

12-1-2010

Introduction

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Recommended Citation

Wood, Allen G. (2010) "Introduction," *Global Business Languages*: Vol. 15 , Article 1.
Available at: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/gbl/vol15/iss1/1>

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INTRODUCTION

For many years in the pages of *Global Business Languages* we have presented studies that relate how modern technology can be utilized in conducting research and creating new pedagogical materials in the field. This year we are very happy to be using a new technological method to present the journal itself, as we are taking it on-line. Most of you will be reading this from our new website at <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/gbl/>>. A few copies will still be published for archival purposes, but we hope to reach a larger market of authors and readers in a truly global environment. We hope you like the change, and we invite your comments.

This year we are also undergoing a shift in editorship. In the mid-1990s the idea for, and driving force behind, the establishment of the journal was the work of Professor Christiane Keck, an early pioneer in the area of business language teaching, especially in German. Professor Keck retired from active teaching in 2002, yet remained an important contributor to the production of the journal. She is stepping down this year as co-editor of the journal, and her guidance and good council will be missed. You will find her listed now as “Founding Editor” of the journal, which is a most fitting title.

The theme of the 2010 volume is Challenges and Critical Junctures, and the articles examine a wide range of topics that consider the theme. They represent some of the best insights, practices, and procedures of professionals in the discipline, supported by critical studies pertinent to each article. We believe the materials in this volume will be useful to those educators and business leaders who have much experience, as well as to those who are in the early stages of their careers. There is a lot for you to discover in the following articles, and we hope you find them not only enjoyable to read but also useful in your own work.

The first article, “Marketing Business Languages,” by Annie Abbott and Darcy Lear, examines a crucial issue involving how business language students can best present the skills they learn in our courses during their job searches. Although many of the key areas targeted by employers are covered in business language courses, students often overlook this fact, or fail to explain it adequately, in their job application materials or during an interview. Instructors need to help students realize the value of our classroom experiences, and help them communicate this during the job search.

The continuing importance of using case studies in the business language course is the focus of “An Examination of Business Case Methodology.”

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Margaret Gonglewski and Anna Helm have used modern technology to assist instructors in the various practices and methods of using cases, in an e-Handbook tied to video-based resources. Their project is also unique in that it includes input from students, as well as experts on the topic. In Tomoko Takami's article, "Infusing the National Standards into Business Language Curricula," instructors at both the college level and also the K–12 levels are encouraged to incorporate the National Standards' goals of Communications, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities in their classrooms. Specific examples are drawn from Japanese language courses, but instructors of all languages can benefit from the discussion on the goals. The importance of real contexts and avoiding miscommunication are among the many insights shared.

An examination of "teacher talk," the modifications and simplifications of language terms and structures that instructors make to be more easily understood by students in a second language (L2) environment, is examined specifically in the business language classroom in "Input Modification by Instructors in Traditional and Business German Courses." Transcripts of several examples of classroom interactions are presented by Maren Schierloh and Patricia R. Paulsell. Their examination of the transcripts indicates the general finding that instructors of business language classes tend to simplify less, as the emphasis is upon a specific vocabulary within authentic language.

William Thompson's study, "Understanding *La Francophonie* in the Context of the Business French Curriculum," examines many textbooks used in Business French courses, and reveals that most focus almost exclusively upon France, and not other French-speaking countries. The article presents many key statistics that indicate the importance of the Francophone world in general, and proposes strategies for bringing materials from other countries into the curriculum. In the article "With Your Permission," by Shoji Azuma, linguistic forms of politeness and "saving face" in Japanese, both in general and in business situations, are illustrated and explained. The importance of honorifics is a complicated cultural reality vital to effective communication in Japan, which students and business leaders need to understand.

Much research has been done concerning the importance of internships as related to business language learning and intercultural awareness, but Margrit V. Zinggeler and Coral López-Gómez explore the unusual setting of consular offices for interns in "Internships at Consular Offices." They detail the process for identifying and locating an internship, and the typical duties involved. The article "Teaching Intercultural Communication in a Professional

Language Course” presents several of Michael Hager’s exercises for increasing students’ awareness of cultural differences among German-speaking countries as well as within North American culture. This awareness is shown to be extremely important for international encounters. In the last article in this year’s volume, “Facilitators and Obstacles of Intercultural Business Communication for American Companies in China,” Hongmei Gao and Penelope Prime propose a framework of cultural facilitators and obstacles for American companies conducting business in China to consider. After a lengthy examination of these issues, a case study focusing on UPS highlights in practical terms many of the general insights found in the preceding discussion.

We can be reached at our e-mail address: wooda@purdue.edu. For more information you can visit us also at our website <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/gbl/>. We hope that this will help facilitate your access to our journal, provide information on subscriptions, and disseminate the call for new articles.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the US Department of Education and Dr. Susanna Easton for support of our Center for International Business Education and Research here at Purdue University. This publication would not be possible without financial support provided by the Purdue CIBER and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Purdue University.

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February 2011