The effect of Web-based French culture learning activities on learning French as a second language at the secondary level

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The effect of Web-based French culture learning activities on learning
French as a second language at the secondary level

by

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This is to certify that the master's thesis of

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has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
- Literature Related Specifically to Teaching Culture in Second Language Courses
- Literature Related Specifically to the Use of CALL in Second Language Courses
- Literature Related Both to Teaching Culture and the Use of CALL in Second Language Courses

## CHAPTER 3. THE STUDY
- The Subjects
- The Materials — The Textbook
- The Materials — The Website
- The Implementation
- The Test

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS
- The Data
- The Discussion

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

## APPENDIX A. TEST

## APPENDIX B. E-MAIL

## APPENDIX C. CONSENT FORMS

## REFERENCES
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

We have the world at our fingertips. At least it seems so in this modern age of computer technology and the World Wide Web. One of the most readily evident strengths of the Web is its ability to transport us virtually to far-away places where we can explore other cultures and other languages, and where we can communicate with real people who live those cultures and speak those languages. But although the Web can transport us there, can it assist us to actually do the communicating—in other words, can it help us obtain the language skills necessary to communicate in the language? And does the vast amount of information we find on the Web about another culture have any effect on our efforts to learn their language? Osuna and Meskill (1998) began to address these questions in their pilot study on integrating Spanish language and culture using the World Wide Web. Theirs was a qualitative study involving college students in a first-year Spanish class, asking primarily if learners' attitudes about learning a foreign language were affected by participating in webquest activities. The results, largely determined by student self-reporting, indicated that the students believed their Spanish had improved by doing Web-based culture activities designed by the instructor. Their questions, methods, and results served as a springboard for my thesis.

Specifically, I intended to measure the effect, if any, of exploring French culture via the World Wide Web on students' learning from their course textbook some of the vocabulary and grammatical structures needed to communicate ideas about print and broadcast media in French, particularly the content of television programming, radio programming, and newspaper articles. The eleven subjects in this study were four eighth-grade and five ninth-grade students in my French II class at Ames Christian School in Ames, Iowa. Using the foreign language
textbook *Fenêtres sur la France* (1976), they completed the publisher-provided activities contained in the text for the unit on the forms and use of the past tense. As this was the unit they were already scheduled to study at the time the I undertook the study, I simply designed the study around its linguistic and cultural content. Under my instruction, all the students were presented with the textbook’s explanations of past tense verb constructions and usage. They also completed the text exercises which consisted primarily of oral and written forms manipulation drills and oral and written responses to questions using the past tense forms along with vocabulary they had already learned in previous units. They then read the culture story in French which presented and utilized new vocabulary related to the French news media. The unit ended with written fill-in-the-blank exercises in which students supplied appropriate vocabulary from the story, another set of questions for the students to answer using the new vocabulary and the past tense verb forms, and a brief composition into which the students were expected to incorporate some of the new structures and vocabulary.

Through a random drawing of names literally from a hat, the subjects were divided into an experimental group of five students and a control group of four students. The experimental group was given additional treatment consisting of a Web-based package of French-language francophone culture input which I expanded from the topic in the textbook. I selected websites from three French-language newspapers, three French-language television channels, and an on-line French-language radio station. I chose websites that I was familiar with, which seemed to me to be representative of typical French-language media, and which I felt were easy enough in design for the students to navigate on their own. These websites are the same authentic sources that native speakers of French might log on to in order to gather information for their daily lives. I hyperlinked these websites to a homepage which I created specifically for the study. The students in
the experimental group were supplied with the URL, and, as all the students had access to computers and the internet at home, they connected to the homepage and its hyperlinked websites at their leisure over the course of about a week. They read on-line issues of the newspapers, listened to segments of the radio broadcasts, and explored shows that were being broadcast on French-language television.

The homepage also contained tasks activities that I designed utilizing some of the language items, primarily vocabulary, suggested by or expanded from the textbook unit and focusing on the cultural information contained therein. I deliberately chose items that the students would encounter both in their text as well as on the hyperlinked websites, although the daily changing content of the websites made the selection difficult. I had to limit the selection to words and phrases found in the parts of the websites that did not change from day to day, such as the newspaper table of contents or the TV guide section headings. The activities involved scanning on-line radio and television program guides and sections of newspapers and answering multiple-choice and short-answer questions. The radio and newspaper activities, five multiple-choice and six multiple-choice questions respectively, were completed on-line, with immediate feedback in the form of “correct” or “try again” messages or clickable “see correct answer” boxes available to the learners. The three television activities, all short-answer questions were completed on paper. The students then submitted in class a printout of the activity webpages with their selected and written responses to demonstrate that they had completed the activities.

The experimental group and the control group took the same teacher-designed unit test (Appendix A), which focused on the structure and use of past tense verb forms and on specific vocabulary from the textbook unit. Finally, the test results from both groups were compared.
Several key pedagogical concepts are important as background to this study: instructional design, objectivism, constructivism, and communicative theory. Instructional design is defined by Bostock (1996) as “a systematic approach to designing instruction and instructional materials to achieve specified learning outcomes.” Moallem’s (2001) definition is similar: “Instructional design is the systematic development of instructional specifications using learning and instructional theory to ensure the quality of instruction.” Designers of instructional systems and materials are guided by a philosophy of learning that is either objectivist or constructivist. Objectivism (also called instructivism) is the belief that there exists in any discipline a set of facts that students must learn, primarily through direct presentation by a teacher who has already defined specific course objectives derived from the facts. According to objectivist instructional design theorists such as Gagné (1985) and Dick and Carey (1990), certain components provide evidence that a given plan of instruction will be effective:

1. Desired learning outcomes are identified and objectives are determined.
2. Tasks, methods, and media that fit the objectives are selected.
3. Learners are motivated.
4. Formative and summative evaluation of the instruction is conducted.

Constructivism, by contrast, is the belief that learning occurs primarily as students explore and discover new information on their own, combine it with what they already know, and use it to solve the problems of their own world. In this way they construct their own truth. Jonassen’s (1997) “Constructive Learning Environment” model describes learning that is “active, constructive, collaborative,
intentional, complex, contextual, conversational, and reflective.” Learners are active participants in processing information they obtain through natural activities. They work together with others combining new and prior knowledge to find solutions to complex multi-faceted real-life problems. Rooted in constructivism, communicative theory is a meaning-based learner-centered approach to teaching and learning languages. It features a primary emphasis on the content of the language, with opportunity for learners to negotiate or work out in context the meaning of the language they are using. It employs authentic materials, language artifacts drawn from the culture and everyday life of native speakers of the target language with which learners can interact. Elements of language structure are taught implicitly (focus on form) as learners need them to communicate, rather than explicitly (focus on forms) as ends in themselves.

In the chapters that follow I will highlight and summarize the literature pertinent to this study. Then I will explain the procedure of the study, including the design, content, and implementation of the treatment materials, the selection of subjects, and the testing instrument. Next, I will discuss the results of the test and evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. Finally, I will conclude with some observations and implications from the study that may have bearing on future investigation into this topic.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

I prepared this review in order to lay some groundwork and provide some guidance by which to plan, carry out, and analyze my investigation. It is an attempt to gather, summarize, and classify the previous research and other literature related to my research question. In it I will describe the literature, focusing on both methodology and results of the research. Finally, I will note the key themes, both theoretical and pedagogical, that dominate the current discussion.

Literature Related Specifically to Teaching Culture in Second Language Courses

Overwhelmingly, the current literature regarding the teaching of culture in second language/foreign language learning resounds with a call for integration of culture as well as language skills.

Kramsch (1996), who has written extensively about, and is considered a spokesperson for, integration, asserts that culture and language are not independent areas of study. The language teacher is responsible for the teaching of culture as well, because it is through language that culture is “mediated, interpreted, and recorded” (p. 3). She laments that despite all our current “intercultural” and “multicultural” teaching, we are not truly integrating language and culture as they ought to be; that is, as they are in reality: “In practice, teachers teach language and culture, or culture in language, but not language as culture” (p. 6). In other words, instead of treating the culture components of the language as entities separate and distinct from the structural elements or as merely an added reinforcement or enrichment, classroom teachers need to view and teach culture as an integral feature of the language—as the context in which
the language is embedded. Such an integration, Kramsch believes, is needed if our students are to learn better both the language and the culture.

Despite agreeing with Kramsch on the mutual integrality of language and culture, Lessard-Clouston (1997) addresses the need also to teach culture explicitly in second/foreign language classes. If students are going to “master some skills in culturally appropriate communication and behavior in the target culture,” then, Lessard-Clouston insists, this instruction needs to be systematic, well-planned and developed, and it needs to include evaluation of the students’ culture learning. He also identifies several areas of research that are still needed in order to better understand the place of culture in second/foreign language education, including teacher and student perceptions of the importance of culture learning, content and materials design for cultural syllabi, and performance aspects of cultural competence.

An earlier pilot study by Evans and González (1993) investigated the integration of language skills and culture using authentic texts in a college Spanish class. According to the researchers, “this pedagogical device leads to a better, deeper, and more complete understanding of the texts and, through them, the culture they represent” (p. 39). They found that learners who completed tasks derived from authentic texts developed a good understanding of the cultural concept being taught (in this case, the importance of the network of family and friends in the Hispanic world) and increased their ability to predict the meaning of new vocabulary. The researchers claim that the students “realized that they could link reading skills to listening, speaking, and writing while gaining further cultural insights into the target culture affirming that language and culture are inseparable” (p. 47). Although primarily based on students’ attitudinal self-reports and the classroom teacher’s somewhat informal and non-independent assessment of student performance on activities, these results were nonetheless positive and
encouraging, causing the authors to challenge researchers to do more empirical studies on this topic.

This challenge was followed by another when the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the Twenty-first Century* (1999) were published. The product of a task force of American foreign language education professionals, the standards define performance goals for foreign language classrooms in the United States. The goals provide uniform guidance to state and local school officials and teachers as they choose their teaching materials and plan their lessons. These goals are categorized into five broad areas of foreign language learning: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Each goal is further subdivided into specific standards with sample progress indicators provided at specific grade levels. The intention is that curriculum designers and classroom teachers will weave throughout these goals the various curricular elements such as critical thinking skills, the language system and structure, communication strategies, and technology, in order for their students to meet the standards and thus achieve the goals.

Of particular interest to my study, the culture goal is intended to provide language learners with an understanding of the connections between the philosophical perspectives of a society, its practices, and its products. The goal is divided into two standards. The first states that “students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied” (p. 50). The focus is on the idea that a society’s patterns of behavior result from its philosophical perspectives and “represent the knowledge of ‘what to do when and where’” (p. 50). The specific patterns of behavior addressed in my study involved how, when, and where francophone people access their news and entertainment information. The second standard states that “students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products
and perspectives of the cultures studied" (p. 51). At issue here is how a society's products, tangible or intangible, “reflect the perspectives of that culture” (p. 51). In the case of my study, the products were French-language newspapers, television programming, and radio broadcasts. In conjunction with the rest of the goals and standards, the aim of the cultures goal is more appropriate and effective communication in the target language. My hope was that, by actually experiencing the francophone behavior via the Web with on-line French-language products, my students would increase their ability to read about and discuss French-language media in French.

In response to the new standards, although not directly in response to the provision calling for better integration of culture into language teaching, Wright (2000) measured the effect of a constructivist process- and learner-centered approach versus an instructionist information-acquisition approach on the acquisition of culture among students of German as a foreign language. His measurement tool was the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). A control group of learners was treated with a culture unit in the traditional and typical instructivist textbook style, meaning that a prescribed body of facts presented to the students was the core of the instruction, with reading the material being the main learning activity and assessment of learning focusing primarily on recall of the facts. An experimental group was given the same information in a constructivist manner, meaning that students used the factual information to address and solve real-world problems or dilemmas and were given opportunity to formulate and share their own reflections about the material in collaborative small groups as well as in the whole-class setting. They also journaled their discoveries in portfolios, which allowed them to make personal connections to the information and evaluate their own learning. In short, they were constructing their own meaning from the objective facts.
Wright’s hypothesis was that the students who received the constructivist treatment would “demonstrate a measurable and statistically significant change in cross-cultural adaptibility” (p. 333) compared with those who received the instructivist treatment. Analysis was made of the CCAI scores of the two groups of learners both before and after the treatment. The results were positive and encouraging for the use of process-oriented methods and materials. The experimental group showed statistically significant gains in the CCAI composite score with a mean increase of seven out of fifty points (a t-test p-value of 0.01), while the control group experienced a slight decline in the same composite score. The study suggests that a process-centered approach to teaching culture does a better job of helping learners internalize the aspects of culture they are learning than an information-acquisition approach does.

Inferences can be made from these results that the integration of culture into the teaching of language has a positive effect on the understanding and appreciation of the L2 culture, but because the experimental treatment was provided primarily in the L1, the impact that such integration may have on the learning of the L2 structure and forms was not addressed. This is where more studies are needed. On the basis of this study, Wright states the need for a change in current second language textbooks and in classroom culture-teaching methods and materials.

This need is echoed by Aski (2003), who surveyed seven college textbooks for teaching Italian as a foreign language at the elementary level. She looked at the types of learning activities the texts employed to teach elements of grammar, focusing on two specific grammar items as examples. The survey revealed that the majority of activities were instructivist forms-focused patterned drills. Only a small percentage truly provided students with communicative language practice. Aski concludes by suggesting that the disparity is not so much due to the textbook
publishers as it is due to the teachers of foreign languages who have not yet demanded change from the publishers. She proposes that such change will happen when "the views of instructors are modified in such a way that they understand and embrace the findings of [second language acquisition] research, and indicate a preference for materials that reflect these findings" (p. 63).

The pedagogical literature on integrating culture and language in the classroom includes many concrete suggestions for implementation. For example, Abrate (1993) uses the topics of food and cooking to demonstrate practical and, she believes, effective ideas for teaching language skills through a cultural experience. She offers her ideas on the basis of a belief that "proficiency in a language can never be acquired without a thorough grounding in the culture that speaks it" (p. 30). Citing a number of theorists, most notably Krashen and Terrell, Ballman (1996) presents a very detailed model for developing a series of lessons based on a cultural theme, such as food, clothing, or leisure activities. The lessons integrate vocabulary, grammar, and culture through a variety of communicative activities. The idea is that the vocabulary, grammar and cultural information to be included in the lessons should be derived from the theme and from the related tasks that the teacher has selected, making the vocabulary, grammar, and cultural information more relevant and meaningful for the student. However, neither of these papers is a research study, so fresh and innovative ideas such as Abrate's and Ballman's need to be tested.

**Literature Related Specifically to the Use of CALL in Second Language Courses**

CALL theory and research related to my investigation ranges from the very general to the very specific. McGrath (1998) cites testimonials from a number of classroom teachers of various subjects as support for her claims that,
among other things, utilizing computer technology increases student motivation and engagement, promotes collaboration and cooperation among students, results in deeper, more probing conversations, promotes a balance of power between the teacher and the student, fosters increased and improved oral and written communication in the language, provides increased opportunities for thematic, interdisciplinary explorations, and makes activities “feel” more real-world and relevant. Her evidence is strictly anecdotal, so it will be up to other researchers to substantiate her claims with empirical data. However, her findings indicate many recent exciting changes in foreign language classes and suggest that more will follow as CALL continues to be promoted as a viable means of integrating culture and language. Fidelman (1996) introduces language professionals to the potential of the World Wide Web for promoting the acquisition of both language and culture. She states,

Well-designed World Wide Web documents can provide visually rich, interactive, and instantaneous information to people all over the globe, especially important to sometimes linguistically-isolated professionals and students. Through this new medium many possibilities exist for offering links to people and ideas of other cultures (p. 26).

Barnwell (1998) calls the World Wide Web “a gateway to the virtual foreign world where real people are using real language in real context.” He notes it is a rich source of authentic materials, both text and realia, and he argues that those with even the most rudimentary foreign language knowledge can participate in and benefit from activities based on it.

Providing more theoretical background, support and guidance for implementing CALL-based instruction, Salaberry (1996) is somewhat cautious about the excitement over potential CALL benefits. He calls for “principle-guided
decisions in the pedagogical use of technological tools" (p. 8). He contrasts the two most archetypical applications of computer technology in second language learning: the behavioristic Programmed learning approach and the Communicative CALL approach. Of the two, Salaberry says that Communicative CALL has stronger theory to support its development, though he is also careful to remind us that not all of that theory is universally accepted in the second language learning field, and that we still lack sufficient empirical studies to evaluate the benefits of CALL programs. Next, Salaberry examines Intelligent CALL (ICALL) and Advanced Language Systems (ALS) as potential advances in computer-based language instruction. ICALL refers to language learning programs using artificial intelligence technology that are capable of conversing with learners, interacting with language input through responses appropriate to the individual learner, and functioning as a private language tutor. ALS involves learners interacting with computer-based multimedia and hypermedia programs that expose them to authentic L2 culture and language. Again, he urges developers and researchers to be sure that acceptance of these technologies is driven by sound second-language acquisition theory. He encourages the use of computers in second language acquisition for those purposes that computers fulfill best; namely, data collecting, storage, and sorting. He reminds us of the foundational principle that the pedagogical objective of a learning task should guide the actual implementation of the task. Thus he arrives at the concept of Computer Mediated Communication, including Computer Assisted Instruction, internet, e-mail, messageboards, and the like, which he describes as more pragmatic and providing more learner-centered interactivity than CALL. He calls for more attention to be paid to principles of sound instructional design and second language application theory to guide classroom implementation of computer-based instruction, instead of letting the technical features of the tool determine
the learning objectives.

Salaberry’s concerns are echoed by others who study, develop, and evaluate CALL applications. Cunningham (1995) provides a useful checklist of criteria for designing, selecting, or assessing CALLware. He notes the promising trend in current materials away from behavioristic “drill and kill” toward simulations, discussion, writing, activity stimulus, storage bank, and open-ended interaction. Still he, too, cautions that the kinds of applications that computers perform best are not always the best for language learners because they generally lack much communicative content. Like Salaberry, Gillespie and McKee (1999) call for more planning and design in the implementation of CALL into language teaching. They claim that CALL is, to date, still an adjunct to current pedagogical structures, and that it needs to be more integrated into curricula to take advantage of its potential. However, there needs to be more consensus among practitioners about how to integrate it. Making his case for what he terms “Pragmatic CALL”—CALL that is appropriate to the language learning task, simple and cost-effective, and which recognizes the still-salient role of the teacher—Fox (1997) contends that such CALL needs two things: “content-rich materials” such as those found on CD-ROM data storehouses and on the Web and “support for the learning experience.” He identifies the key to these elements as being a pedagogical framework of good instructional design.

Besides the Web being a source of cultural information and language input, the other aspects of CALL that most relate to my research are its potential for providing interactive and communicative activities and its capacity for learner-centered instruction. Rüschoff (1993) strongly advocates all of these aspects, especially arguing that learners need not just to be exposed to language input through technology, but also to have opportunity to experiment with the technology, to interact with it, and to manipulate and exercise control over the
input materials in order to develop competence. Borsook and Higginbotham-Wheat (1991) offer another view of learner control when they address the importance of incorporating into appropriate applications and activities a good measure of interactivity in order to achieve a closer approximation of human-human communication in CALL (note that this advice pre-dated the internet and the World Wide Web). They identify the traits of interactivity and provide a list of key ingredients that can combine to create different amounts and kinds of interactivity. They maintain that interactivity does not necessarily imply a high degree of learner control, and in fact, demonstrate through the results of four studies (Lahey, 1978; Gray, 1977; Ross and Morrison, 1988; Higginbotham-Wheat, 1990) that high levels of learner control, regardless of the learning experience or device, produce disappointing results. Instead, they advocate a balance where the learner and the CALLware each at times have control of the learning experience, producing optimal interactivity. Finally, they detail two specific kinds of high-interactivity instructional systems—adaptive instruction and simulations—in which the computer can function both as a tutor and as a communicative audience. Thus the learner has enough freedom to explore, experiment, and interact, yet the computer provides guidance and support along the way.

Finally, one of the more applicable studies that has been conducted on the kind of CALL I intend to implement in my study was that done by Liu and Reed (1995). They conducted an ambitious quantitative study “to determine if a hypermedia assisted learning environment can reduce learners’ anxiety and improve their attitudes, and whether language proficiency and learners’ learning styles have an impact on learning via hypermedia-based instruction” (p. 162). Such an environment is made possible by technology that links together in a non-linear fashion multimedia items connected to a central concept. Learners explore
this network of text, still and animated graphics, and sound files within the framework of their own need to create meaning out of the language presented. In this case, the context was a classic American movie, *Citizen Kane*. The focus of the lesson was vocabulary. The multimedia included video clips from the movie based on the novel and text from the script. Parts of the text could be highlighted by the learner to display more detail about the vocabulary such as definitions and usage examples.

The overall question was broken down into five research questions, each tested and analyzed in a fairly large (63 participants) study. Specifically, the questions were:

1. What is the effect of hypermedia-assisted-instruction on vocabulary learning?
2. Does language proficiency affect vocabulary learning in a hypermedia environment?
3. What is the effect of individuals’ learning styles on vocabulary learning in a hypermedia environment?
4. What is the effect of hypermedia-assisted-instruction on improving attitudes toward computers and lowering computer anxiety?
5. What is the relationship among learning styles, computer anxiety, attitudes toward computers, and vocabulary learning?

The results revealed several findings, including:

1. Hypermedia is effective, at least in improving the vocabulary skills of the participants. The data showed significant gains in learners’ vocabulary understanding, in their ability to use the vocabulary appropriately in other contexts, and in later retention.
2. Computer anxiety was lowered and learners’ positive attitudes towards computer-based instruction improved after using hypermedia-based learning software. The data indicated that learners’ performances on the vocabulary test were significantly related to their attitudes toward computers and their levels of computer anxiety.
3. Learners’ individual learning styles, measured for field-dependence or field-independence by Oltman, Raskin, and Witkin’s *Group Embedded Figures Test* (1971), did not seem to make a difference in their achievement with the hypermedia-based instruction. While each group made significant gains after treatment, the amounts of their gains were about the same.

Liu and Reed give several reasons to explain hypermedia’s role in the participants’ language learning success. First, because hypermedia’s strength is in making connections between ideas, theoretically, it should allow learners the opportunity to process information at deeper levels and to retain it longer. Second, hypermedia is capable of producing practice in a variety of communicative skills—reading, writing, listening—in a close to authentic situation, making learning more natural. Finally, linguistic items can be linked to other related linguistic and cultural context, allowing the learner to be flooded with information that makes the items more meaningful.

Once again, the issue of modified learner control as one of the important factors in CALL-based instruction is evident in this study. As the researchers describe, “learners had the ultimate control of the courseware as to what to see and how to see them, yet advice was given at various critical stages to provide guidance” (p. 172).

To be fair in discussing Liu and Reed’s conclusions, it should be noted, as Salaberry (1996) points out, that their study contained no control group, leaving open the possibility that other factors contributed to their results. Specifically, he remarks that since none of the subjects was isolated from the computer-based materials, mere exposure to those materials could account for gains made by the subjects.
Literature Related Both to Teaching Culture and the Use of CALL in Second Language Courses

Several themes keep showing up in the culture-related and the CALL-related literature, specifically 1) the foundation of communicative theory that both share, 2) the dependence upon authentic materials and tasks in order to integrate culture and language, and 3) CALL's ability to provide such materials and tasks. Also emphasized is the need for both CALL and culture integration to be implemented according to good principles of instructional design.

All of these issues come together in the small but growing body of literature currently available that looks at the integration of culture into language learning via CALL, especially via the World Wide Web. Most of this literature is descriptive, reporting the results of qualitative studies conducted by classroom practitioners.

One of these studies made use of a technology similar to the Web, but actually more authentic to the target language culture than the Web. Abrate (1996) describes the unit she created based on the French Minitel system, the French precursor to, and still common substitute for, the internet. This system involves the use of small computers provided to French citizens by their telephone company. The users can access public information for very little access cost. Minitel doesn't feature a lot of technological bells and whistles, being a text-only format, but it is surprisingly popular and adequately functional in France where internet access can be limited because of cost. It can be accessed abroad via the Web. For the purposes of Abrate's students, Minitel provided not only authentic text in the target language, but also manipulation of the information almost precisely as the French themselves would do it. Authentic tasks included taking a sample Bac test (a high school graduation exam, similar to an SAT or ACT), obtaining personal Minitel accounts, and finding a hotel and restaurant in a
French city and making appropriate reservations. Abrate sums up the project: “Minitel’s structure allows students to utilize the language to interact with services” (p. 708) that are provided to all French citizens by the French government or other public institutions. Her students comment: “It forced you to interact with the French way of life,” (p. 708) and “I appreciate the fact that this class isn’t taught with an American slant to it—it doesn’t emphasize tourist-like ideas . . .” (p. 708). Obviously, these students were learning “real” French.

An ambitious project, the Segovia Virtual Study Abroad Program, was recently designed by Pertusa-Seva and Stewart (2000). This actually involved one group of students traveling to and living in the target language culture while sharing their experiences with another group of learners who remained at home. Their method of contact was via a website and e-mail. On the website, the travelers posted a journal, a photo album, and a variety of cultural information about the places they visited and their experiences. The students who stayed behind completed written and discussion assignments based on the contents of the website. The main authentic tasks for both those who posted on the website and those who responded to what was posted was writing in the target language for an authentic audience besides the teacher. According to the researchers, both groups benefited from the project, although some students reported a need for more opportunity to negotiate meaning with each other. A bonus outcome of the project was the number of stay-behind students who were encouraged to travel to the target language country in the future.

More researchers and practitioners who echo the excitement for the potential of CALL, specifically the Web, to be a source of authentic materials that draw on the L2 culture also reiterate the emphasis on employing sound instructional design of tasks connected to the learners’ exploration of those materials. Grandjean-Levy (1997) states, “The purpose of any technology I offer
in my courses is primarily to expand the student’s use of the language” (p. 826). She explains that this goal is achieved through careful activity design, in her case, the pre-selection of websites pertinent to the cultural topic, the packaging of those websites into a homepage, and the development of specific communicative tasks for the students to accomplish. To illustrate, she includes a sample webquest activity based on her homepage, *Page de l’Hexagone* (1995). This homepage is essentially a meta-list of 138 French-related websites including those owned by French government agencies (national, regional, and local), the French national library, the French postal service, French museums, francophone media (television, radio, and newspaper), French manufacturing firms. Also listed are francophone search engines, francophone literature available on-line, francophone message boards and list-servers, and even a site where lycée students can take a practice version of the French Bac exam. Most of the sites listed on the homepage were created by native French speakers primarily for an audience of native French speakers, providing learners of French plenty of authentic material to use as a basis for communication. Merely providing the resource sites for her students, however, did not make them any more willing practice their L2 skills in order to use the information they contained than if that information had been provided via older technology (i.e., books). Grandjean-Levy found that designing tasks which required the students to use the sites the way native French speakers would—for example, checking the weather forecast, planning a week of leisure activities, or finding a good recipe—resulted in greater eagerness to practice previously-learned skills and gain new ones.

Kost (1999) notes that “many teachers still do not know exactly how to integrate the World Wide Web efficiently and effectively into their curriculum” (p. 309). She insists on the need to “embed the Web activity in a structural context” (p. 312). In other words, because the volume of material available on the
Web can easily distract students, teachers need to design communicative activities structured in a way that keeps them on task and focused on the topic of discussion. She also insists that pre- and follow-up activities help to maintain this focus. Finally, she reminds us that authentic L2 materials available on the Web are additionally a good source of language content for developing learners’ proficiency with discrete vocabulary and points of grammar contextualized in those materials.

Spodark (2000a, 2000b) recently developed two similar units of study integrating culture into language via the Web. One was based on the French money system. Using good instructional design principles, she chose the websites and activities ahead of time so the students were guided and wouldn’t get sidetracked and lost. She included enough variety and breadth into the activities to maintain learner interest. Authentic tasks making use of language skills included money exchange and denomination conversions, on-line shopping from target language department store Web-based catalogs, and choosing a target language bank from on-line advertisements and opening a simulated account. The other unit of study took advantage of the students’ interest in Christmas holiday customs. She and the students all found the Web materials about French Christmas customs to be rich sources of contextualized vocabulary, grammar, spelling, reading, and even pronunciation practice. Authentic tasks requiring students to use French in the same ways that native speakers would use it included collaborative writing in the creation and sending of an e-Christmas card from a target language on-line service, singing Christmas carols, and writing letters to Père Noël with personalized e-mail responses received in return. Spodark (2000a) admonishes:
We foreign language teachers need to create new ways to take advantage of these innovations to guide our students in developing and using their language skills and in fostering cultural understanding. . . . We need to integrate the technology available in the multimedia classroom into lessons that excite all our students and inspire them to want to communicate in French and explore the Francophone world (p. 127).

Finally, coming full circle in the on-going dialogue about the place of culture and the place of CALL in language learning, Walz (1998) and Gonglewski (1999) both bring us back to the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the Twenty-first Century (1999). Walz (1998) provides numerous examples of how the use of the World Wide Web helps the standards to be met. He calls the Web the “single best source for authentic documents” (p. 104), which help meet the standards by being cultural products of the target language—created by and for native speakers. He then discusses the need for teachers to design appropriate tasks in order for students to achieve linguistic skill according to the standards. Gonglewski (1999) demonstrates standard-by-standard how use of the Web provides plentiful opportunities for teachers to design lessons that meet the standards. She notes the importance of good task design and task-driven activities in applying the resources of the Web to language learning. Stating that “language in use is, to a large extent, culture” (p. 358), she makes the connection between authentic materials and L2 culture, pointing out that incorporating into our teaching the authentic materials available on the Web “imparts authentic cultural input” (p. 355). Then she concludes with this challenge:

If it is our true aim to achieve the foreign language learning standards, then incorporation of Internet resources into foreign language courses is not just an intriguing concept — it is a necessity (p. 360).
CHAPTER 3: THE STUDY

A perusal of the catalogs from the publishers of secondary school textbooks for learning second languages reveals a new trend. Many publishers are now offering on-line Web components to their foreign language texts. A quick check of some of the more well-known and well-patronized companies shows that some of these components have only been copyrighted within the last five years (Table 1).

Driven by communicative language learning theory and the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the Twenty-first Century (1999), the demand for new teaching materials, coupled with the exciting availability of Web-based materials that lend themselves to communicative teaching methods and the ubiquitousness of Web access, has created a bandwagon effect among textbook publishers. Nobody wants to be left behind in the development of new L2 curricula that take advantage of Web technology. But in the rush to get on board the Web-based bandwagon, what hard evidence do we have that Web-based learning is an effective way for students to learn a second language?

A few considerations need to be made at this point:

1. Textbooks used in schools, especially K-12 schools, are rarely the most current. Budget constraints often require that textbook selections be made in 5-year cycles, or even longer. Responses to a questionnaire (Appendix B) that I e-mailed to all Iowa high school French teachers showed several schools using textbooks that are not the most current offerings from the publishers (Table 2). So not all schools may have access to the publisher-designed Web-based activities that accompany the newest curricula.

2. The same survey also demonstrated that even when the most current texts are purchased, some schools either do not purchase the accompanying Web-based materials, or the teacher chooses not to make use of all or part of them.
Table 1. Major Publishers of French L2 Textbooks with On-line Web Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Textbooks</th>
<th>Website URL</th>
<th>Website Copyright</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Bon Voyage</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holt Rinehart</td>
<td><em>Allez, Viens!</em></td>
<td><a href="http://go.hrw.com">http://go.hrw.com</a></td>
<td>no date listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winston</td>
<td><em>En Avant!</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>En Route!</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. French L2 Textbooks Currently Used by Somea Iowa School Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Copyrightb</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Web-based Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Clear Lake</td>
<td>Yes, but not fully used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Indianola</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Jefferson-Scrantan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Johnston</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>North Scott</td>
<td>Teacher wasn’t certain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Vinton-Shellsburg</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allez, viens!</em></td>
<td>1996, 2003</td>
<td>Waverly-Shell Rock</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bienvenue</em></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Marion</td>
<td>Yes, but not often used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bon Voyage</em></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Ankeny</td>
<td>Yes, but not used by teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bon Voyage</em></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Cedar Rapids</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bon Voyage</em></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Davenport</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bon Voyage</em></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Discovering French</em></td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Carroll</td>
<td>Some websites suggested in Teacher’s Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Discovering French</em></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>TPR Storytelling</em></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Newton</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a All Iowa school districts offering French were sent a short questionnaire by e-mail (Appendix B). Sixteen schools responded.

b most recent copyright dates: Glencoe, 2002; HRW, 2003; McDougal Littell, 1998 for student editions
3. Teachers like myself who use older textbooks may design their own Web-based activities to accompany the texts they have. The degree to which these activities are communicative, and the amount of L2 culture content they incorporate can vary widely.

4. Not all Web-based activities, even those designed by the major publishers, are communicative. Some are just on-line versions of traditional paper-based pattern drills, which certainly have their place in the L2 world, but don’t necessarily make use of authentic materials or provide students with opportunity to practice with authentic language.

With these considerations in mind, along with Osuna and Meskill’s (1998) previous study demonstrating that students of Spanish as a foreign language believed their Spanish had improved by completing teacher-designed Web-based culture activities, I decided to test a group of Web activities that I designed around the cultural information contained in a teaching unit of the French textbook I use. I was looking for evidence that the use of such activities would help students studying French learn the grammatical concepts presented in their textbook. In particular, I wanted to determine whether students in an experimental group who used Web-based culture activities as part of their French curriculum achieved higher scores on their unit grammar and vocabulary test compared to students in a control group who did not use the Web-based activities.

The Subjects

The subjects for this study were eighth and ninth grade students in my French II class attending a small private Christian school located in a mid-sized (population 50,000) midwest community. There are 80 students enrolled in the school in grades K-12. Grades K-8 have existed since the school began in 1992. The high school grades, along with the foreign language program for grades 7-12 were added just last year. The school charges tuition, though it is among the
lowest-priced private Christian schools in the state. Some of the students are on scholarship assistance either due to financial need, because a parent is in full-time Christian ministry, or because it is part of the salary package of a parent on staff. Presently I and one other teacher are the core faculty in the secondary grades. Most of the courses are multi-grade, though the plan is eventually to split out the grades as the student body and faculty increase in number. Music, art, and physical education are taught by part-time staff. Academic courses in the secondary grades, including French, meet every school day for 40-minute class periods. French I and II are elective courses.

All eleven students enrolled in my French II class were invited to participate in the study. Nine elected to do so – six girls and three boys. They varied in grade level from grades 8-12, and in age from 13-17 years old. At the time of the study they had already completed two months of work in the course. Five of the nine students I randomly chose to be the experimental group by literally drawing names out of a hat. The remaining four made up the control group. All were in my French I class the year before, so they were very familiar with my teaching style and expectations, and I was familiar with their previous academic performance. Because I was also their Computer Applications teacher, I knew that each of the subjects was familiar with internet usage and accessing the Web, and they all had computers at home in addition to Web access at school.

The experimental group consisted of four females and one male. Two of the students were in the 8th grade, two were in the 9th grade, and one was in the 12th grade. The control group consisted of two females and two males. Two of the students were in the 8th grade, and two were in the 9th grade.

Though each group was selected randomly, they both contained students who struggle with learning the language and students for whom language learning comes more easily. One student in the control group is extremely adept at
memorizing and verbal skills in general, and another is consistently a straight-A student. The academic performance of the other students in the group was less outstanding. One student in the experimental group as a child lived for a few years in the Ivory Coast where French was the government language. Most of that time however was spent in English-language settings, most notably in an English-language school for missionary children. The student had only passing contact with spoken French and even less contact with written French. The other students in the experimental group routinely earned A's and B's, with a few scattered C's in their coursework.

In my opinion the two groups were as fairly similar as could be expected in such a small sample.

**The Materials — The Textbook**

As a youngster, I learned French through decidedly instructivist methodology (primarily grammar-translation). As a college student, I was trained in the use of various instructivist methodologies for teaching French. After teaching French in grades 7-12 for twenty-three years, I am hesitant to abandon materials and techniques that I have found to be "tried and true" and jump headlong into new philosophies and ways of teaching with which until recently I had been unfamiliar and about which I am still uncertain.

As evidence of my pragmatic reluctance to change, I use an extremely outdated textbook. Since I began teaching French, *Fenêtres sur la France*, written by Yvone Lenard (1976) and published by Harper and Row, has been, along with the other titles in the series, my deliberate choice for a curriculum. Lenard developed what she called the Verbal-Active Method which contains a significant amount of the audio-lingual pattern drill popular from the 1950s through the 1970s. Although I do not always use the textbook exactly as prescribed, I continue using it because
I prefer its scope and sequence, particularly in regard to the teaching of verbs, over all other textbooks I have examined. Having been written in the 1970s, it obviously lacks the kinds of technology components available in the newest curricula. It also conspicuously treats L2 culture as a separate aspect of language learning, relegating information about the people and places of the Francophone world to short stories or vignettes at the end of a chapter or photo essays at the end of a unit. This practice was and still is common and problematic for teachers wanting to employ more communicative methods and materials. Gaspar (1998) laments that even still “the isolated cultural segments inserted here and there—largely in the form of ‘asides’ or ‘boxes’—prove that the incorporation of cultural elements literally resides in the margins of some textbooks” (p. 71).

Yet it is this very out-datedness of the textbook that made this study so intriguing. I am willing to explore the viability of communicative theory through a conservative approach of gradually incorporating communicative activities where they seem relevant to the textbook concepts, while I continue to employ Lenard’s curriculum. Since it has no inherent connection to 21st century Web technology and its main emphasis is on the structural elements of French with very little integration of francophone culture, this text seemed ideal to use as the backdrop in determining the effect of Web-based communicative activities involving L2 culture on learning the language concepts presented in the curriculum.

The Curriculum Content

Unit 2 of the textbook provided the curriculum content for the study. The grammar contained in the unit includes the passé composé (present perfect) of -IR and -RE verbs, the imparfait (imperfect) of “state of mind” verbs, agreement of past participles with preceding direct objects, the use of être (to be) as the auxiliary in the passé composé of verbs of movement, and a review of the use of the
impersonal 3rd person subject pronoun on. The students had previously learned the imparfait of être and avoir (to have), and the passé composé of -ER verbs and a few irregular past participles in Unit 1. Lexical items included in Unit 2 consist of a significant number of new verbs, as well as a dozen or so other words employed in the “culture” story near the end of the unit. The “culture” story near the end of the unit deals with the topic of the French news media. It incorporates nine examples of the new verb forms and two instances of the use of on, although the explanations, the twelve oral exercises and the ten written exercises in the first eleven pages of the unit have no apparent connection to the cultural information in the story. They make use of vocabulary from previous units to provide examples of and practice with the new grammar forms. The last four pages of the unit contain four brief exercises involving vocabulary from the story, questions about the story, or rewriting parts of the story in the past tense. The unit wraps up with a set of three composition questions expanded from the story. The student is expected to choose one to write about in the target language.

The Culture

The focus of the “culture” story in Unit 2 is the French news media, particularly the radio news on Radio France. The story is a make-believe newscast which blends serious news items such as a presidential visit, a miners’ strike, and the weather report with such humor as tourists traveling to the moon, James Bond being arrested for espionage, and an improbable 6-legged calf. The humor includes a good dose of stereotyping—American tourists who live for nothing but buying souvenirs, French tourists who live for nothing but a gourmet meal, and an uneducated peasant farmer who has difficulty with simple arithmetic. In my opinion, the stereotyping compromises the quality of the cultural information because the text presents a blend of accurate and inaccurate
attitudes and practices from both cultures without distinguishing for the student those that are intended to serve as humor.

I decided to select authentic examples of French media as the Web-based culture to integrate into the grammar of Unit 2. I incorporated websites and activities dealing with radio, television, and newspaper so that the students in the experimental group got a legitimate experience with the French news media.

**The Materials — The Website**

I started with a homepage (Figure 1) titled *Activités de l'internet en français* (2003) that I built on a Macintosh with an editor, Claris HomePage 3.0 (1998). In addition to the project title at the top of the page and my personal contact information in the fine print at the bottom of the page, I created three links: one to the newspaper portion of the website, one to the radio portion, and one to the television portion. To provide some design interest and help students make a visual connection to the meaning of the text on the page, I also added a few simple graphics obtained at no charge and with permission from CoolCLIPS.com (1999) and one graphic that was included as part of the Claris HomePage 3.0 package. The subsequent pages were arranged in frames in order to allow for a navigation bar along with an area for the culture websites to load and an area for the activities to be displayed (Figure 2).

At an after school meeting, the students in the experimental group were given the website address (the universal resource link, or URL) and about a week to access the site and complete the activities at home. Altogether, the activities took the students about one to two hours to complete, although students who wished to browse the site and its links in more depth were free to do so at their leisure. The students in the control group were not supplied with the website URL, and the students in the experimental group were specifically asked not to share it
Activités de l'internet en français

Activité du journal

Activité de la radio

Activités de la télévision

This website belongs to
Jennifer Anderson
calsun@tdsi.net
Last updated 10/25/03

Graphics used by permission from CoolCLIPS.com and Claris Home Page

Figure 1. Screenshot of website homepage Activités de l'internet en français. (2003)
Activité de la radio

Click on the link below to access the CityRadio de Paris version of Radio-France. (You will need Media Player installed on your computer.) The program will begin streaming immediately for your listening pleasure. Click on "Programmes" for a schedule. Remember that Paris is seven hours ahead of Central Time.

CityRadio de Paris

Questions

Home

Figure 2. Sample task page showing link navigation bar and window for display of culture websites and activities. Screenshot from website Activités de l'internet en français. (2003)
with them. I knew that I could trust them not share it, though with subjects less personally familiar to me, I probably would have incorporated a prevention into the design of the study.

The Links

For the Newspaper section I installed links to three French language newspapers: *Le Monde* (2003), *Le Figaro* (2003), and *Le Soleil* (2003). The television section had links to France 2 (no date) and France 3 (no date) as well as TV5 (no date) from Canada. With the right plug-in, the students could watch streaming video from TV5’s broadcast. The radio portion had a link to *La CityRadio de Paris* (2003). Clicking the link opened the CityRadio website as well as a live broadcast for those who have a plug-in such as RealPlayer or MediaPlayer installed. I asked the students to let me know if they did not have the plug-ins so that I could give them instructions on downloading them. However, they all reported success in accessing the video and audio broadcasts.

Each of the pages in the three sections included brief instructions for the students about accessing the links. Those on the newspaper page were written in French with vocabulary and grammar I knew my students could understand. The others were written in English because they were more complex. Since the students were accessing the links by themselves at home, I didn’t want them to be overwhelmed with instructions I knew they might not fully comprehend. My intent was for the experiment to focus on the content of authentic materials, not on the technical instructions for accessing them. Each page also contained links to the activities and a link back to the home page.

The Tasks

None of the five tasks were very lengthy or overly challenging to the
students. The point was not to add to the burden of coursework already imposed on them by the curriculum. The point was to provide to the students a tool with which they could connect grammar and vocabulary to real life and thus make the grammar and vocabulary easier to comprehend and internalize.

The newspaper task (Figure 3) asked the students to browse the on-line versions of three major French-language newspapers and answer six multiple choice questions about locating information in the sections of a newspaper. The information was the kind that anybody authentically browsing a newspaper might be looking for: current events, a job, a house for sale or apartment for rent, how to subscribe to the paper, the stock market report, and even the crossword puzzle. The students would not have to navigate very far into the links for these sections to find out what information each one contains, but human curiosity being what it is, the hope was that the students would venture further into the sites than the task required them to do. The newspaper questions were provided in English for the simple reason that asking them in French would have necessitated giving away the answers. For example: "Dans quelle section du journal est-ce qu'on cherche si on a besoin d'un emploi?" ("In what part of the newspaper do you look if you need a job?") Of the choices, "bourse," "météo," and "emploi," the correct response, "emploi," is too obviously "employment" to require the student to search for it.

The students could have completed the task without actually visiting the newspaper website links if they were already familiar with the vocabulary or if they used a French/English dictionary. However, I planned for that possibility in several ways. First, I specifically designed the task page listing the newspaper links above the questions link. I was counting on the students being creatures of habit and opening the links in order. Next, I created the newspaper links to open in a separate window, allowing both the newspapers and the questions to be
Le Journal

Correct on first try

Answer the questions below.

1. Which section of the newspaper seems to contain the most current events?

2. Where would you look to subscribe to the newspaper?

3. Where would you look if you needed a job?

4. What part of the newspaper would be helpful if you needed a place to live?

5. Where might you look to find the crossword or other puzzles?

6. Where would you find stock market and investment information?

Figure 3. Newspaper task questions. Screenshot from website *Activités de l'internet en français*. (2003)
available simultaneously to the student. Finally, I know my students well enough to trust that they will follow the directions I give them. I could have constructed questions requiring the students to do more with the actual content of the articles, such as describing objects, explaining events, or providing their own opinions, but since the content of the articles changes on a daily basis, the questions would have necessarily been broad and vague. At their current level of language ability, I believe the students would have been confused and frustrated by the task. In addition, I had already included short-answer questions elsewhere in the project, and I wanted to ensure that there was variety in the activities.

I created the newspaper task page using a template supplied by permission of Doug Mills from the University of Illinois, Urbana. It used drop-down menus for the students to select their answers. It also included hidden fields with messages to tell the students immediately if their answers were correct or not. For motivation to make well-informed answers another field on the page calculated how many questions were answered correctly on the first attempt. One of the responses caused me some technical difficulty after I had uploaded the page. For some reason Internet Explorer did not like the acute accent mark on the word “actualités” (“current events”). Although it was the correct response, the students would be told upon selecting it to try again. It worked fine in the editor, but not in the browser. I “cheated” a bit by removing the accent mark, and then it worked. This small technical challenge may be just a browser version problem, or it may be a slight incompatibility between the browser and the Macintosh computer I used to create the website. It’s a small problem, but it should be addressed in the future.

The radio task (Figure 4) asked the students to browse the website of La CityRadio de Paris, especially the link to the daily programming schedule. An added treat for the students was the automatic launch of the live broadcast, which
Les programmes de la radio

1. A quelle heure est-ce qu'on peut écouter les infos?
   - A. 17:00
   - B. 03:15
   - C. 12:46
   - D. 06:10

2. A quelle heure est-ce qu'on peut écouter la circulation?
   - A. 5:40
   - B. 10:58
   - C. 13:00
   - D. 11:16

3. A quelle heure est-ce qu'on peut écouter un jeu?
   - A. 05:21
   - B. 08:15
   - C. 23:05
   - D. 15:46

4. A quelle heure est-ce qu'on peut écouter la météo?
   - A. 08:24
   - B. 17:45
   - C. 19:12
   - D. 14:46

5. A quelle heure est-ce qu'on peut écouter la musique?
   - A. 16:31
   - B. 03:18
   - C. 09:00
   - D. 12:15

Figure 4. Radio task questions. Screenshot from website Activités de l'internet en français. (2003)
was available all day everyday.

There were five multiple choice questions asking about the programming schedule and what time certain types of programs could be heard. The questions were written in French, and the times were given in the 24-hour system, just as Francophones would be accustomed to using. The students selected their answers by clicking a radio button. Hidden fields beside each answer could then be clicked in order to see the correct answer for comparison and immediate feedback. This particular exercise did not include a mechanism for the students or myself to track the number of wrong attempts. It could be added by someone who has more HTML code writing background than I do, and it would provide a check against students possibly taking wild guesses at the responses.

The TV page offered three French-language television channel websites for the students to browse, then presented three activities (Figure 5). The first activity asked the students to compare the schedule of French shows to American TV schedules and to suggest what might be a possible cause of the evident differences. The second activity asked the students to simply make a list of shows they recognized. And the third task engaged the students in a simulation where they were given the opportunity to create their own personal television viewing schedule for a week using the on-line TV guide accessed through the websites and selecting the same shows that people all over the Francophone world watch.

The questions on this page were written in French, and I took advantage of the opportunity in the simulation description to model for my students a number of past tense constructions which they had just studied from their textbooks. Because I did not install a CGI program in this website, which would have allowed the students to submit their answers to the free response questions on-line, I directed them to answer these questions on a separate piece of paper. Had I included a CGI program, I would have created a text field on the activity page for
Activité n° 1

Remarquez les heures des programmes. Sont-ils les mêmes qu'aux États-Unis? Qu'est-ce qu'il y a de différent? Pouvez-vous deviner pourquoi?

Formulez vos réponses sur un morceau de papier.

Activité n° 2

Sur votre papier faites une liste de programmes que vous reconnaissez.

Activité n° 3

Parce que vous êtes un élève formidable et vous avez complété tous vos devoirs, vos parents ont décidé de vous donner plus de liberté. Vous pouvez regarder la télévision pour deux heures chaque jour cette semaine. Quels programmes allez-vous choisir? Faites une liste composée d'une variété de programmes: des nouvelles, une comédie, un drame sérial, quelque chose pour les enfants, la culture (la musique, l'art, la danse ou la théâtre), et les sports. Mettez le nom du programme, le jour, l'heure, et la chaîne.

Figure 5. Television task questions. Screenshot from website Activités de l'internet en français. (2003)
them to use.

The first goal of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the Twenty-first Century* (1999) "focuses on language use and communicative competence" (p. 205) and describes the three modes of language communication: interpersonal (two-way communication via conversation or written exchange), interpretive (understanding what one hears or reads), and presentational (expressing one's ideas in speech or writing). The interpretive communication standard for French calls for students to "understand and interpret spoken and written French on a variety of topics" (p. 208). To facilitate meeting the standard, teachers are encouraged to provide students with access to and opportunity for practice with a wide variety of authentic francophone materials, including magazines and newspapers, video and audio recordings, music, and internet documents, as I did.

Scanning a newspaper, listening to radio programming, checking a television guide, these are all ways in which people in a modern culture interact with language. And in the process of doing so, they mentally manipulate the elements of the language to create meaning and communicate with others in the context of their culture. Thus, the Web-based activities that I created provided my students with several opportunities for communicative practice as called for in the standards.

**The Implementation**

All nine of the students participated in the same standard classroom activities and assignments related to Unit 2 of the textbook. About midway through the unit I asked the experimental group to meet after school, at which time I gave them the website URL and instructions on accessing the various features on the website. I also asked them to not reveal the experimental
materials or website URL to their classmates in the control group, and, as they are very trustworthy students, I have no reason to believe that they did. They had about a week to explore the site on their own time. They could use their home computer or one of the internet-connected computers at school. I was available at school for technical questions they had about the links and the instructions.

To verify that that students had indeed accessed the material and attempted the activities, I required that they each turn in to me their written responses to the television activities as well as printouts of their responses to the other two activities.

Covering the text material in the entire unit took nearly three weeks. I scheduled a test review session two days before the test. Normally, the students are accustomed to reviewing for the test the day before, but a school scheduling conflict prevented the class from meeting the day before the test, so our review was conducted a day earlier than usual. During the review session I deliberately avoided discussion of anything specifically related to the website or its contents so as not to influence the control group with information accessed by the experimental group.

After the test was administered, the test papers were collected, and the scores were calculated.

The Test

I do not have publisher-provided tests to accompany Fenêtres sur la France. I have developed my own tests for each unit which I use from year to year. The test I had previously written for this unit was the same test I administered to the students. In other words, the test was written prior to the research, helping to ensure that it was not biased towards either group of students. It should be noted that the test was designed to measure only the students’ knowledge of their
textbook content. As such, it may not address all that they could have learned in the process of exploring and using the Web-based materials designed for this study. The extensive combination of multimedia resources on the websites linked to the activities provided opportunities for the students to hear native pronunciation, practice their listening skills, encounter other new words and expressions, and experience cultural similarities and differences not covered in class or in the text. In addition, the Web's non-linear structure allowed them to branch out as much as they desired into other trails of related interested through the links to further resources on each page. Trying to incorporate all of this potential learning into the test, however, would have exceeded the scope of this study; hence my decision to use the test developed for the textbook unit.

The test incorporated several kinds of questions: vocabulary matching (with definitions in English), multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, sentence manipulation, and free response. The focus was very much on verbs, particularly the students' ability to discriminate between the usage of the imperfect and the passé composé, and between the auxiliaries être and avoir in the passé composé. They also needed to know the forms of both past tenses, as well as the meanings of several verbs new and fifteen words from the "culture" story dealing with the news media.

Since the students were being tested on the grammatical issues of the lesson, I made sure to grade only for those items. Other errors such as misspelled words and incorrect accent marks were noted, but points were not deducted. Partial credit (1/2 point) was deducted in some cases; for example, the wrong participle form in a passé composé construction in conjunction with a correct auxiliary verb was awarded 1/2 point. Forty-six points were possible on the test.

The test was administered in the regular classroom setting under the same conditions that all their tests are administered. Because it was a research project,
the scores were not going to be counted in the students' grade averages, and they were aware of this fact. To what extent this made a difference in their personal test preparation is difficult to tell. Some of the students indicated afterwards that they would have studied more if the test had counted in the gradebook.

The class period for the test was forty minutes long. However, I allowed those students who needed more time to stay after class in order to finish the test. I was available in the classroom for technical assistance during the test.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The Data

The results of the test were interesting and unexpected. The last time that I had taught French II (three years prior in a different school, but using the same materials), I had nine students in the class—the same number as those participating in this study. Scores on the test then ranged from 45.5 to 34 points, with a class average of 38.7 points. This time, the students’ scores ranged from 42 to 27.5 points (Table 3). The number of errors made ranged from 4 to 18.5. The control group (four students) made an average of 14.1 errors per student. The experimental group (five students) made an average of 13.2 errors per student.

Because the structural content in the Web-based culture materials consisted primarily of lexical items, I also compared the scores of the students on just the test’s fifteen vocabulary items. The students in the control group each missed between 2 to 5 items, for an average of 3.5 points deducted. The students in the experimental group each missed between 0 to 8 items, for an average of 3.6 points deducted.

On the other hand, the rest of the test items, worth thirty-one points total, dealt with verb forms. The students in the control group each missed between 5 to 14.5 points, for an average of 10.1 points deducted. The students in the experimental group each missed between 4 to 12.5 points, for an average of 9.6 points deducted.

Overall, none of the students performed as well on this test as they have done on previous tests in this course. One reason may be that the grammatical concepts covered in this particular unit were, in my opinion, the most difficult in the text. I had already told the class as an encouragement that once we made it through the first two chapters of the text, it was “downhill the rest of the way.”
Table 3. Comparison of Test Scores by Individual Students in Each Group and of Group Average Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control Group</th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total points</td>
<td>Points missed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entire Test</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(46 points possible)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student D</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student I</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>31.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary Items</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15 points possible)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student D</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student I</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verb Form Items</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(31 points possible)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student D</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student I</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>20.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another reason for the poor showing may have been the knowledge that the test grade would not affect the course grade. In an effort to facilitate gaining permission from the Iowa State University Human Subjects Research Office to use my own students as test subjects, I had been advised by the staff in the office to avoid building any kind of penalty, such as the potential for a reduction in course grade, into my research project. Thus, my informed consent documents (Appendix C) specified that the test grade would not be counted as part of the course grade.

The differences in total scores between the control group and the experimental group were minimal. The experimental group averaged less than one full point better than the control group. On the items involving verb forms the differences were about the same: the experimental group scored an average of one-half point better than the control group.

The surprise came on the vocabulary section of the test. It was here that I would have expected the Web-based materials to influence scores the most. These were the language structure items that the students using the Web-based activities would have most obviously encountered and used. Yet the average score for the experimental group was actually one-tenth of a point below that of the control group.

The Discussion

The students in the experimental group responded well to the materials that I created. Accessing French websites and being guided by the activities to accomplish tasks that used information on those websites was a novel experience for them that piqued their interest. In follow-up discussion after the project was completed, the students commented that they found the questions in each activity to be relatively easy. I underestimated their ability to understand the written
texts they accessed. They probably could have handled more subjective or open-ended questions covering a greater amount of the content in the French websites and more questions asked in French instead of English. They also had an easy time navigating the newspaper websites due to the cognates used to distinguish different sections of the newspaper, but they found the television guide websites more difficult to navigate because there were more options from which to choose and more links through which to wade. They reported that understanding the radio broadcasts was quite difficult because they thought that the announcers spoke so fast, but they were surprised at the proliferation of English-language music on the broadcasts. When asked if they would like to do more webquests in French, they all enthusiastically said yes.

Despite the overall enjoyment of the Web-based materials and activities by the learners who used them, the data do not appear to support the hypothesis that exploring French culture via the World Wide Web has a beneficial effect on their efforts to learn the specific language elements presented in the published curriculum. Comparisons between group means were conducted with two sample $t$-tests. The gain made by the experimental group was not significant at the 5% level on the whole ($p=.80$), equally insignificant on the verb forms ($p=.83$), and was a small negative post-test gain on the vocabulary items ($p=.96$), the language skill where the gain was expected to be greatest (Table 4).

There is no doubt that the culture links on the website that the students used were authentic materials from francophone culture. Newspapers, TV guides, and radio stations are nothing if not communicative language practice resources. And delivery via the Web certainly makes them as accessible to the students as they would be to native speakers of the language. But while these resources provide communicative L2 practice, to what extent do they provide practice with the specifics of the published L2 curriculum? In other words, while the students
Table 4. Descriptive Statistics: Results of t-Tests for Errors Made on Entire Curriculum Unit Test and on Subsections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Section</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entire Test</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocab Items</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb Forms</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

were using their previously-acquired language skills to read, listen to, and understand the new cultural materials, it does not appear that using the cultural materials helped them to learn the new grammar and vocabulary content that the curriculum was teaching.

Is this the fault of the hypothesis or the fault of the design of the activities? Osuna and Meskill (1998) state that their study activities included “varying foci on language forms” (p. 72), and that “the integration of each of the textbook chapter’s cultural components with the language foci of that chapter worked well in bringing contextualized meaning and practice to the online tasks” (p. 77). However, the language forms are never identified, so determining which ones were targeted and how well they were learned is difficult.

The Web-based activities in my study aimed to contextualize in the culture primarily the vocabulary from the textbook chapter, as well as, to a lesser degree, past tense verb forms. But in the process of creating activities patterned after those of Osuna and Meskill (1998) for the purpose of teaching French vocabulary and grammar, I emphasized the culture and the authentic materials at the expense of the forms, the communicative aspects of the language at the expense of the structural elements.
In retrospect, the culture and the language concepts presented in the published curriculum were not truly integrated. Apart from identifying vocabulary words and reading text that contained past-tense verb forms, the activities did not require the students to use or manipulate the structural elements of the language in any way. The grammar and vocabulary were not made salient enough for the students to attach them to the meaning found in the context or to their previously-acquired knowledge in order to communicate effectively about the topic of the lesson.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While Osuna and Meskill (1998) demonstrated that students’ perceptions of increased L2 language skill resulted from the use of Web-based activities featuring L2 culture, my study suggests that actual increase in L2 skills requires more. Making cultural materials useful for language learning goes beyond just making them available. It involves careful planning and task design in order to maximize their impact on learners’ overall ability to understand and interact with members of that culture. It also involves rethinking both the role of culture and the role of structure in language learning. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the Twenty-first Century (1999) remind us that “the true content of the foreign language course is not the grammar and vocabulary of the language, but the cultures expressed through that language” (page 47).

In my attempt to obtain quantitative data about what my students learned through the use of Web-based communicative activities featuring L2 culture, I may have focused too narrowly on measuring grammar and vocabulary skills. By expecting the activities to be a means of learning the L2 structure, I lost sight of the concept that structure is a means to communication and is subordinate to culture.

I designed the study to blend communicative activities with an instructivist curriculum in order to achieve primarily instructivist goals. According to the data, the experiment failed to produce the anticipated result. However, it did not measure the broader kinds of learning that come with communicative language teaching. It did not account for my students possibly learning L2-related concepts other than grammar and vocabulary, concepts such as making comparisons between French and American media or being able to navigate around a French
language newspaper by means of context and cognates, concepts encouraged by the standards. Thus, testing whether students learned discrete L2 structure elements following the employment of communicative materials and teaching methods was not good instructional design. In the enthusiasm surrounding the message that all the authentic language practice we could ever want is literally at our fingertips via the World Wide Web, we must remember to fit the materials, and the tasks that we ask students to accomplish with them, to the specific purposes for which we are using them.

Studies like this one need to be undertaken again, with more carefully-designed tasks and a larger number of test subjects. I only had nine subjects participating. More would improve the study's reliability. Tasks that match more closely the purposes for which we teach languages and cultures as expressed in the standards would improve the study's validity.

Harris (1998) puts it simply: "There is a big and important difference between using the tools (operation) and using the tools (application)" (p. 5). Nevertheless, too many of us practitioners (and curriculum designers) are still in a honeymoon period with the tools. As I perused the Web-based activities available from the major French language textbook companies (Table 1), particularly comparing those that corresponded to the same skill level (early second year) as my students had attained, I noticed a number of activities that drilled grammar forms and vocabulary with on-line quizzes, as well as an abundance of activities that featured, in English, information about the francophone culture and its language. A few of the tasks, such as classifying French hotels by tourism ratings, determining from weather maps current temperatures in French cities, taking a true/false personal health quiz, and listing on a chart the features of homes for sale, appeared to be somewhat more authentic uses of both the tools and the language. However, even these presented the instructions and questions primarily
in English. Additionally, the activities' formats allowed the students to write their responses in English, although they could be required by the classroom teacher to employ French. Thus, the Web-based activities currently available emphasize either fragmented L2 structure or L2 culture, both from a more-or-less instructivist approach. They do not contain as much communicative practice as they could or as the standards promote for learners to achieve greater comprehension of other languages, better understanding of the cultures represented by those languages, and more effective communication with members of those cultures. Continued research into the use of the tools may help us do that.

Without question Web-based activities hold tremendous potential as a tool in second language teaching and learning. But I am not convinced that we have as yet tapped their potential. As a fairly new, but constant, user of the Internet and the World Wide Web, I have been amazed and excited to see so many possibilities of harnessing this powerful tool in my own classroom. Despite my experiment results, my students enjoyed exploring the Web materials I provided for them. Several said they would revisit them again in the future on their own time. But I don't want to throw gadgetry and a plethora of disconnected websites and activities recklessly at my students. Without well-defined objectives aimed at contextualizing the L2 structure into the L2 culture and clear evidence that Web technology can help achieve those objectives, it would be irresponsible and a waste of my and my students' time—in short, it would be poor pedagogy. In my use of the Web as a tool for teaching a second language I need more direction. More importantly, my students deserve more.
Français
Mme Anderson

Examen Leçon 2

1. la grève
2. le bouton
3. Le journal parlé
4. l'auditeur
5. atterrir
6. la météo
7. l'émission
8. rencontrer de
9. les nouvelles
10. l'espion
11. la presse
12. remercier
13. l'embouteillage
14. le quartier
15. refuser de

da. the neighborhood
b. the weather report
c. to thank
d. the strike
e. the newscast
f. to refuse
g. the knob
h. to land
i. the traffic jam
j. the broadcast
k. the listener
l. to meet
m. the news
n. the press
o. the spy
II. Écrivez le participe passé de chaque verbe. (Tous les verbes sont réguliers.)

1. André a ___________ son examen de mathématiques.  
   (passer)

   (perdre)

3. Vous avez ___________ le meilleur cadeau.  
   (choisir)

   (réussir)

5. Marie et Suzanne ont ___________ leurs amies.  
   (attendre)

III. Donnez les terminaisons de l'imparfait.

je — ___________   nous — ___________

tu — ___________   vous — ___________

il/elle — ___________   ils/elles — ___________

___ 1. (Croire) - vous l’histoire de Blanche-Neige?
___ 2. Nous (voir) un bon film au cinéma hier soir.
___ 3. Le prof (expliquer) la leçon pour la classe.
___ 5. Tu (avoir) un grand mal à la tête.

V. Choisissez l’expression correct dans chaque phrase.

1. Nous (avons arrivé, sommes arrivés) en retard à l’aéroport
3. On (a monté, est monté) l’escalier de la tour Eiffel.
4. La vieille dame (a vendu, est vendue) les pommes au marché.
5. (J’ai venu, Je suis venu) à l’université pour étudier le français.

VI. Mettez chaque phrase dans le passé.

1. À la télévision et à la radio on annonce les nouvelles.

2. Je viens à l’école en autobus.
3. Vous n’aimez pas la cuisine à la cantine.

4. Nous savons tous les mots des chansons de cette chanteuse.

5. Jacqueline finit sa travail à minuit.

VII. Répondez à chaque question.

1. Avez-vous pris votre parapluie à l’école ce matin?

2. Est-ce que Guillaume était fatigué après le match de football?

3. Où êtes-vous allé hier après-midi?

4. Est-ce que vous avez dîné chez vous hier soir?

5. Les filles sont-elles tombées de l’arbre?
APPENDIX B. E-MAIL SENT TO IOWA FRENCH TEACHERS

From: High School  
To: highschool@ameschristianschool.org  
Sent: Friday, November 21, 2003 3:13 PM  
Subject: Current French Curriculum

Hi,

I am looking at various curricula for future selection in my position as foreign language teacher here at Ames Christian School, as well as needing to determine which curricula are most popular for a research paper I am writing at Iowa State University.

If possible, I'd appreciate your response to a few curriculum questions. Only the name of the school district and the title and date of your French curriculum would appear in a table as part of the research paper.

Question #1: What is the title of your current curriculum? (e.g. Discovering French; Bienvenue/A Bord; Allez, Viens!, etc.)

Question #2: What is the publication date of your current curriculum?

Question #3: Does your current curriculum include a publisher-designed web-based package of activities?

Thank you so much for your help.

Jennifer Anderson  
highschool@ameschristianschool.org
APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of Study: The Effect of a Web-based French Culture Learning Activity on the Acquisition of French Grammar

Investigators: Jennifer Anderson, B. A.

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is an advantage to using web-based French culture activities for learners of French as a foreign language. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a student of French as a foreign language in grades 7-12.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for about two weeks and will involve normal French class time each school day, several typical homework assignments from Chapter 2 of our French text, three or four short activities to complete using a teacher-designed internet website, and a test covering the material in the text chapter. During the study you may expect the following study procedures to be followed. You will be asked to attend your daily French class, complete the coursework for Chapter 2 of the text, and take the chapter test. Randomly selected students from the class will also be asked to complete three or four short French culture activities on the internet.

RISKS

While participating in this study you may experience the following risks: You may experience awkwardness using the internet activities if the internet is unfamiliar to you. You may experience anxiety if your score on the test are not what you expect for them to be. You will be provided any assistance needed using the internet. Your test score will not be counted in the course average at the end of the grading period.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there will be no direct benefit to you. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by helping French teachers and curriculum writers to design better tools to aid students learning French as a foreign language.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.
PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide not to participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken:
1. Subjects will be identified by code.
2. Only the Principle Investigator will have access to study records, which will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet.
3. The study records will be destroyed on December 31, 2003. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information about the study contact the principle investigator, Jennifer Anderson, at 515-232-2198. The major professor supervising the research is Dr. Carol Chapelle, 445 Ross Hall, Ames, IA 50011, (515) 294-7274; carolc@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the Human Subjects Research Office, 2810 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-4566; austinger@iastate.edu or the Research Compliance Officer, Office of Research Compliance, 2810 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-3115; dament@iastate.edu

SUBJECT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the signed and dated written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Subject’s Name (printed) ---------------------------------------------

(Subject’s Signature) ________________________________ (Date) -------

(Signature of Parent/Guardian or Legally Authorized Representative) ________________________________ (Date) -------

HSRO/OCR 05/02

2
INVESTIGATOR STATEMENT

I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of their questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

(Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent) (Date)
I am doing a study to learn about junior high and high school students who use internet websites to help them learn French. I am asking you to help because you are currently studying French in junior high or high school.

If you agree to be in my study, I will ask you to participate in your regular French class activities and assignments covering Chapter 2 of your textbook. You may also be asked to do some French language related activities on the internet. At the end of the chapter there will be a test over the contents of the chapter, very much like the French tests you are used to taking.

You can ask questions at any time that you might have about this study. Also, if you decide at any time that you don't want to participate any longer, you may withdraw from the study. The activities on the internet are not graded, and the test score at the end of the chapter will have no effect on your course grade.

Signing this paper means that you have read this or had it read to you and that you want to be in the study. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign the paper. Remember, being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you don't sign this paper or even if you change your mind later.

Signature of Participant __________________________Date ________________

Signature of Investigator __________________________Date ________________
REFERENCES


