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ISBN 0-315-56044-4

Canada

**The Effects of a Video-enhanced Simulation Strategy
On Oral Proficiency in College Second Language Courses**

Brian Smalridge

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Educational Technology

**Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

November 1989

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ABSTRACT

The Effects of Student Produced Videotapes On Oral Proficiency in College Second Language Courses

B. Smalridge

This research effort consisted of two parts, an experimental study and a survey of practitioner's opinions on a video-enhanced simulation strategy. The experimental portion addressed the question of whether a video-enhanced instructional strategy (VES) is more beneficial for improving oral proficiency among college second language (SL) students than a non enhanced strategy. A quasi experimental design was used comparing two treatment groups and a control group. One treatment group consisted of a video-enhanced simulation strategy and the other treatment group followed a simulation strategy without video enhancement. The control group was exposed to a conventional method of classroom instruction. Oral proficiency and affective measures were used to assess the outcomes of all groups. Analysis of the data revealed that a video-enhanced simulation strategy was not significantly superior to a non enhanced strategy or to a conventional strategy in improving oral proficiency among second language students. Similarly there were no significant differences in affective outcomes as a result of the intervention. The approach however, did improve the oral proficiency scores of subjects in the 'middle' prior language category without adversely affecting the oral proficiency of subjects in the 'low' or 'high' prior language category. Also of note were the opinions of practitioners and students of a video-enhanced strategy. Chi square measures

comparing their opinions revealed that students were significantly more optimistic than teachers about the usefulness of VES and its ability to improve oral proficiency in a second language.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Educational theories and the practices they spawn evolve to meet the needs and goals of educational systems and consequently go in and out of fashion. While the predominant theory of an age will inevitably affect, to some extent, the way all subjects are taught, foreign language teaching seems to undergo more frequent and more radical shifts than most. This is partly due to the imperfect understanding of how language works or is acquired and partly to the various levels of competence learners seek from instruction. In the opening chapter to *Speaking in Many Tongues*, Rivers (1983) outlines the dominant views of the past century where the pendulum has swung from the grammar-translation methods emphasizing facts about language with overwhelming stress on written forms, to the new communicative approaches which see language as a social tool with major emphasis on oral fluency. In an age when only an elite attended university, when travel was restricted to a certain class, when a desire to read literary masterpieces in another language motivated students, the grammar-translation methods provided an academic, intellectual thrust expected at university. Few language students today are motivated by a desire to read literary classics or to exercise their intellects with verbal gymnastics. Students even exhibit a limited desire to be able to write well in another language. Most want to speak another language. Oral proficiency is the goal of modern language courses at all levels. There abound dramatically different opinions on how best to achieve this goal. The current communicative methods, an outgrowth of Chomskian linguistics,

recognize that the students of foreign language, like children learning their mother tongue, progress through a series of interim grammars before achieving fluency and that oral fluency comes through constant practice in speaking.

Reporting on attitude surveys conducted at UCLA among beginning students of Spanish, Frey and Sadek (1971) demonstrated a marked preference for instruction favoring spoken language over written language: "...teaching...techniques stressing oral competence were singled out as the most positive aspect of the programme..."(pg. 436). The March 1986 *Hispania* journal was devoted entirely to current trends in teaching Spanish. In it, oral proficiency was highlighted as the principal goal of beginning language courses, but a plethora of methodologies and approaches have made their appearance. These range from methods which eliminate the formal presentation of grammar completely (as in *Para Empezar*, by Peris, Lopez, Baulenas y Bleger, Barcelona, Edición 6, 1987) to those which had integrated new strategies with older grammar-oriented ones (as in *Situaciones*, by Nila Gutierrez Marrone, Toronto: Random House, 1987). What clearly emerged from the survey was the awareness of a need for methodologies and strategies which provide ample opportunity for the students to use their new language skills for communicative purposes. The strategies, consequently, derived from a definition of what communicative purposes one had in mind and what level of language usage matched those purposes. There has not yet emerged a consensus on what these should be for the beginning level Spanish course.

Getting students to use structures and vocabulary in a natural way is not easily accomplished in the traditional classroom setting. Joiner & Westphall (1978) points out Stern's view that the learning

of the formal features of a language (i.e. facts about a language, grammatical theory) does not readily translate into ability to use language. Many years of formal language training may still result in failure to understand or express oneself in real life situations. These editors present Savignon's definition of communicative competence as being able to function in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence (strict grammatical accuracy) adapts itself to the context in which communication occurs. In learning a second language (henceforth SL) there is a need for real life situations where students can practice the target language and review/amend their performance. Traditional second language teaching methods do not take place in a real life context nor allow for a natural communicative exchange. A simulation technique in second language learning endeavors to develop automatic, spontaneous use of structures and vocabulary in appropriate contexts (Littlewood, 1981). A classroom situation should provide an opportunity to practice the grammatical patterns which normally appear in real life contexts.

Although real life situations are probably ultimately superior to simulations they have the disadvantage of having several uncontrolled variables. Simulations have the ability to compress time so that events that may take a month in real life can be experienced in only minutes (Miller 1984). All students in a simulation exercise are also exposed to similar problems and have the same opportunity for learning and can be evaluated accordingly. Another advantage is that students cannot be merely observers in their educational process. They must make significant decisions and reap the consequences of those decisions. Littlewood (1981) restates Paulston and Selekmán's position that interaction activities such as

simulations help engineer the "great leap" from linguistic competence to communicative competence because vocabulary and structures learned through immediate need in a specific situation tend to be retained. Self-assurance required in real life situations does not come through the repetition of patterned phrases, but from understanding how to use language and repeated practice in doing so. Real life conversations rarely match textbook utterances. There is much starting, stopping, repeating, mispronouncing, fragmenting etc. Understanding native speakers means developing strategies to grasp the communicative intent in a given situation, since sentences modelled on pattern drills will rarely be heard as such (Savignon, 1983).

Selection of a Media-enhanced Strategy

The careful structuring of activity-based experiences appear to be beneficial in developing some communication and social skills as well as in learning the subject matter. In her thesis Berger quotes Brunner's (1966) view that activity-based experiences, films, TV programs, filmstrips, sound recording, simulations and games should not be dismissed as merely enrichment. These devices provide vicarious experiences for all types of learners.

Simulations are representations of reality. They require students to become actively involved in the solution to problems that they encounter in the simulation. Simulations can be presented in a variety of formats and media, such as - paper and pencil, three dimensional models, computers, videotape or videodisc, live persons or a combination of these. But which of these media forms would be the most powerful when combined with a simulation strategy? Under

what conditions? And, what type of learner would benefit the most? These are a few of the questions examined by the present study. As far as the medium alone is concerned, decades of research attempting to determine which media help students learn most effectively have repeatedly shown no significant difference among media forms. Various studies have shown learning gains upon the introduction of media, but it was possible to explain these gains in terms other than the effect of the medium. For example, if factors such as content, mode of presentation, teaching strategy and situation were allowed to vary, it was not possible to determine with certainty that the media made the difference. Once all variables have been controlled, Clark (1983) concludes there is only an inert delivery device left to study. In summary, research appears to indicate that the same kind of teaching is similarly effective with or without various technological aids (Clements, 1984).

On a more positive note, Hornik (1981) suggested that future research seek new directions and examine the difference in the relationship between media use and educational achievement among subgroups in the population. According to Hornik, "Specification is the order of the day. What sorts of people of what ages are particularly vulnerable to television effect?" (p. 211). Cohen, Ebeling and Kulik (1981) also discovered that only a few studies of video-based instruction have been conducted on what appears to be the most promising implementation of VBI - the use of videotape for purposes of feedback. This meta-analysis showed that most research has been on closed circuit television - half of the studies compared instructional television to conventional instruction.

Following these recommendations, the current study looked at the effects of a video-enhanced simulation strategy where college

second language students make and view videotapes of their simulation exercises. It was predicted that television used in this context is not as Clark (1983) states "an inert carrier of information," but an integral aspect of the instructional strategy, providing the unique opportunity for students to conduct a self-evaluation of their performance. The experiment focused on the benefits of videotape in its ability to discriminate different types of student interaction and to provide supervised feedback of student performances.

Participants were first year college students and were generally young, attractive, and intelligent, conditions that Frager (1985) found particularly suited to the use of videotape for the purpose of feedback. It was also expected that the medium of television when combined with a simulation instructional strategy would be superior to the simulation technique when used without television. It was further predicted that video-simulation would arouse student interest, encourage active class participation and improve oral proficiency skills. It was anticipated that the technique would be useful in any second language or communications course that aims to improve competency in spoken language.

CHAPTER TWO

Review Of The Literature

Introduction

In spite of occasional complaints (Clark, 1985a; Clark, 1985b; Bernard, 1986; Solomon & Clark, 1977; Solomon & Gardner, 1986) much of media research over the past 20 years has involved comparisons between media treatments and traditional instruction. Nearly every medium has undergone much scrutiny, up to and including computer-based instruction in recent years. Rather than realizing that any medium of communication can deliver instruction effectively, the primary question being addressed in these "gross media comparisons," has been "can a medium teach?" and if yes, "can a medium teach better than a traditional, teacher-based instruction?" This thesis is concerned with media when it forms part of the instructional strategy, not when it is used as a means to present or deliver instruction. The study introduces three levels of an instructional strategy into the college language classroom - simulation, video-enhanced simulation (henceforth VES) and conventional teacher based instruction . The question being investigated is whether the media/simulation strategy is more effective than a simulation strategy and a conventional strategy.

This review presents the results of studies on the use of simulations in college language classes. Also of interest are studies that used video with simulation to form the instructional strategy. The literature review begins with a discussion of a communicative approach to second language acquisition and is followed by an explanation of the role simulation serves in SL learning. Then, based on the results of meta-analyses, the contribution of media

to learning is examined, followed by a section on the merits of a video instructional strategy. The chapter concludes with a statement about the problem this study addresses.

Communicative Approach in Language Instruction

Joiner and Westphal's *Developing Communication Skills: General Considerations and Specific Techniques (1978)*, contains a collection of basic texts by experts in second language teaching, among others, Westphal, Savignon, Paulston, Zelson, Palmer, Valette, Desick. All of these stressed the importance of group work in teaching for oral competence. Group work builds self-assurance in the student (p. 13), encourages co-operation thus creating a non-threatening atmosphere in which skill-using is possible (p. 36). Students use language creatively, learning to listen and evaluate both themselves and their peers (p. 62). The classroom becomes decentralized and students accept responsibility for their own learning. The classroom activities become student rather than teacher oriented. The teacher, according to Rivers (1968), must be willing to relax control of the class, to build an atmosphere of security in which the student does not fear using language. The teacher is no longer the omniscient source of information, but rather a helper, a guide who directs the student with encouragement.

Ludger Schiffler of Freie Universitat von Berlin (1984) studied in depth the advantages and disadvantages of working in groups in language courses, the problems faced by timid students, and the unequal distribution of work that may result from unmotivated students. The instructor, he noted, must be sensitive to these problems, resolving them by supervising carefully the distribution of work among group members. Varnava (1975) sees group work as a

means of dealing with mixed level students in a classroom, providing opportunity for all to practice language skills. Smith (1981) feels that group work confers relevance on language learning and without perceived relevance and meaningfulness, the student will not be motivated to use it. In this, Smith echoes Littlewood (1981) who likewise stresses group activities as a means of demonstrating the relevance and purposefulness of language learning. He also stresses the need for positive reinforcement, the need to avoid excessively negative stress on correctness both of which are guaranteed to make learners lose confidence in their ability to communicate and come to regard language learning as a chore to be avoided.

In classroom activities involving oral exercises, Rivers (1972), Valette (1977) and Bartz (1979) recommend a judicious form of correction in which only major errors (i.e., those that hinder communication) are highlighted so that the student does not become overwhelmed with a sense of his/her inadequacies, a feeling which soon translates into hostility to language learning. Perez (1982) mentions the use of tape recorders to help students recognize their errors in pronunciation and intonation and the use of group correction as tools in the classroom. Knight (1975) sees a similar function for video in the language classroom. In this context, simulations and especially videotaped simulations are an ideal group learning activity for a communicative language class.

Language Instruction and Simulations

A major problem in second language teaching is getting students to use structures and vocabulary in a natural way, a task that is not easily accomplished in a traditional classroom setting or with traditional methodologies. Simulations are useful in helping students to relax or in giving the teacher a chance to vary

classroom activities. They provide a more stimulating way of learning new vocabulary and structures and they stress cooperation rather than competition, thereby encouraging an environment in which students enjoy using the target language (Wattenmaker & Wilson, 1979). Current opinion on second language teaching stresses the importance of communicative intent or purposefulness, that is, the use of language skills in real life situations. Simulations stress skill using, the process of interacting with others in the target language for real communicative purpose. Communicative competence, the ability to select vocabulary, structures, gestures, tone of voice appropriate to a situation is as important, if not more so, than strict grammatical competence. (L. Dickinson, no date). Simulations are ideal instruments for developing purposeful, communicative activities because (1) they provide whole task practice; (2) they improve student motivation; (3) they allow natural learning and use of the target language; (4) they create a social context which reinforces learning (Littlewood, 1981). However the success of a simulation strategy is largely dependent on the willingness of both the teacher and student to modify their traditional roles.

Simulation as an Instructional Strategy Berger (1983) makes the case that research in instructional technology has supported the use of surrogates of reality as aids to learning. The empirical experience of many teachers shows that when students bring emotions and ideas together into a language experience, then the language development and learning experience are much more powerful (Dale, 1969; Morris, 1946; Carpenter, 1953). Using surrogates of reality (simulations) as an instructional strategy provides an opportunity for this type of language experience to take place.

In addition, Whybra and Prinzing (1984) cite a need in second language learning for opportunities to practice those communicative measures which uphold and further the understanding between communicating partners, for instance, corroboration (not teacher echo), enlarging upon a point, provoking, teasing, and even expression of incredulity, disbelief and annoyance. The researchers found that by making self-observation and self-awareness possible through videotaping second language students in role playing situations, there was a reduction of anxiety and insecurity as well as a promotion of the pragmatic use of language, mimicry, and gestures. The results of their study showed; greater student motivation and creativity, increased student confidence, and substantial gains in language skills and knowledge. This study, unlike many media comparison studies, used video because of its unique ability to provide a self-assessment for the student. The medium was not used to simply deliver instruction, but was part of the instructional strategy.

Using Media in Instruction

In reviewing research on media effects, Clark (1983) concluded, "The best current evidence is that media are mere vehicles that deliver instruction but do not influence student achievement any more than the truck that delivers the groceries causes changes in our nutrition" (p. 445). In addition, Clark (1983) points out that the meta-analyses on media research "...provide strong evidence that media comparison studies that find causal connections between media and achievement are confounded. The most common sources of confounding seem to be the uncontrolled effects of a) instructional method or content differences between

treatments that are compared, and b) a novelty effect for newer media, which tends to disappear over time" (p. 448). Hornik's (1981) synthesis of research on television effects assessed decades of findings and also concluded that researchers have failed to demonstrate a significant relationship between media use and educational achievement. On a more optimistic note, however, Shwalb (1986) and Cohen, et al (1981) found that more positive results are being achieved in recent years by the more discerning and appropriate use of media, particularly in institutions of higher learning. Hornik (1981) concluded that future research should investigate the relationship between media use and educational achievement among sub-groups of the population and determine what sort of people are particularly susceptible to television effect? (Krendl 1986). Similarly, Cohen et al advised that future media research should explore what appears to be the promising area of videotape and feedback.

Meta-analyses and Media Utilization

The research studies that lead Clark (1983), Cohen et al (1981), Hornik (1981), and Shawlb (1986) to their conclusions were generally media comparison studies. As already mentioned, the results from decades of media comparison studies has repeatedly produced no significant difference as to which medium provides the more effective learning experience. Cohen's (1981) meta-analysis included 74 visual-based studies published up to 1977. It found that 74% of the studies of student achievement reported no significant difference between visual-based instruction (henceforth VBI) and conventional teaching (henceforth CI). However, 76% of the studies that reported significant differences found an effect favoring VBI.

This percentage is somewhat higher than in the studies done in earlier years. In fact Cohen did find that the year the studies were conducted predicted achievement outcome in the meta-analysis. More recent (after 1970) studies produced results more favorable to VBI.

The study also found that the level of institution at which the research was done correlated significantly with achievement outcome. This is possible due to the fact that higher level institutions generally have more sophisticated human and equipment resources for the development of high quality VBI materials.

As stated earlier, Cohen's meta-analysis was able to identify major directions for future research on VBI. He discovered that only a few studies have been done on the implementation of VBI where videotape is used to provide feedback to students and teachers.

Another meta-analysis done by Shwalb et al (1986) integrated the findings of 128 studies reporting technology uses in Japanese schools. Of the 128 studies, 116 were achievement studies and the box-score review found that 56% of these studies reported no significant difference between technology and conventional teaching, and 94% of all studies reporting significant differences favored technology learning.

Overall, the findings on Japanese studies were in accord with other meta-analysis on technology learning done in the U.S. The analysis of student achievement in VBI favored the technology group in 31 of 35 studies. In the remaining 4 studies, achievement differences favored CI. In these 35 studies, 14 reported differences that were significant; 13 favored VBI and one favored CI. In studies where different teachers taught VBI and CI classes, achievement differences were more clearcut and in favor of VBI. In studies where

the same teacher taught both differences were less pronounced.

Like Cohen's meta-analysis, Shwalb's analysis also showed that more positive results of technology have been reported in recent studies. It may be that technology instruction has been used more discriminately in recent years. Media are no longer seen as a panacea and are used where they can do the most good. The art of developing technology materials may have also improved, so that recent studies use better materials than older studies.

The results of Shwalb's meta-analyses are consistent with earlier meta-analysis that showed no significant difference among comparative media studies. As previously mentioned, Clark (1983) stated that these meta-analyses provide evidence that media comparison studies are confounded by the uncontrolled effects of instructional strategy or content differences between the treatments that are compared. It is precisely this argument that led Clark to conclude that media are mere vehicles of instruction - neither adding or subtracting from the learning experience. It is important to realize that the present study is not another media comparison study. It is not part of the genre that Clark makes reference to as a delivery system. The current study compares three instructional strategies and controls for content, mode of presentation, and situation differences among them. One instructional method uses simulation-only, another a video-enhanced simulation and still another uses a conventional teacher based strategy.

Video as an Instructional Strategy

Waddell (1983) noted that an instructional strategy that uses video-tape feedback is unique to the extent that both educators and

learners can review the teaching-learning process using the objective, audio-visual record provided by the video tape. Evaluative conferences can then be based on a common frame of reference rather than on subjective records and memory. Over the decades several articles and reports have been written on the success and benefit of using videotapes. But, many of these suggestions and recommendations have been based on the positive feelings of those using the medium for the first time. It is possible that the so called Hawthorne Effect could explain many of these reports. However in teacher education there is a body of literature on the use of video technology that is based on empirical studies. Furthermore, studies on the feedback stage of microteaching (Fuller & Manning,1973) have identified the three conditions for the effective use of videotapes.

- 1) when the viewing population is young, attractive, verbal, intelligent, successful - the potential for changing behavior is maximized, and the chances for learning from videotape are enhanced;
- 2) when there are no expectations for quick improvement in teaching among supervisor and trainees; and
- 3) when feedback is unambiguous and related clearly to the performance goals set before the feedback videotape was made. (pp. 469-528)

In addition to the above findings, a study by Orme, McDonald and Allen (1966) showed that preservice teachers benefited more when a supervisor provided discriminating feedback of their performance than when the teachers viewed the tapes of their performance alone.

Discrimination training is another area of teacher training in which videotapes have been used effectively. Nias (1974) used

videotape to increase her students' ability to discern different types of classroom interactions. In a study by Legge and Asper (1972), preservice teachers who made and viewed videotapes of their own teaching were able to rate a film of a teacher's performance with a significance (.025) closer to the ratings of a group of master teachers than could preservice teachers from the same course who did not make and view videotapes.

Fragar (1985) cited a study done by Moritz and Martin-Reynolds where teachers were given a choice between traditional evaluation or a videotaped self-evaluation, the teachers preferred the videotaped version by more than a two-to-one margin. According to Goodman (1985) video has the capacity to repeat endlessly and without alteration the same linguistic and paralinguistic data. This cannot be said about live presentations. With video it is possible to direct the student to a different aspect with each viewing.

Dopemu and Talabi (1986) studied the effectiveness of videotape recording in micro-teaching settings. The resulting videotape was not edited but played back as recorded for the student and supervisor to view. During the review, the student was guided by the supervisor to see the errors in his/her performance. Results of the study showed a significant difference in mean scores between the video recording group and the non video recording group.

In the current experiment a VES strategy was chosen because of: the unique opportunity for feedback afforded by videotape, the nature and context of the material being learned and the type of student being instructed. After recording the second language performances of college students, the videotape was replayed to learner and teacher. The taped version provided an objective record

for evaluative purposes and allowed the teacher to provide discriminating feedback of each student's performance.

Statement of the Problem

An experimental study was designed to investigate media's influence on learning where they are used as part of an instructional strategy. The question of whether a media-enhanced strategy influences second language acquisition among first year college students was addressed. Comparisons were made among student proficiency scores of two treatment groups and a control group. The control group was exposed to the traditional classroom methods of instruction. One treatment group used a VES strategy and the other a simulation-only strategy. Data was collected over two college semesters.

A second study was conducted, surveying the opinions of SL practitioners on a VES strategy. An identical instrument was administered to subjects in the experimental study who were exposed to the VES treatment. Chi square measurements were performed on these two variables to determine if significant differences existed between the perceptions of SL students and teachers.

Hypotheses

SL oral proficiency measures will reveal a hierarchical relationship among treatment conditions. The simulation with video will be superior to the simulation without video and both will be superior to the control group.

Research question. What sorts of people are most vulnerable to television effect?

Research question. Are attitudes toward learning a second language changed as a result of video-enhanced simulation

Research question. Do teachers and students of SL believe that the technique of video-enhanced simulation is effective in arousing student interest, encouraging active class participation and improving oral proficiency skills?

CHAPTER THREE

Method

The current research problem was investigated via an experimental study and a practitioner's opinion survey. The scope of the experimental study was threefold. Foremost, it determined whether a VES strategy produces superior learning outcomes to a simulation-only strategy. Secondly, it revealed what sort of people are the most vulnerable to the effects of television, and lastly, it appraised shifts in students' attitudes as a result of the intervention. The practitioner's opinion survey addressed the question of whether SL teachers and students believe that the technique of VES is an effective classroom activity that arouses student interest, encourages active class participation and improves oral proficiency skills.

Student Sample

The sample for the experimental portion of this research effort consisted of 81 first year CEGEP students enrolled in four beginning Spanish classes at Champlain College in St. Lambert, Quebec. The sample was composed of mostly anglophone students. Roughly 73% of the subjects were female and 27% male. Their average age was 17 years.

Practitioner Sample

Part two of the study had a sample size of 45 college and university SL teachers in the Montreal area and 47 students that were exposed to the VES strategy in part one of the experiment. Initially 171 SL teachers were asked to complete an opinion survey. Forty-five responses were received, representing a return rate of 26

percent. Their SL teaching experience ranged from less than one year to more than 30 years.

Design

The study employed a four group experimental design where levels of the independent variable were conventional, simulation, and video-enhanced simulation teaching strategies. The initial design consisted of two VES and one control condition in the first semester and a VES and simulation condition in the second semester. Unfortunately the VES condition in the second semester was lost from the experiment as a result of changes to the teacher workload rules at the college. Due to further limitations imposed by the school schedule, intact groups were used. As a result this study qualified as a quasi-experimental design. Also, as this was a beginning Spanish course, students were not expected to have any knowledge of vocabulary or grammatical structure in the target language. Consequently a pretest could not be given. Instead entry characteristics of students were determined by gathering their results on the Nelson Denny Reading Test, high school language scores and their college averages. These data were used to make comparisons among the groups to see if all were similar in scholastic and linguistic abilities at the start of the experiment.

Of the four Spanish classes involved in the study, three were designated as treatment groups (N = 63), while the fourth (N = 18) was designated as a control group. One level of the independent variable consisted of VES and this was given to two groups (N = 47) to partly offset the deficiency in having to run the experiment over two college terms. A second level of the independent variable comprised simulation without the video component. This was

administered to the remaining treatment group (N = 16). The control group (N = 18) followed a traditional method of instruction.

Material

Opinion survey. An opinion questionnaire, based on the work of Kelly (1986), was created and sent to 171 college and university SL teachers in the Montreal area and to 47 beginning Spanish students. A five point Likert scale was used to gather judgemental feedback on: 1) the attitudes toward the learning experience (questions 1 & 2); 2) the design of video-enhanced simulations (questions 3 to 7); and 3) whether they would use or recommend using this learning experience if it were available (question 8). This questionnaire appears in Appendix A.

Attitude questionnaire. A 30 item attitude survey was constructed and given to all subjects at the start of the experiment. It was administered again after the implementation of the treatment. The instrument was designed to measure any attitude shifts that occurred as a result of the intervention. Items on the questionnaire addressed the following broad categories: a) attitudes toward other languages, b) attitude toward learning a SL, and c) attitude toward how a SL is studied.

Course textbook. Champlain College's Modern Language department has followed a communicative approach to teaching second languages for several years. The textbook used by the department is Puertas a la Lengua Espanola, An Introductory Course, second edition. (Copeland, Kite, Sandstedt, & Vargas, 1986) and it follows the communicative approach by stressing language used in everyday situations. Each chapter deals with a scenario that

approximates what students will likely encounter in a real life setting. Spanish students in this experiment were asked to create parodies based on the chapter topics using only the vocabulary, grammar and structures that are covered in the textbook.

Candidate guide for the oral interaction test. The instrument used to measure the outcome of instruction in this study was the Oral Interaction Test for Second Language Evaluation (henceforth OIT) developed by the Personnel Psychology Centre of the Public Service Commission of Canada. It is part of a publication entitled The Candidate Guide For The Oral Interaction Test used by the Canadian government to evaluate the level of second language proficiency among its civil service employees. The complete guide describes in detail the design of language simulations and suggests methods for implementing them. The evaluation section uses a rating scale to assess the student's ability to both speak and listen and establishes the individual's level of second language proficiency in oral interaction.

A rationale for following this evaluation procedure was given by Morrow (1983). His work investigated the questions of validity and reliability associated with this type of evaluation. His experience showed a face validity that was high; both teacher and students agreed readily that these tests are a good approximation of what is involved in language use in the real world. More research is being done by his team on the concurrent validity between these tests and other oral tests, and of correlation between these tests in different areas. The issue of concern in the present study is marker-marker (inter-rater) reliability. It has traditionally been a source of difficulty for "subjective" tests of this nature. Morrow explains that the questions being asked by the assessor should not be open ("How

good is the candidate?"), but closed ("Is the candidate good enough to meet these criteria?"). The answer should be based on a global consideration of all criteria. If they are all met, the candidate passes, if not, the candidate fails. Morrow recognizes that the criteria themselves are subjective but he concludes that it is in terms like this that communication operates. He adds that teachers as well as assessors have little difficulty working in this framework with very high reliability. Rivers (1972), Valette (1977) and Bartz (1979) all support Morrow and recommend the use of a rating scale which describes areas of competence and communicative success rather than strict grammatical accuracy as the criteria for evaluation.

In the current study the OIT was used as a reference for the construction of the simulation exercise and in the measurement of SL proficiency among the treatment and control conditions. (See Appendix B for a sample of this guide).

The Nelson Denny reading test. The test consists of a 136 item paper-pencil test of vocabulary, comprehension and reading rate. Test items, particularly in the comprehension section, have been selected so that the test does not favor students who are strong in any one subject matter area. It is mandatory that all participants be representative of the group used in the norming sample for the norms to be of any use in providing evaluation information. Research on this test has shown a strong relationship ($r = .67$) between test scores and scholastic achievement (Brown, 1981), and was thought to be useful in determining the scholastic achievement of each group involved the study. The time required to administer the test is 35 minutes and directions for its implementation are included with the examiner's manual.

Procedure

The procedure for the present study consisted of: 1) establishing the general level of scholastic achievement and linguistic performance of the students as they entered the experiment, 2) the implementing the treatments and control condition, 3) assessing the learning outcomes in each group; 4) appraising the attitudes on learning a second language as a result of the treatment intervention; and 5) the assessing of opinions on the use of VES in second language learning.

Scholastic achievement and linguistic performance. Given the constraints imposed by the college on registering and scheduling students into classes, it was impossible to randomize students into treatment and the control group. However the standardized CEGEP admission requirements across the province ensured that classes were roughly uniform in learning ability. In order to ascertain the level of prior linguistic performance, students' high school language scores were collected. Except for students in the simulation group, each student was given the Nelson Denny Reading test during the month of August, before the first week of class. Students in the simulation group were given this test at the start of the second semester, on the first day of their Spanish class. These scores along with students' college averages were used to determine the level of prior linguistic ability and scholastic achievement for each group at the start of the experiment.

Implementation of conditions. At the beginning of the semester each Spanish class was visited and an explanation was given as to the nature and purpose of the research. Each group was told that the project involved an investigation into the effectiveness

of various teaching strategies and techniques. It was explained that their decision on whether to participate would not effect their success in the course. Students were asked to volunteer for this project by signing a consent form. All students agreed to participate.

The content and procedure for creating simulations as outlined in the textbook and OIT have been used by Champlain's second language teachers for the last two years. Students in both treatment groups were required to produce as a final major project a five to ten minute parody depicting some aspect of daily life. The specific topic was to be suggested by their own interests and experiences, and knowledge of Spanish as covered by the textbook.

The total experiment consisted of forty-five hours of instruction and was delivered over fifteen weeks to the treatment and control groups. In the treatment groups, the class periods were regularly devoted to preparing the students for the final project by having them act out small role playing situations. Students were told, when creating their final parody, to rely on all previous material covered in the text and in class, but to change it around to fit their own context. Note reading was not allowed and students were urged to improvise extensively. Subjects in the two experimental groups were exposed daily to a simulation treatment. On the thirteenth week students in the VES treatment were sent to the TV studio to record their final parody while the simulation group performed their final parody in front of their peers and instructor. During this entire period the control group continued with drills, question and answer strategies, scrambled sentences and guided narrations. These exercises covered the same content, had the same learning objectives and used the same textbook as in the experimental conditions. The major differences were in the various teaching strategies.

Students in the VES treatment were allowed two "takes" when recording their simulation. The finished tape was given to the class teacher for evaluation and on the fifteenth week the tapes were played to the entire class and the teacher made comments on the performance of the students. In making his comments, the teacher stopped the machine at pre-determined spots throughout the tape. Students in the role-play as well as the whole class were advised of errors in language usage as they occurred on the screen.

Students in the simulation-only treatment performed their simulation in class from the thirteenth to the fifteenth week. The teacher made comments on students' performance at the end of each role-play activity.

Assessment of proficiency outcomes. After fifteen weeks, participants in all groups were subjected to the OIT to evaluate their skills in oral proficiency. This post-test format consisted of an interview conducted according to specific OIT directions. It stressed the following universal language tasks in assessing a student's level of oral proficiency: (a) asking questions, (b) relating events, and (c) giving explanations and supporting opinions. Above all, the naturalness, appropriateness of language to the situation was to be considered.

To administer the OIT, an external independent evaluator was approved and engaged. During the examination process this evaluator was unaware as to whether the student being tested belonged to a treatment or control condition. In addition to this evaluator the course teacher was permitted to sit in on the interview and make his own assessment of the student's ability. This provided paired data to determine the inter-rater reliability of the test instrument and it also served to reduce students' fear of the

examination experience with an external examiner. In keeping with the directions for the O.I.T., each evaluator assigned a percent grade. It was these posttest scores that served as the dependent variable in the experimental study. The evaluators were prevented from collaborating with each other before, during and after the interview. The evaluation data were collected at the completion of each interview.

Appraisal of attitudes. A thirty item attitude questionnaire was constructed and administered to all 81 subjects at the start and close of the experiment. Principal components analysis was performed on the pretest results for all groups to identify those factors responsible for the largest amount of the variance. MANOVA was used on the posttest results to see if significant differences existed in attitudes among the four groups as a result of the treatment intervention.

Assessment of opinions. An opinion survey consisting of eight questions was sent to 171 practitioners to appraise their perception of the effectiveness of this teaching format. This survey was also given to subjects in the VES treatment at the close of the experiment. Comparisons were made between the responses of the VES group and the practitioners.

Analysis

Comparisons were made among the group means of the Nelson Denny scores as well as college averages to ensure that the entry level of scholastic achievement was roughly equal. ANOVA was used to determine if the entry level of linguistic performance was similar, based on high school language scores. A one-way analysis of variance was performed on the post-test scores to determine the extent to

which the means of the treatment and control groups differ. Aptitude by treatment interaction analysis was performed on the scholastic achievement and prior linguistic performance categories to determine what type of people were the most susceptible to the effect of television. Principal component analysis and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were conducted on the thirty item attitude questionnaire to determine if significant treatment effects were present in the posttest responses. Second language students' and practitioners' opinions of a VES strategy were analyzed using a chi square test.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The current study compared the learning outcomes from three instructional strategies and determined whether the outcomes from one strategy are superior to those of the others. It was predicted that students who followed a video-enhanced simulation strategy would perform better in an SL interview than students in the other strategies. It was further expected that students exposed to a VES strategy would acquire more favourable attitudes toward learning a second language than students in the other strategies. Also of interest were the opinions of SL practitioners and SL students on the effectiveness of the VES strategy.

Experimental Study

Sample attributes. The overall mortality rate of the sample was 9%. The VES groups lost just 2 subjects (N = 49), and the simulation-only and control conditions lost 2 (N=18) and 4 (N= 22) subjects respectively. This did not appear to have a deleterious affect on the study.

Since students could not be assigned randomly to groups, the equality of the prior linguistic performance level for each group was determined using ANOVA. Table 1 shows the comparison for the four groups on this measure. It indicates that there was no significant difference in performance levels among groups prior to their entry into the experiment, $F(3, 77) = .495, p = .70$.

The Nelson Denny Reading Achievement Test and college averages were used to determine if all groups were similar in scholastic achievement. Table 2 indicates that a significant difference

existed among groups on the reading measure, $F(3, 67) = 3.65, p < .02$. On the other hand, ANOVA conducted on college averages (i.e. grade point averages to date) indicated (see Table 3) that all groups were similar for this variable, $F(3, 76) = .85, p > .05$. The disagreement between the two scores was difficult to explain. A possible explanation could be in the timing of administering the Nelson Denny test. Subjects in the two VES and control groups completed the Nelson Denny test the summer before their entry into college. Subjects in the simulation-only condition completed the test at the start of their second semester. Perhaps the higher scores in the former groups were attributed to the enthusiasm usually associated with starting college. Since it was judged that college averages and high language scores are a more valid and reliable measurement of students' scholastic achievement, these scores were used to judge the equality of groups prior to the start of the study.

In summary, these statistical measures suggest that at the beginning of the experiment all groups were similar in their linguistic performance and scholastic achievement levels. Table 4 provides the group mean and standard deviation scores for these variables.

TABLE 1

Summary Table - High School Language ScoresAnalysis of Variance

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
Between groups	3	76.56	25.52	< 1.0	> .05
Within groups	77	3966.33	51.51		
Total	80	4042.89			

TABLE 2

Summary Table - Cumulative Nelson Denny ScoresAnalysis of Variance

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
Between groups	3	5451.92	1817.31	3.65	< .02
Within groups	67	33342.87	497.66		
Total	70	38794.79			

TABLE 3

Summary Table - College Averages

Analysis of Variance

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
Between groups	3	275.93	91.98	< 1.0	> .05
Within groups	76	8252.02	108.58		
Total	79	8527.95			

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores by Group for High School Language Grades, Nelson Denny Scores and College Averages

	Video		Simulation #1		Video		Simulation #2		Simulation Only		Control Group	
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
High School	27	77.1	8.5	20	79.2	5.4	16	77.3	7.7	18	76.6	6.2
Nelson Denny	23	65.3	24.1	18	54.8	24.6	14	43.0	17.1	16	65.6	20.8
College averages	27	69.8	9.0	20	68.1	13.3	16	73.4	9.1	17	68.6	9.8

Oral action interview scores. The means and standard deviations of the two raters' assessments are shown in Table 5. A t -test was performed to compare group scores as assessed by each rater. No significant difference $t(80) = -.03, p > .05$ was found to exist between the scores of the raters. A Pearson product moment performed on the set of rater's scores, revealed a coefficient of .76. Along with the results of the t -test, this was considered sufficiently high to permit averaging the two evaluators' scores into one composite set of scores (see Table 5) reflecting students' performance during the Oral Action Interview. It was this score that was used as the dependent variable in the study.

Between group comparison. ANOVA was carried out on the four experimental groups to determine if the treatment intervention produced significant differences in students' oral proficiency. The omnibus $F(3, 80) = 1.36, p > .05$ (see Table 6) indicated no significant difference among groups. Subjects who were exposed to VES did not perform significantly better than subjects who were exposed to the simulation-only or the control conditions.

Aptitude by Treatment Interactions

Test # 1. A two-way analysis of variance was performed on the high school second language scores and the treatment conditions to determine if a significant interaction was present. The F ratio for the interaction, was computed at $F(6, 69) = 1.97, p = .08$, and was not statistically significant (See Factor AB in Table 7). There was also no significant difference for either the main effect for treatments (as already mentioned) or categories of linguistic performance, $F(2, 69) = .70, p > .05$

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Oral Proficiency Outcomes by Group

	Video						Simulation			Control		
	<u>Simulation #1</u>			<u>Simulation #2</u>			<u>Only</u>			<u>Group</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Examiner # 1	27	84.7	9.0	20	85.5	7.4	16	83.4	8.6	18	76.6	4.6
Examiner # 2	27	82.4	13.7	20	84.7	9.4	16	81.9	8.8	18	82.4	5.8
Composite score	27	83.9	10.7	20	85.1	7.8	16	82.7	8.6	18	79.8	4.8

TABLE 6

Summary Table - Oral Action Interview Scores

<u>Analysis of Variance</u>					
Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
Between groups	3	296.20	98.73	1.36	.26
Within groups	77	5595.76	72.67		
Total	80	5892.00			

TABLE 7

Summary Table - Treatment (A) by Prior Language Interaction (B)

<u>Analysis of Variance</u>					
Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
(A) Treatment Grps	3	349.84	116.61	1.75	.16
(B) Pri. Linguistic per.	2	92.56	46.28	.70	.50
AB	6	782.30	130.38	1.97	.08
Error	69	4578.49	66.36		
Total	80	5803.19			

TABLE 8

Table of Means - Treatment by Prior Language Interaction and Treatment by College Averages Interaction

Linguistic / Scholastic Categories	Treatments								Totals		
	Video Simulation #1		Video Simulation #2		Simulation Only		Control Group				
	N	M	N	M	N	M	N	M			
Linguistic	High	11	85.0	7	84.1	6	85.0	5	81.0	29	84.1
	Middle	7	91.4	10	85.0	6	81.8	5	77.5	28	84.6
	Low	9	76.6	3	87.7	4	80.5	8	80.5	24	79.9
Totals		27	83.9	20	85.1	16	82.7	18	79.8	81	83.1
Scholastic	High	7	91.4	8	87.4	7	82.6	4	77.5	26	85.7
	Middle	12	82.0	3	88.3	3	78.7	8	80.0	26	81.7
	Low	8	80.0	9	82.0	6	84.8	5	80.8	28	81.8
Totals		27	83.9	20	85.1	16	82.7	17	79.7	80	83.0

Test # 2. A two-factor ANOVA was run across the variables of levels of scholastic achievement and treatment groups (see Table 9). The dependent variable was the composite OAI scores. Again the interaction was not significant, $F(6, 68) = 1.42, p > .05$. A test of the main effects for treatments and scholastic aptitude also revealed no significant difference.

TABLE 9

Summary Table - Treatments (A) by Scholastic Achievement Interaction (B)

Source	df	<u>Analysis of Variance</u>			
		SS	MS	F	p
(A) Treatment Grps.	3	398.63	132.88	1.90	> .05
(B) Scholastic Achi...	2	113.44	56.72	.81	> .05
AB	6	595.62	99.27	1.42	> .05
Error	68	4767.27	70.11		
Total	79	5874.96			

Assessing Attitudes

Subjects' attitudes toward SL learning were analyzed by principle components analysis and multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). The purpose was to uncover any between group differences in students' attitudes caused by the treatment intervention. Questionnaire items were not treated homogeneously since the instrument was meant to measure several types of attitudes toward learning a new language. Consequently, items on the questionnaire were reduced to several sub-sets of like items. Since it was expected that the posttest would reveal the presence of treatment effects, the pretest was used as the basis for establishing the presence of item subsets. Principle component analysis was performed on the 30 pretest items with subjects treated as a homogeneous sample.

Principle component analysis revealed that 26 of the 30 items clustered around 5 factors (41.7 % of the total variance was accounted for by these 5 factors). An interpretation of the five factors was carried out by attempting to assign a conceptual label to each of the factors. The first factor appeared to address subjects' attitudes toward studying a new language (e.g. a useful, enjoyable, challenging, enriching, demanding, productive experience). The second factor involved those considerations that motivate subjects' to speak a new language (e.g. importance of: speaking over writing, expressing ideas over grammatical accuracy, a non-threatening environment). Factor three includes items that describe the difficulties in acquiring a new language (e.g. pronouncing new words, understanding native speakers and new language concepts). Factor four is concerned with the role of the language teacher (e.g. oral activities in class are more productive when directed by a teacher than when directed by students in a group). The final factor

incorporates methods of learning a new language that respondents believed were the most beneficial (e.g. self correction by a tape is preferable to correction by the teacher in front of a class).

Five attitudinal sub-tests were created by adding together the posttest responses within each of the five factors. MANOVA was used to test between group differences, with 26 items on the posttest broken into five sub-sets, serving as multiple dependent measures. Table 10 provides the pretest and posttest unadjusted means and standard deviation scores for these five factors.

The results of MANOVA showed that there was no significant differences among treatment groups for the five sub-tests. Apparently subjects' attitudes toward language learning were not significantly influenced by the treatment.

TABLE 10

Attitudes Toward Learning Second Languages: Unadjusted Means and Standard Deviations

Group	Pretest		Posttest	
	M	SD	M	SD
Factor 1				
VES # 1	36.64	2.64	35.44	2.26
VES # 2	35.92	3.69	35.11	3.41
Simulation	36.94	3.19	36.94	3.47
Control	35.79	2.90	35.38	4.72
Factor 2				
VES # 1	12.18	1.96	13.19	2.81
VES # 2	12.16	2.93	12.33	2.54
Simulation	12.75	2.38	13.13	2.39
Control	11.84	3.15	12.19	3.06
Factor 3				
VES # 1	15.75	2.12	16.74	3.02
VES # 2	14.76	1.74	15.61	2.50
Simulation	15.38	2.09	15.69	2.44
Control	15.11	2.73	15.69	2.93
Factor 4				
VES # 1	9.75	1.76	9.70	1.56
VES # 2	9.88	1.92	10.00	1.37
Simulation	10.81	1.52	10.44	2.28
Control	9.90	1.63	10.88	2.16
Factor 5				
VES # 1	12.50	1.35	12.82	1.86
VES # 2	12.64	2.20	12.61	2.36
Simulation	12.63	1.15	12.94	1.81
Control	12.90	1.80	12.81	2.46

Note: Pretest $N=89$, Posttest $N=81$

The Practitioner's Survey

Assessing perceptions of VES. An eight item opinion survey (see Appendix A) was sent to 171 post-secondary SL teachers and administered to the 47 SL students in the VES condition. Members of the control and simulation-only groups did not take part in the video-enhanced simulation and therefore were unable to give their opinion. A five point Likert scale was used to measure respondents perceptions on the use of video-simulation. Items 1 & 2 surveyed the opinions of respondents towards the technique. Questions 3 to 7 focused on the objectives while item 8 was a general information question.

The return rate for the content expert survey was 26%. The demographic data showed that teaching experience ranged from less than one year to more than thirty with a median of 15 years. A contingency table (Table 11) was constructed to analyze the bivariate frequency distributions of student and teacher responses. Of the eight items on the survey, only questions 3, $\chi^2(4, N = 92) = 10.41, p < .05$ and 8 were significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 92) = 9.63, p < .05$. Although caution is advised in interpreting these results, it appears that students were significantly more optimistic than their teachers about the influence of VES on improving oral expression in a second language. When asked whether they find this technique useful in a SL classroom, responses showed that students exposed to VES were significantly more favourable toward the use of the technique than were the SL teachers.

TABLE 11
Percentage Distribution and Chi Square statistics for
Teacher and Student Opinion Survey

Groups	Choices					χ^2 statistic
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Interest					
teachers (%)	2.2	0	8.9	51.1	37.8	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 3.57$ $p > .05$
students (%)	0	0	12.8	63.8	23.4	
	Motivation					
teachers (%)	2.2	0	17.8	46.7	33.3	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 7.21$ $p > .05$
students (%)	0	4.3	19.2	61.8	14.9	
	Oral Express.					
teachers (%)	2.2	2.2	28.9	40	26.7	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 10.41$ $p = .03$
students (%)	0	4.3	8.5	68.1	19.5	
	Oral Compre.					
teachers (%)	2.2	2.2	33.3	44.4	17.8	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 8.41$ $p > .05$
students (%)	0	2.1	10.6	61.7	25.5	
	Enjoyment					
teachers (%)	2.2	6.7	17.8	37.8	35.6	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 1.80$ $p > .05$
students (%)	2.1	2.1	19.2	46.8	29.8	
	Small Grp. Value					
teachers (%)	4.4	4.4	6.7	42.2	42.2	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 3.61$ $p > .05$
students (%)	0	2.1	4.3	55.3	38.3	
	Realistic Sit.					
teachers (%)	2.2	4.4	13.3	44.4	35.6	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 5.83$ $p > .05$
students (%)	0	6.4	12.7	63.8	17.1	
	Usefulness					
teachers (%)	6.7	4.4	24.4	24.4	40	$\chi^2 (4, N = 92) = 9.63$ $p = .047$
students (%)	0	0	10.6	31.9	57.5	

Written Comments by SL Teachers.

Overall, the written comments of the teachers supported the approach. Their remarks were grouped into the following themes.

1. The project appeals to extroverts and may put excessive pressure on introverts; not appropriate for all types of students; small classes needed; not for large groups
2. A good idea but don't restrict scope to vocabulary and structures in textbook; more than 30 hours of instruction needed before this could be used for some languages; project assumes high level of performance: eliminate video part
3. Similar technique used by assessor with favorable results; assessor would be willing to try the technique; technique considered good for promoting vocabulary and pronunciation and for motivating students.
4. Professor needs to guide scripting and taping phases to ensure no 'cheating' occurs; process does not provide immediate feedback; fear that method reinforces student errors in grammar and usage.
5. Method an excuse to avoid real teaching; problems with access to equipment.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Experimental Study

Proficiency outcomes. The principle question addressed in this study was whether a VES strategy was superior to a non video-enhanced strategy or to a conventional strategy in its ability to improve oral proficiency among college SL students. Posttest scores from oral interviews fell in a hierarchical relationship as originally hypothesized, that is, the simulation with video was superior to the simulation without video and both were superior to the control group. However ANOVA measurements on the means of all conditions revealed no statistically significant differences.

Aptitude by treatment interactions were similarly not significant for linguistic competency and scholastic achievement. That is not to say, however, that the VES strategy did not influence oral proficiency at all. While the high, middle and low learners in the simulation and control groups performed at a level of proficiency that approximated their performance on the prior linguistic and scholastic measures, students in the VES condition with middle linguistic ability, were observed to perform nearly as well as subjects with high linguistic ability. This means that the treatment benefited learners in the VES treatment group who possessed middle linguistic ability. Although it was not surprising to find that subjects with high prior scholastic achievement measures scored high in the oral proficiency interviews, it was interesting to note that subjects with the highest scores were the high scholastic ability learners of the VES treatment group. Similarly proficiency scores of the middle scholastic learners were highest in the VES treatment group, whereas scores among the low scholastic learners were very similar among all the treatment conditions. This means that even though the VES strategy favoured the learner with middle linguistic ability it did not hinder

those students with high and low linguistic abilities nor students with high, middle and low scholastic abilities.

Attitude Outcomes

At the start of the experiment it was anticipated that the attitudes of the VES treatment groups towards other languages and their acquisition would improve as a result of the intervention. However the results of pre and post attitude questionnaires administered to all groups, showed no significant attitude changes toward other languages generally and toward learning second languages in particular.

Practitioner's Survey

Perception outcomes. A further question asked in this study was what opinions and beliefs do SL teachers and students have regarding a VES strategy. Responses to the survey revealed that students' and teachers' opinions toward the technique were positive (Table 10), however, as previously stated this did not translate into generally more positive student attitudes toward learning a second language. Most of the written comments by teachers were favorable and they centered around the two dominant and competing philosophies of teaching second languages. Video-simulation appears to be more closely associated with a communicative methodology where language is seen as a tool rather than a body of knowledge to be learned and - where language proficiency rather than strict grammatical accuracy is the goal.

Table 10 reveals that students found a VES strategy to be a positive learning experience. This is further supported by the absentee rates of the groups. The rate in the VES group was lower (2.4 classes / student) than in the simulation-only or control groups (2.5 and 3.27 classes / student respectively). The two VES groups

had 1 drop-out each and the simulation-only group had 2 subjects abandon the course. The control condition lost 4 subjects. This, along with the student responses to the opinion survey items one and two, indicated that motivation and interest were higher as a result of the VES format. A significant difference in perception was identified between teachers and students on the ability of the technique to improve oral expression. A similar significant difference was revealed between student and teachers opinion on the usefulness of the technique. Students appear to have a stronger belief in the utility of VES than their teachers do. It seems that students in the VES treatment condition leave the course with more confidence about their SL oral abilities than their teachers think they've developed. This was supported by observations made during the Oral Action Interview. The raters found students in this group to be more spontaneous in their use of the SL than those in the simulation-only and control conditions. Perhaps this is the major achievement of this technique - to impart confidence to students so that in real life situations they will continue to exercise, experiment and speak a new language.

Limitations of the Study

A plausible explanation for the non significant effects of the current study may lie in the method used for measuring linguistic proficiency outcomes. As Morrow (1983) points out, language is essentially a qualitative rather than quantitative phenomena and subjective testing has traditionally been a source of difficulty in measuring qualitative processes such as oral proficiency. In this study the instrument used to measure the dependant variable may not be sufficiently sensitive to precisely discriminate among subjects' performances on the oral interview. The categories of low, middle and high for previous achievement (scholastic and linguistic) support

this possibility since they did not significantly predict subjects' standings on the OIT (see Table 8) and there was no significant interaction or main effect between these categories and the dependant variable for each condition. A further concern related to outcome measurement was that of marker-marker or inter-rater reliability. It is possible that experimenter bias was the source of some variance in the proficiency measures. Since the independent rater was unfamiliar with the evaluation instrument and the abilities of the students, his evaluation was based solely on the performance in the interview. Consequently his scores may be overly conservative. Alternately, the second rater was the course teacher and he was familiar with both the evaluation instrument and the previous achievement of each student. As a result, his scores may be overly liberal. A more objective method of evaluating oral proficiency would minimize these uncertainties surrounding inter-rater marking. Towards this end, further research comparing this test instrument with other oral tests to determine its concurrent validity, and the use of multiple markers (Shapiro (1989) would help to isolate and control the variables of instrumentation and inter-rater reliability.

Other threats to the internal validity of the experiment occurred in the history of the study. The original research design included a VES group and a simulation group to be run in term two of the experiment. At the start of the second term the VES group was withdrawn due to teacher workload regulations at the college. As a result, there were not two groups to compare and it is uncertain as to whether the variables of times, settings and selection of subjects were adequately controlled for in this treatment condition.

Conclusion.

The results of the present study suggest that if language proficiency is the only goal of instruction then the traditional method of instruction is just as effective as simulation or VES. If however there is a concern for student enjoyment, variety in learning activities or student reported helpfulness of the technique while learning a second language, there is some support for the value of VES.

The findings of this study reveal that the medium of television when used as part of the instructional strategy does not make a significant difference in proficiency scores among treatment groups. It may be that the potency of a VES strategy is superior and produces significant outcomes when it is implemented early in the experiment. As it happened the VES strategy was not administered until the thirteenth week. But when prior linguistic performance and scholastic achievement were used to characterize sub groups within the population; the language sub group with average abilities was most influenced by the effect of video.

In closing, it should be pointed out that the qualitative nature of language makes the evaluation of spoken competency difficult to assess, using current scientific measurement practices. Additional work on oral proficiency measurement methods are needed before the effects of various treatments can be accurately detected in studies of this kind.

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**APPENDIX A
PRACTITIONER'S OPINION SURVEY**

I have ___year(s) of experience teaching a second language.

Please respond to the following statements using the five point scale:

1 = totally disagree

2 = disagree

3 = unsure

4 = agree

5 = totally agree

Circle only one number per question.

1. The simulation exercise will stimulate student interest.

1 2 3 4 5

2. The simulation format will motivate students to participate in small group discussions.

1 2 3 4 5

3. The simulation format will be helpful in developing effective oral expression in SL students.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The simulation format will be helpful in developing effective oral comprehension skills in SL students.

1 2 3 4 5

5. Planning the exercise will be enjoyable.

1 2 3 4 5

6. The simulation exercise encourages practical application of acquired language skills.

1 2 3 4 5

7. The acting out of a real life situation is realistic and practical.

1 2 3 4 5

8. As a second language teacher I would use video simulation if it were made available to me.

1 2 3 4 5

General Comments:

**Project Evaluation
STUDENTS' OPINION SURVEY**

Please respond to the following statements using the five point scale:

- 1 = totally disagree
- 2 = disagree
- 3 = unsure
- 4 = agree
- 5 = totally agree

Darken only one number per question on the answer sheet provided.

1. The simulation exercise captured my interest.

1 2 3 4 5

2. The fact that the students scripted and performed the skit motivated me to participate in discussions.

1 2 3 4 5

3 .Discussions about the simulation helped me develop oral expression.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The simulation exercise helped develop oral comprehension.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I enjoyed planning the exercise.

1 2 3 4 5

6. In small groups I was encouraged to use my knowledge to contribute to discussions.

1 2 3 4 5

7. The acting out of a real-life situation was realistic and practical.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I think other students at this level could profit from this exercise to improve their mastery of another language.

1 2 3 4 5

Student Attitude Questionnaire

Indicate your reaction to the following statements by using the 5 point scale.

1 = totally disagree

2 = disagree

3 = unsure

4 = agree

5 = totally agree

Darken only one number per question on the answer sheet provided.

- 1) Studying a second language is useful.
- 2) Studying a second language is enjoyable.
- 3) Studying a second language is an enriching personal and cultural experience.
- 4) Second language courses are challenging.
- 5) It's more important to speak a second language well rather than write it.
- 6) Pronouncing a second language is difficult.
- 7) Ability to express (one's) ideas in a second language is more important than strict grammatical accuracy.

- 8) Speaking a second language in public is an intimidating experience.
- 9) Learning to read a second language is less demanding than learning to speak.
- 10) Understanding native speakers in learning a second language is more difficult than learning to read.
- 11) Reading in a second language improves fluency and vocabulary.
- 12) Compared to other college courses, second language courses are less demanding.
- 13) Second language learning entails learning difficult new concepts.
- 14) Working in a language lab is useful.
- 15) Self-correction with the help of a tape is preferable to correction by a teacher in front of a class.
- 16) Group activities encourage useful practice in the target language.
- 17) Written homework is more productive than oral-aural homework.
- 18) Class work is more productive than homework.
- 19) Class work is enjoyable.
- 20) Class work is productive.
- 21) Group activities are more intellectually demanding than repetition and substitution exercises.
- 22) Group work is more difficult than individual work.

- 23) Oral activities in class are more productive when directed by a teacher than when directed by students in groups.
- 24) Oral work is less demanding than written work.
- 25) Written tests measure language ability more accurately than oral tests.
- 26) Written tests are more challenging than oral tests.
- 27) In comparison to other college courses, second language courses require fewer assignments.
- 28) In comparison to other college courses, the assignments in second language courses are less challenging intellectually.
- 29) In comparison to other college courses, the grading in a second language course is less strict than in other courses.
- 30) In comparison to other college courses, more is learned in a second language course than in other courses.

**APPENDIX B
ORAL ACTION INTERVIEW MATERIALS**

**SECOND LANGUAGE EVALUATION:
ORAL INTERACTION TEST**

Candidate Guide

Public Service Commission of Canada, Staffing Programs Branch

**Commission de la Fonction publique du Canada, Direction
générale des programmes de dotation**

This candidate guide was produced by the Personnel Psychology Centre of the Public Service Commission of Canada in order to assist candidates to prepare for the Oral Interaction Test. This test is the oral part of the Second Language Evaluation (SLE) system used by the federal government to assess the second language proficiency of public servants.

The guide describes the test, its format and the manner in which the candidate's performance is evaluated. It also contains information on how to complete the data information sheet and some suggestions that may help candidates in preparing for the test and in taking the test.

The Nature of the Test

The Oral Interaction Test measures a candidate's ability to use the second language in work-related situations.

The test assesses a candidate's ability to both speak and listen.

Separate ratings are not given for speaking and listening; rather there is an evaluation of the level of the candidate's overall oral interaction skill.

The Oral Interaction test takes the form of a face-to-face conversation with an assessor. It is conducted in a relaxed setting and lasts from 15 to 40 minutes. The assessor guides the candidates in a dialogue about work-related matters and, in so doing, obtains a sample of the candidate's performance in the second language. The conversation is recorded for record purposes, but the candidate does not "talk to a machine" or answer questions pre-recorded on a cassette.

The goal of the test is to find out the candidate's level of second language proficiency in oral interaction. To do this the assessor first asks questions and poses language tasks geared to the level at which the candidate appears to be functioning. A solid performance on these language tasks indicates to the assessor that the candidate is indeed functioning at the level verified. The assessor also has to determine the upper limits of the candidate's proficiency. For this purpose, questions and language tasks at higher levels are used.

In order to obtain a complete sample of the candidate's ability to interact, the assessor also asks the candidate to participate in one or more role-plays or simulations of work situations. The role-plays are designed to assess the candidate's ability to perform certain language tasks when interacting with a real person in situations similar to those he/she might encounter on the job. The same number of role-plays may not be used in every interview. -

Role-plays may flow naturally out of the conversation or may be presented to the candidate on a card. The assessor may decide to use one or both types depending on the circumstances. The card, if used, describes the general situation, indicates the role that the candidate will be playing, and provides some guidelines concerning what the candidate should say in playing his/her part. The instructions for the role-play are written in the first language of the candidate in order to ensure that the candidate understands the situation. The candidate may keep the card while doing the role-play. Here is an example of a role-play card:

You are leaving tomorrow for a three-day conference in another city. You have decided to prolong your stay by two days to attend to some urgent departmental business. Ask the clerk in charge of travel arrangements to make the necessary changes. Be sure to explain.

- Why you will be staying longer
- That you need to extend your hotel reservations two extra nights
- That you wish to take the earliest flight possible after 5:00 on Friday (rather than Wednesday)

Ask the clerk to call you as soon as possible to confirm your hotel reservations and the flight arrangements.

You might not have the exact vocabulary for this situation but do your best to make yourself understood.

Work-Related Content

The questions and role-plays used in the Oral Interaction Test are concerned with work-related matters only. The candidate is not

required to talk about his/her hobbies, family life, current events, etc. All topics discussed during the test are relevant to the Public Service work environment. The questions and role-plays may be specific to the candidate's job or based on general work-related situations that are applicable to everyone in the Public Service. For candidates who are not already employees of the Public Service, the assessor will choose topics related to the candidate's previous work experience.

The particular topics which candidates are asked to talk about will largely depend on the type of job they occupy, their individual experience, and the level of second language proficiency they demonstrate. For example, at Level A, candidates might be asked questions about their place of work hours of

work, the operation of a piece of equipment, or the performance of a simple, routine task. At Level B typical topics might include a project the candidate is working on or an upcoming move in the division. At Level C, as well as talking about more concrete aspects of their work, candidates might be asked to discuss the implications of a regulation or a policy affecting their work, or to take a stand on an issue such as the government involvement in health and safety, or whether smoking should be prohibited in the work place.

However, candidates are not evaluated on their knowledge of facts, nor on their opinions. Because the test is a second language test, the assessor is interested not in what the candidate says but in how he/she says it, not in the opinions the candidate holds, but in how well they are expressed.

To evaluate the accuracy of the candidate's speech, the assessor does not base his/her rating on the number of errors in grammar, pronunciation, etc. Instead, the rating is based on the degree to which errors interfere with communication of the intended message.

The final rating is a global one, based on the candidate's ability to perform the language tasks with the appropriate content and accuracy for the level.

The Level Attained

The Oral Interaction Test is designed to evaluate candidates at

all levels of second language proficiency. Based on the test, candidates are assigned Level A, B or C in Oral Interaction. Candidates are evaluated according to their ability in the second language, regardless of the level required in the position for which they are applying. For example, if the language requirement for a position is Level B in Oral Interaction, but the candidate is capable of performing at the "C" level, he/she will receive a Level C rating.

Exemption from further testing in the oral interaction skill may be granted to candidates who have attained a "solid C" rating. At a "solid C" level, the candidate's performance contains no major weaknesses and allows him/her to handle most situations in the second language. However, the fact that the candidate has attained a "C" rating does not mean that he/she is automatically exempted. In order to assign an exemption, the assessor must make the judgement that the candidate is unlikely to lose the level of competence demonstrated during the test. This judgement takes into account the strength of the candidate's control of the second language as well as the degree of ease and fluency demonstrated.

To determine a candidate's proficiency level, the Oral Interaction Test concentrates on an individual's ability to perform a number of universal language tasks such as asking questions, relating events, giving explanations and supporting opinions. Such language tasks are common to all work-related situations.

At each level of language proficiency there are a number of language tasks which are required. It is the candidate's performance on these language tasks which forms the basis for determining which level is assigned.

The language tasks required at Levels, A, B and C are listed below. To help you understand the meaning of these language tasks, some examples are provided. The language tasks are tested in the Oral Interaction Test by means of questions about the candidate's job or other aspects of the work environment. The language tasks are also assessed by means of role-plays which simulate situations that candidates may encounter on the job.

LEVEL A

Ask and answer simple questions. A machinist asks a colleague where a certain tool may be obtained, or a staffing officer answers an employee's question about the time allowed for a particular test.

Give simple directions or instructions. A receptionist directs a visitor to the cafeteria, or a manager gives his/her secretary simple instructions about a file that is required.

Handle simple work-related situations. A clerk explains to a visitor that the director is out of town and, therefore, unavailable for a meeting.

LEVEL B

Give simple explanations. An administrative officer explains to a caller over the phone how to complete a certain form.

Give factual descriptions (of people, places or things). A manager describes to his/her director the design, color and dimensions of the information brochures that have been ordered.

Narrate events (past, present, future). A security officer relates to the supervisor the events of a break-in in the building he/she is responsible for.

Handle work-related situations with a complication. A clerk resolves the problem of an incomplete supply order with the person responsible for filling out the order.

LEVEL C

Give detailed explanations and descriptions. A secretary explains to another secretary a complex system of keeping track of ministerial correspondence, or a lab technician describes to a colleague the steps involved in a study being conducted.

Handle hypothetical questions. A unit head explains to his/her superior what would happen to the work output if a compressed work week were adopted by the work unit.

Support an opinion, defend a point of view, or justify an action.

A project leader justifies the need for two additional staff members in order to complete a project by the deadline, or a supervisor defends the opinion that flexible hours for the support staff unit should be permanently adopted.

Counsel and give advice. An employment counselor helps an unemployed person explore his/her employment options, or one manager advises another manager on the best method of handling a difficult situation or project.

Handle complex work-related situations. The head of a unit discusses with a junior employee the problem of that employee's lateness for work and frequent absences, and the effect that this is having on the rest of the work unit.

Test Results

A candidate wishing to know his/her result(s) on the Oral Interaction Test should contact his/her department. The department will also be able to provide information in such areas as retesting procedures, validity periods and other policies related to language testing. Do not expect the assessor to give you feedback. After the interview, the assessor will not be able to tell you the results of the test or to comment on your performance.

Note: If, before or during the testing session, a candidate experiences physical or psychological indisposition of sufficient severity to interfere with his /her test performance, it is the responsibility of the candidate to inform the assessor that he/she cannot undertake or continue the testing session. A candidate who chooses to undertake or continue a testing session despite such physical or psychological indisposition must accept the test results.

How to prepare for the Test

Since the test measures your general ability to communicate in the second language and not your knowledge of structures or vocabulary, the best thing to do to prepare for the test is to speak and listen to French as much as possible. To increase your chances of performing at your true level of proficiency, you should, in the final few days before the test, listen to the radio, watch television, and speak French as often as possible with colleagues, friends, and neighbors. If you have not spoken the language for an extended period before the test, you may find it difficult to get back into it at the time of the test.

Note: Candidates must bring their Social Insurance card and one other piece of identification to the testing session as he/she may be required to provide identification.

If a candidate has a handicap that may hinder his/her test performance, he/she should contact the department to obtain additional information and assistance. Alternative test arrangements can be made when the department is aware of the problem in advance.

Suggestions for taking the test

A. BE ON TIME. By arriving on time, you will feel more relaxed and the test will get off to a good start.

B. TRY TO RELAX. The test will not begin with difficult questions or role-plays. There will be time for you to adjust to the testing situation and for the assessor to get to know you.

C. SPEAK ONLY IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE. Throughout the Oral Interaction Test, the assessor will only use the candidate's second language. You will adjust more quickly to using your second language and will perform better if you speak in your second language from the beginning of the test.

D. CHOOSE A COMFORTABLE RATE OF SPEAKING. Speak at the pace that comes naturally. You are not evaluated on your rate of speech as such but rather on the total effectiveness of the way you communicate. Choose the rate of speech at which you function best and with the most efficiency.

E. DON'T GET HUNG UP ON A WORD. If you can't think of a certain word, use a simple substitute or explain what you mean, then go on with the conversation. Often candidates spend too much time trying to think of a particular word. This disrupts the natural rhythm of the conversation and is not necessary.

F. DON'T WORRY ABOUT MAKING MISTAKES. If you are aware that you are making mistakes and would feel better if you correct them, go ahead and do so. People do this even in their first language. However, it is not necessary to correct mistakes. Remember that the assessor is looking at your ability to communicate in the second language. In some cases, making many corrections may decrease your efficiency by interrupting the flow of speech.

G. DON'T WORRY IF YOU GET LOST IN A LONG SENTENCE. Simply stop, collect your thoughts, and break down your explanation into shorter sentences.

H. ANSWER QUESTIONS AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE. You should avoid responding to questions in monosyllables. Whenever possible, you should expand your answers by giving details, explaining points or developing your thoughts, rather than answering the assessor's question with a simple "yes" or "no".

I. TELL THE ASSESSOR IF THE TOPIC IS SENSITIVE. If the question or role-play deals with an issue that is sensitive for personal or security reasons, you should not hesitate to inform the assessor. The assessor will then simply move on to another topic or choose another role-play at the same level of complexity.

J. MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE ROLE-PLAY. If you don't understand the assessor's explanation or the instructions on the card,

don't hesitate to ask for clarification. Do not embark on the role-play until you know exactly what role you are supposed to play.

K. JUST BE YOURSELF IN THE ROLE-PLAY. You don't have to be an actor. The assessor is not interested in your acting ability but in how well you can carry out specific language tasks when interacting in a real communication situation.

L. DON'T WORRY IF THE ROLE-PLAY SITUATION IS UNFAMILIAR. If the role-play is not exactly the kind of thing you have to do in your job, this should not affect your performance. Since the functions tested in the role-plays are universal language tasks, you should be able to interact in all role-plays at your level, whether you normally have to deal with these particular situations or not.

M. DON'T WORRY IF THE TEST SEEMS DIFFICULT. It is normal to feel that the test is difficult at some point. The assessor has to use more advanced questions and role-plays in order to give candidates the opportunity to reach their maximum level of proficiency. You cannot expect, therefore, to do the test without feeling, at some point, that it is demanding and that you are not performing as well as you would have liked to perform.

N. REMEMBER THAT THE TAPE-RECORDER IS ONLY USED TO PROVIDE A RECORD OF YOUR INTERVIEW. Do not pay attention to the tape-recorder. Just concentrate on talking to the assessor. It is the interaction between you and the assessor which counts.

Completing the Answer Booklet

There is one answer booklet for the three second language tests: Reading, Writing and Oral Interaction. Candidates for the Oral Interaction Test are only required to complete the personal information sheet which is the first page of the booklet. This page is common to all three tests and if a candidate is taking all three tests within a few days of each other, this page is filled out with the Reading and Writing tests. If a candidate is taking only the Oral Interaction Test, then this page is filled out at the end of the Oral

Interaction Test. In order to complete this page candidates will need to know their Social Insurance Number, their classification code and their department code. Examples of the classification code are:

Stenographer (ST-STN-02)
Clerk (CR-04)
Engineer (EN-ENG-01)
Personnel Officer (PE-03)

Examples of the department code are:

Statistics Canada - STC
National Defence - DND
Employment and Immigration - EIC
Environment - DOE

APPENDIX C
Spanish Oral Exam

Marking Scheme	Description
A⁺(100)	The student at this level has no difficulty understanding questions asked at a normal speed and can answer questions accurately without difficulty. The student can also give explanations and detailed descriptions, support an opinion or
A (95%)	give advice as well as narrate a sequence of events. The formal aspects of language, grammar, tone, intonation, pronunciation, are accurate and natural. The student at this level has no difficulty
A⁻ (90%)	communicating.
B⁺ (88%)	The student can perform most of the tasks expected of an A student but may not be able to do
B (84%)	as quickly or as accurately as an A student. There may also be minor problems in the rhythm of the speech, or in vocabulary and usage, but these do
B⁻ (80%)	not hinder communication.
C⁺(78%)	The student at this level may have difficulty understanding questions asked at normal speed and may ask for repetitions of the question. Answers may be factual, without further
C (74%)	development or explanation. The student can give simple instructions, descriptions of events or people. The student has difficulty expressing himself; intonation, vocabulary usage, grammar do
C⁻ (72%)	cause problems in communicating.
D⁺(68%)	The student at this level has considerable

D (64%)	<p>difficulty understanding questions at normal speed and requires repetitions of the question and time to figure them out. Answers tend to be simple, one or two words. The student can handle only the simplest of directions or descriptions. Communication is restricted to the basics of getting and giving information. Speech is hesitant, laboured; inaccuracies in intonation, vocabulary and forms strain comprehension without rendering it impossible.</p>
D ⁻ (62%)	<p>The student at this level has great difficulty understanding questions and is unable to answer them or gives inappropriate answers. This results in a severely restricted ability to state opinion, to give instructions or describe or narrate. Mechanical elements of language are so poorly used that communication is severely strained if not impossible.</p>
F ⁺ (50%)	
F (30%)	
F ⁻ (20%)	