-up. Revised literature review added sections on work done by Grasha, Amy Hsu, and included tables. Changed a few cosmetic issues with units and tried to find better sources for where to learn more section.
03/2011	3	Edited and revised videos. Converted them to Quicktime and used Imovie to edit length and content.
04/2011	10+	Edited each Chapter of write up. Looked for language, grammar, and punctuation errors. Expanded Chapter 5 and 6. Included more information

		on readability and Range program. Took units through each program again to confirm readability. Continued work on Chapter 6 Recommendations and Lessons Learned. Prepared write-up for final version to be sent to Dr. Henrichsen. Finished working on Appendices, figures and tables in write up.
05/2011	8	Editing, word choice errors, punctuation errors, included new articles from Dr. Henrichsen, changed organization of chapter 4 added more details to rationale of content. Deleted more of each unit to get closer to 7 pages each.
06/2011	8	Revising and rewriting Chapter 3, editing, punctuation, writing style changes and editing several citations
07/2011	20	Revising and rewriting chapters 3 and 5
08/2011	6	Revise and edit chapters 3-5 after sending to editor.
09/2011	10	Revise and edit chapters 1-6 based on Dr. Henrichsens feedback, weekly meetings with Dr. Henrichsen
10/2011	15+	Revision and editing of organization of some content
11/2011	20+	Revisions, editing, philosophy of minimalistic, videos, surveys, etc. based on feedback from defense.
Total	250+	