National Foreign Language Resource Center

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

1999 NFLRC SUMMER INSTITUTE EVALUATION:
"SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: MATERIALS AND STRATEGIES"

GRAHAM CROOKES

CONTENTS

"Hawai'i has always been a very pivotal role in the Pacific. It is *IN* the Pacific. It is a part of the United States that is an island that is right here."

— Vice President Dan Quayle, upon arriving in Honolulu, 4/25/89

point of view (POV): Hawaiian Islands from mid-stratosphere. The Islands are a scattering of green and brown dice on a blue velvet gaming cloth.

pull in…: Your 747 crowded with honeymoon couples from Iowa already in matching "Hawaiian" shirts and shorts (too bright for the locals) are eagerly looking out of the cabin windows. The south shore of O'ahu is (over)developed but the upper slopes of its brilliant green hills are mostly still clear of urban blight, and the miniature waves are sharp white scratches on the cobalt-blue-enameled surface below [hapa-haole steel guitar music here please]

pull in…: It's another beautiful day in paradise [background music J. Mitchell "…paved paradise, put up a parking lot…"] Your traffic-spotting helicopter buzzes between the Waikiki skyscrapers--"Captain America reporting that traffic's pretty heavy on Likelike Highway Ewa-bound."-- the giant concrete snake squirms between the plantation style termite-eroded bungalows and the time-share condos.

and: Looking toward Diamond Head, turn POV up Manoa Valley to see the collection of large squarish light colored blocks that are gradually filling in what was once a cow-college in sometime farm land of a once-green, still-wide valley: the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

jump cut: Moore Hall is one such beige-colored blockiness [POV from eye level, in the courtyard of this five-story example of late 1960s cut-rate institutional architecture]. It's fairly anonymous, but there are trees and tables out here, it's nice if you like a somewhat tropical climate: low 80s, a bit humid, but gentle tradewinds 5–10 mph, nice weather for shorts, sandals and a t-shirt [turn…]

POV 90 degrees: one of the Moore Hall windows from outside. There's something going on in there that might be secret, as heavy drapes prevent any ordinary human from finding out, but with the miracle of modern camera work, POV approaches the window and

cut: to inside the room: those gray drapes are all round the room, there's lots of technical audiovisual equipment, there's no light from outside, only fluorescent lights, a bunch of people look like they're getting ready for something, and Jeez! it's cold in here (70F and dry)…

Lights! Computers! Action!

voice over: Welcome to the first day of the 1999 NFLRC Summer Institute Workshop on "Self-directed Learning: Materials and Strategies." Have you all got your sweaters? Then I'll begin…

Crookes, Graham. (1999). 1999 *NFLRC Summer Institute evaluation*. (Research Note #23). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.

BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT

The University of Hawai'i National Foreign Language Resource Center has been operating for nine years. Each year a Summer Institute (SI) has been run, and it is generally the most intensive and expensive operation in the yearly activities. Although they last only a few weeks, yearly planning for the next one begins almost as soon as the current one has finished, and a great deal of person-power and accumulated expertise goes into the delivery of each Institute. The Advisory Board, as part of its general oversight role considers each year's Institute as proposed and reviews it upon completion by way of an evaluation report. The present report, then, is directed to the Board[1], UH NFLRC Director, and to the Workshop facilitators, as its primary audience (though it is, or will be, a publicly-available document, of interest to other readers as well). The present evaluation report is intended to provide the reader with an accounting of this part of the work of the University of Hawai'i NFLRC, through giving a sense of the form and processes of the SI, as well as a providing good faith assessment by an appropriately qualified observer.

This year's Summer Institute was the ninth to date, and was entitled "Self-Directed Learning: Materials and Strategies." A particular focus, as with past summer institutes at this site, as well as on-going activities of this NFLRC, was the less-commonly taught languages.

GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE 1999 SUMMER INSTITUTE

Reflecting the three-year granting period for the various NFLRCs, the 1999 Summer Institute of the University of Hawai'i (UH) NFLRC was originally proposed in 1995. It would have been surprising if, in the fast-changing world of post-secondary foreign language (FL) education, the originally-proposed institute had been delivered exactly as formulated four years earlier. In the run-up to the '99SI, the Advisory Board provided additional direction, recommending a shift in emphasis from the original concern with FL self-instruction, to "student-managed learning." They emphasized that "the point of departure for the entire workshop should be the student's acquisition needs and the wide variety of media and delivery systems available to efficiently meet these needs, including but by no means limited to, traditional 'self-study' and classroom-based teaching." (Advisory Board Meeting notes, Jan. 1998)[2]

NFLRC staff interpretation of this directive can be seen in the following statements which appeared in the introductory information concerning the '99SI: The Summer Institute focused on "methods, materials, and assessment techniques to promote learner autonomy via technology in the less commonly taught languages," and according to language on the SI website,

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[1]   The Board has never given directives concerning the evaluation report, nor required the evaluator to consult with them. Such consultation or specification is not unusual for evaluations, however.

[2]   Further stages in the development of the SI99 were the result of not getting sufficient funding to address the full range of activities planned (e.g., lab courses in Samoan, Tagalog, and Ilokano), and at the same time, the obtaining of a federally-funded project to develop instructional materials in an integrated CD-ROM/WWW format for Chinese and Korean. This was a source of input for the SI99, particularly in the hands of Candace Chou, who had been involved with the project [p.c. UH NFLRC Director Dick Schmidt].

"Self-directed learning covers a range of contexts, from pure self-instruction (with no teacher and no class) to regular classes in which teachers encourage learners to take charge of their own learning. Self-directed learning offers great potential for the extension of instructional resources, especially for the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Growing enrollments have resulted in increased demand for educational resources in these languages but the wide geographical dispersal of the LCTL populations of learners makes it difficult to meet their needs through traditional classroom-based or distance-based education. Therefore, it is especially important that learners of these languages take responsibility for some or even all of their own learning. It has also been argued that taking charge of one's own learning leads to self-empowerment and that all learning is ultimately autonomous in the sense that it depends on the efforts of the learners themselves."

As usual, there were two components to the SI: a workshop and a symposium. The workshop ran from June 14 to June 26, the final two days of which were devoted to a Symposium, consisting of related formal academic presentations.

Intended processes and foci

Introductory material concerning the Workshop stated that it would

"provide participants with tools and techniques for promoting learner autonomy through:

incorporate training in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies into the language curriculum

create environments that enable students to self-direct their learning by setting objectives, planning, organizing and completing tasks, and finding solutions to problems

develop techniques for student self-monitoring through self-assessment

make effective use of Web-based and other resources to support self-directed learning

develop self-access Web-based materials and resources"

The Symposium, as a culminating activity for the Workshop, but also to some extent free-standing, was intended to "facilitate the sharing of resources, ideas, and information about all aspects of learner autonomy"

INSTRUCTORS

The workshop was led by five facilitators: Dick Schmidt, Candace Chou, Carsten Roever, Bill Savage, & Irene Thompson. Briefly, Schmidt is UH NFLRC Director; Chou is a Research Assistant for the National Foreign Language Resource Center and PhD candidate in the Communication and Information Sciences program, University of Hawai'i (and a previous NFLRC SI facilitator); Roever is a PhD student in the UH SLA program and (at the time of the SI) an NFLRC-funded GA; Savage is Associate Professor, Center for Language and Educational Technology, with the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok; and Thompson is Professor Emerita, George Washington University (and a previous NFLRC SI facilitator).

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 20 educators representing a spectrum of 13 languages participated in the Workshop. Nineteen of the participants were affiliated with higher education institutions; one was a secondary

level teacher. The "foreign" (non-English) languages represented were Bislama, Filipino, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Malay, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Vietnamese.

WORKSHOP FORMAT

This was an eight-day Workshop (supplemented by a three-day Symposium). The first half (Days 1 to 4) scheduled mainly plenary sessions in which the facilitators formally presented, introduced, or reviewed conceptual material on the following topics: learner autonomy, learner strategies, and motivation, and gave introductory presentations on Web-based self-assessment and "authoring tools" for the design of Web-based self-instructional materials for FL learning. The second half (Days 5 to 7) were initially scheduled for individual work on projects, in which Workshop participants would attempt to apply what they were learning, with the final day (Day 8) intended for participants to present their projects and for evaluation and wrap-up sessions. (See Appendix A for schedule.)

WHAT DID IT LOOK LIKE?

Here is an edited extract from a write-up of my running notes concerning the first morning[3]:

Notes SI99
  Day One
  Intro session

Moore 155A — a room with no outside windows is the setting for most of the main sessions of the 1999 SI. This room is set up as an audiovisual "lab." Gray acoustic damping drapes are hung on three sides of the room. And besides a large video screen, various other pieces of technical equipment, notably unused studio video cameras, adorn the room, the back side of which is a large glass window into a technician's control room.

On this occasion, the room is just the right size to comfortably accommodate about 25 people, most of whom are the SI participants, on modern padded stacking chairs which are also unfortunately gray. The chairs are arranged in the circle.

This year's SI is the ninth. There are three administrative support staff, two technical support staff, five instrucer/facilitators one of whom is also the NFLRC Director; and there is also me, the SI evaluator. One of the three support staff has been involved in all nine previous SIs; other members of the staff and instructors have been part of several previous SIs. Even I have been involved in three previous evaluations.

The participants are mostly not repeaters, although two of them are. From glancing at their self-introductions I have a slight sense of the makeup of this group. It's satisfyingly diverse, as one might hope a group of S/FL professionals would be. Whites are in a minority, and the genders are evenly balanced. Most of them are mid-career, established professionals, but not career academics, exactly.

The group began to assemble from 7:30 am on, grouped in the corridor by this gray room, around coffee, tea, and muffins — a common beginning to workshops of this type within this culture.

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[3]   This may not be the most representative day, but as the first day it is usefully introductory. I make no claims that these constitute a methodologically-correct exemplar of field note technique. Participants' names are pseudonyms.

Participants, as professionals with a shared interest and more than one shared language seemed to have little difficulty, particularly once equipped with nametags by the support staff, in introducing themselves, making small talk, and beginning to get familiar with the people with whom they are about to spend two weeks.

By 8:30, Director Dick Schmidt begins formal proceedings. Schmidt is a small, deeply tanned "haole," resident in Hawai'i as an academic for more than twenty years now, and he has been doing this sort of thing most of his life. Dressed in a heavily starched aloha shirt (with a bold blue and red leaf pattern) and cream cotton pants he kicks off his welcoming remarks with comments about the weather here in Manoa Valley ("this room is the only place you will need a sweater") and with his relaxed and confident manner is quickly putting needed pieces of information out. The participants seem to understand and appreciate him. Smiles and a little laughter begin to break out, and participants are asked to introduce themselves after Dick has first done so himself. And the other instructors and staff are also introduced or make self-introductions. I introduce myself as "the evaluator," explain federal funding constraints, and emphasize that I am not here to evaluate the participants themselves.

It's 8:40 and things seem to be running smoothly, as well they should with all this experience in one room.

As the schedule is introduced, Dick introduces the idea that it looks complete but is intended to "evolve as we go." Irene Thompson, one of the instrucers who has been in several previous workshops, gets up to explain in more detail. She too adds a comment that "autonomy sets in on the afternoon of the fourth day."

By 8:53 introductions are complete, for now, and Dick hands straight over to Bill Savage. Bill is a fairly tall Caucasian in what seems to be early middle age; his dark hair is only just beginning to recede from a well formed broad brow, and like Dick he is fairly tan, as befits someone resident in Thailand. Bill is visiting Hawai'i, though he is very familiar with the location of the SI as he did his MA here.

Bill has been facilitating learner autonomy, the subject of this workshop, for a number of years. It is his major professional specialty and a central feature of the prestigious governmentally-funded institution he works for in Thailand. This experience, as well as his broad multilingual learning and teaching experience, will obviously be critical to the success of this workshop. Although his fellow instructors also have essential skills, Bill is the autonomy specialist; though not, he jokes, the "autonomy police."

He introduces himself with a compressed biography emphasizing his international experience, without bombast, and swiftly moves on to "the rationale we have employed in designing this workshop"--learner autonomy. However, he does not choose at this point to make any explicatory remarks, but directs the participants immediately to assume a small group format and sets what he calls a "task question": "What is your understanding of learner autonomy?" Participants, in groups of four, are directed to two nearby rooms and two in this room, given one hour of discussion time, and asked to report back at 10:30. (I wonder to myself if it is noteworthy that Bill uses the term "learner autonomy" rather than "self-directed learning"; the latter is the title of the workshop.)

I circulate; these folks are accustomed (it looks like) to this sort of thing. Of the two groups in Moore 155A, one does a little more self-introductions, and then they get on with addressing the question, taking it in turns to add responses. They seem to be drawing on their own teaching experiences and circumstances (e.g., Chinese heritage students' use of family resources…).

I overhear one interesting exchange between two participants:

> He [referring to learner autonomy]: It won't work for most normal human beings.
> She: Luckily I don't fit into that category.

In another part of a discussion, one participant is emphasizing that interdependence and asking for help is an important aspect of learner autonomy.

A break at 10:00--almost a full half hour, which is probably a good thing; then at 10:33 groups return to the main room and report back, having been asked to do so using chart paper marker summaries. Group reporters deliver sophisticated and confident summaries. A very wide range of concepts are included: I will not try to capture them here as we have the actual chart paper.

By this time, participants have already shown examples of learning from each other. For example, Jeff, who teaches at a community college, asked one presenter for an example of a strategy for SDL. Sushil began to answer, and even though one of the instructors tried to defer the inquiry by saying it would be covered tomorrow, fellow group member Lavindra directed the question to her group member Richard. Richard didn't answer the question directly (though he commented that most SL learning around the world is "100%" autonomous).

In group 2's report, presenter Byron Sasaki explicitly referred to the importance that participants were finding in sharing with each other; also mentioned by Darlene Jansen). I note in passing sophisticated and up-to-date understandings of SLA (as SL Socialization) that I suspect Byron has gotten from his university colleagues; though he also refers to antiquated ideas about motivation, while recognizing some movement (he also mentions Dick's and my paper).

A question that didn't get answered in this phase was from Sandra, who wanted to know about the "cultural variants in terms of being and becoming aware and self-directed."

Byron was calling for "a re-evaluation of the whole educational system."

Darlene mentioned life-long learning and that "the classroom is receding in terms of the life-long learning process."

11:00--Bill tries to highlight themes emerging: "autonomy plays out in institutions…the whole framework for LA has to be quite rigidly structured but within that framework, there is a lot of flexibility…we need to re-identify ourselves as teachers in a LA environment" and so forth.

Bill's review takes 10 minutes (for details see Bill's notes) and then there is about 15 minutes of discussion (some points captured in my handwritten notes). Bill was of course a leader of discussion, calling on participants or holding them back; I note that he hadn't negotiated that aspect of his responsibility.

At the close of this phase, in moving the session on, Bill mentions in passing the readings packet in the three-ring binder. He says it's up to individual participants to decide what use if any to make of it. There is also a vague and confused mention of other book resources, but it turns out there's only one such book available (by Oxford). [The idea of getting together a resource library apparently

hasn't come to anything. There had been a previous decision not to send out the readings packet ahead of time because past experience had shown that this was very expensive and ineffective.] Participants drew on relevant experiences and expressed views on LA but none of them this morning in my hearing mentioned any relevant academic literature.

BS moves to next topic by way of reference to teacher learner autonomy, and poses the question "What should we be paying attention to see if learners in this workshop are experiencing/ or there is/ LA?" He explains that he is taking an action research approach to his pedagogy in this Workshop. Then he posed the question. Debra asked who the "we" in it was. Bill said everybody. Discussion of this question proceeds. First couple of speakers said that they couldn't answer it. But Kali states, "I felt that the structure of this workshop was that it did show autonomy." [I didn't have the tape recorder going yet!] Yi Peng produces a detailed diagram from her groups' analysis, that she seems quite excited about as she is confident that they have it all figured out, and to a large extent they have; it emphasizes structure and flexibility and she specifically mentions that "we have to be re-educated." Another contribution is from Darlene, who says that something that would be indicative would be the affective tone of the discussions--whether they are respectful, and so on. Carla says one indication would be participants' knowledge of resource availability in the environment; also respectful of how comfortable participants are with tolerance of ambiguity.

Yi Peng says, "We must have confidence to share, we should know how to ask the questions."

Lunch
[end notes extract

INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION REPORT

Thus far I have provided a little background and have sketched the basic structure of the SI. I've also attempted to provide a picture in words which would provide some of the flavor of the first few hours of the SI. It is time now for me to turn to a more analytic mode. To support the readers' use of this document, I need first to explain my status and qualifications as Evaluator, as well as indicate the UH NFLRC's approach to the present evaluation.

BASES FOR TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THIS REPORT

The evaluator's background and position

I am a faculty member (Associate Professor) in the Department of ESL, UH. I am at least moderately expert in the general area sometimes called Second and Foreign Language Studies[4] (S/FLS). Among my areas of interest (and publication) are alternative/innovative approaches to S/FL teaching and teacher education. I am thus a plausible "expert witness" on at least some aspects of this particular SI. Declaration of interest: During the NFLRC funding cycle (three-year) just concluded I have conducted one small project that was funded by the UH NFLRC. I was also a minor player in the UH NFLRC during its first three years (1990–93). I am a departmental colleague of the director

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[4]   Older terms (with additional baggage) are "Applied Linguistics" and "Educational Linguistics."

(Schmidt) and knew the rest of the facilitators as junior, senior, or peer colleagues prior to the SI. I am thus by no means an outsider.

I have produced two previous UH NFLRC SI evaluation reports (1994 and 1998). Last years' (like most of the previous UH NFLRC SI evaluation reports) was relatively small-scale, in keeping with the priorities and budget of the NFLRC; it was done "hands-off" and my role was mainly confined to designing questionnaire instruments, compiling and analyzing the data thereby collected, and writing a short final report. However, for the 1994 evaluation report I was able to observe much of the SI and interview those involved; the report was consequently much more substantial. I was told that the Board had recommended a return to this more substantial format last year.

Inside or outside evaluation

In the 1994 Evaluation Report, I wrote the following:

> "As Love (1991, p. 4) remarks,
>
>> 'By reason of being part of an organization, the internal evaluator has firsthand knowledge of an organization's philosophy, policies, procedures, products, personnel and management. This permits the selection of evaluation methods tailored to the reality of the organization. The long-term commitment of the internal evaluator permits the formation of positive working relationships with management and staff…
>>
>> [On the other hand] a manager may prefer external evaluators when specialized skills are required and persons with them are not practical to keep on staff, or when the perspective of an outside observer is necessary…When the purpose of the evaluation is accountability to outside parties…external evaluators carry greater credibility as objective evaluators than do internal evaluators…In fact, both external and internal evaluators have their biases, and true objectivity is an elusive commodity.'
>
> One of the strengths of the [1994] evaluation is, I would allege, that it lies somewhere between an internal and external position. I was extremely familiar with its physical location, and had pre-existing connections with some of the staff and participants. I was, on the other hand, not part of the NFLRC, and have an independent status and position at UH. However, I believe that if the NFLRC budget allows, future external evaluations and indeed future SIs, will be strengthened by being able to draw upon the extended engagement that attention to greater internal evaluation efforts would allow."

My understanding is that this position was found satisfactory by the Advisory Board at that time. I think it is a fairly accurate representation of my position again in 1999. (Cf. Weiss, 1998, pp. 37–9.)

Duration in the field; conceptual framework; data and data analysis; write-up

I attended one morning facilitators' planning meeting prior to the start of the SI. (There were in fact a number of such meetings, besides email discussions.) Thereafter for the two weeks of the SI I was present during most of each of 9 days, out of a possible 10.5 days.[5] Consequently I was able to attend almost every formal session (both those scheduled and those added on), and "hung around" in the labs for the majority of working hours on days when participants were working (or consulting) individually. I was introduced at the beginning of the SI as "the Evaluator," so my presence was understood. I believe I was able to establish good rapport with the participants[6]. For the Symposium,

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[5]   Computer labs *were* open over the weekend mid-SI, but I am not counting those days.
[6]   I cannot provide really strong grounds for this statement. Negative data: no one avoided me, refused to be interviewed by me, or seemed uncomfortable when I was observing them or sessions in general. My official position was neutral with regard to the participants. There are good reasons why rapport should have been easy to achieve, in any case: I

I attended for the entirety of the 2.5 days. Towards the end of the SI I interviewed five Workshop participants (25% of the Workshop participants). Three interviews were done during the last three days of the Workshop, and two were done during the Symposium. These averaged around 40 minutes in length.[7] I also conducted oral "exit" interviews with two of the facilitators during the three days following the conclusion of the SI, one by email, and two as this report was being drafted. I engaged in a consultative relationship with one of the facilitators for the duration of the Workshop, as a result of which I audiotaped two extended immediate retrospections concerning the course of the Workshop so far. Besides this, I kept notes throughout the Workshop, concentrating on the formal sessions. Also important were the written evaluation questionnaires (see Appendix B). 20 out of 20 were completed for the Workshop (100% rate of return). For the Symposium, I collected written evaluations from about half the regular participants, but collected audiotaped (or emailed) interview comments from the SI facilitators on this topic as well. Some preliminary drafting of the report and partial analysis of a section of data were done upon the close of the Workshop (for discussion in the Symposium), but most of the tapes were indexed and partially transcribed immediately following the close of the SI, and analysis and write-up proceeded steadily from late June to mid-August.

Questionnaire data, both numerical and qualitative, were transcribed entirely onto a 20x35 matrix (for the Workshop, larger for the Symposium; using a spreadsheet application); means (only) for the numerical data were computed. About 10 hours of semi-structured interview data from five participants and three facilitators were indexed and partially transcribed; the other two facilitators responded to questions by email. I wrote up my own observational notes from the first two days in detail, and referred back to non-cooked notes for the remaining days. I also drew upon notes from non-recorded structured oral interviews conducted by Bill Savage. Data was reviewed across data sources for the analysis. Many issues were established a priori, and this was reflected in the design of the questionnaires. Other issues emerged as I observed and conducted interviews, and were not reflected in questionnaire design or revision.

Evaluation approach and models

The terms that evaluation methodologists such as Patton (1980) would use in describing the approach manifested in this evaluation are *holistic* and *inductive*; this is a fairly holistic, though only partially inductive, evaluation.[8] The approach is not purely inductive because I approached the SI with a detailed conceptual framework which I believe is broadly shared between me, the

[7]   share a professional culture with the participants, and we were all roughly the same age and professional status. I also share an interest in and sympathy for the intent and topic of the workshop itself.

[7]   This was a non-random, "prospective" sample. It reflected my judgments concerning dimensions that the participants could be divided among which I was guessing might be important. These were hitech-lotech and NS-NNS. They also reflected my judgment concerning the rapport I had or could establish with the interviewees, their articulateness, and their accessibility.

[8]   "*A Holistic View*
      …evaluators using qualitative methods attempt to understand programs as wholes…. This holistic approach assumes that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; it also assumes that a description and understanding of a program's context is essential for understanding the program. Thus, it is insufficient simply to study and measure the parts of a situation by gathering data about isolated variables, scales, or dimensions….
      An Inductive Approach
      …is inductive in that the researchers attempts to make sense of the situation without imposing preexisting expectations on the research setting…" (Patton, 1980, p. 40)
      "Holistic-inductive research… is a strategic ideal…. In practice, however, it is important to recognize that *holistic-inductive analysis and naturalistic inquiry are always a matter of degree.*" (Patton, 1980 p. 46, his emphasis)

participants, and probably most readers, concerning how a residential in-service workshop or short course for education professionals *should*, or does best function. This would generate propositions like "the professional development of educational professionals in intensive workshops is generally aided by emotional security and collegiality," and so on, which indicate areas to focus the evaluation on. This evaluation takes for granted, at a rather general level, the program theory itself; it does not attempt to bring it to light in detail for inspection, and it does not attempt to test it (cf. Bickman, 1987; Weiss, 1998, pp. 55–70). With regard to models that have been proposed for evaluations (House 1978 listed eight), the present effort is in line with his "Transaction Model" in that it concentrates on the processes going on in the program; it is a process more than a product evaluation.

FINDINGS

THE PEOPLE

Getting the mix of people right for an intensive in-service workshop is obviously important. Two questions concerning personnel at the Workshop are obvious: were the instructors adequately qualified for the task they were to perform and were the participants appropriate given the intent of the SI? In addition, DID they mix?

The instructors have already been listed. But let me establish their bona fides:

Dick Schmidt is Professor in the Dept. of ESL, UH, and Director of the UH NFLRC. More importantly, he is an expert on the topic of motivation in FL learning, a matter which feeds in to self-directed learning. Candace Chou is a doctoral student in the Communications and Information Science Department, UH, and is in charge of the NFLRC sponsored and supported Media Lab. She is an instructional design specialist with extensive experience in technology based materials development for FLs. Carsten Roever is a doctoral candidate in the SLA PhD program of UH, and an experienced developer of Web-based tests. Bill Savage is Associate Professor in the service English unit of the Asian Institute of Technology, an FL instructional unit that has a house philosophy of learner autonomy. He and his colleagues have published extensively in the topic area of the SI. Professor Emerita Irene Thompson is an authority on learner strategies in FL learning and teaching, and is familiar with authoring tools specific to FL materials design.

All except Savage are residents of Hawai'i and have worked together successfully before. Thompson has worked with a previous UH NFLRC SI; Savage graduated from the Department of ESL and has collaborated with Schmidt on research; Schmidt has visited and participated in Savage's program at AIT; Roever and Chou have been extensively involved with UH NFLRC operations over the last few years. Besides working relationships, there were a variety of learning relationships among the facilitators.

The participants were mentioned briefly earlier. Now is time to give greater scrutiny to them. In line with the mandate of the NFLRC grant, dissemination is taken very seriously. Thus participants should be carefully selected for SI workshops, with a view to the appropriateness of their positions

and qualifications to the goals of the workshop, and to the potential they have not only to learn, but to spread what they have learned. In addition, all through the work of the UH NFLRC there is supposed to be an emphasis on the less-commonly taught languages.

The languages taught by the participants were Bislama (1), Filipino (1), Hindi (1), Japanese (6), Khmer (1), Korean (1), Italian (1) Malay (1), Chinese [Mandarin] (7), Russian (1), Spanish (3), Tamil (1), and Vietnamese (1).[9] Obviously, Spanish is not a LCTL, but it was mentioned only as subsidiary languages by individuals whose primary teaching languages were LCTLs. Each individual thus taught at least one and in some cases two LCTLs. On the face of it, this should satisfy an elementary concern about appropriate selection of participants. The acceptance rate was 30%.

Though linkages between the various levels of education systems are not particularly tight, the working conditions and previous education of individuals in post-secondary education are such that they are more likely to influence others and be able to disseminate their ideas than those in elementary and secondary education (other things being equal). It is often, in the case of academics at research institutions, a primary condition of their employment. Thus in most cases for maximum dissemination, it is advisable to select participants who have situations in line with those just summarized. Nineteen of the 20 participants were from this group. Internal dissemination is obviously going to enhanced, too, by choosing participants who have relevant administrative positions. While the culture of post-secondary education is still regrettably individualistic, in-house unit directors often exert direct influence on their junior colleagues. Thus the presence of coordinators, dept. chairs, center directors, not to mention technology advisors or consultants, is highly desirable. Seven out of the 20 participants fell into this category. It should also be mentioned that these participants, as in many previous SIs, are also active in their professional organizations (e.g., the Group of Universities for the Advancement of Vietnamese Abroad [GUAVA], the Chinese Language Teachers Association [CLTA], and the Council of Organizations of Teachers of SE Asian Languages [COTSEAL]). Two SI participants mentioned to me that they were going to report on the SI workshop almost immediately after at conferences of the above-mentioned groups

With the exception of one individual (with non-instructional technical support responsibilities) all participants had at least 5 years teaching experience. The most senior individual reported 35 years of teaching experience, and the average was 11 (rounded). With one exception the participants were teachers at institutions of post-secondary education. Five were instructors; four were professors of various ranks (in the US nomenclature) and one was a department chair at a community college, which may mean also of professorial rank. Four referred to their position as lecturer or senior lecturer. Four had unit directorial or coordinator responsibilities. Three had responsibilities for technology and computing for their units or for supporting other instructors in this area.

Position and qualification of the participants was thus more than adequate. Selection of participants could have been a problem despite this, however, if it had turned out that they were not at the Workshop for the right reasons or could not get along with each other.

In the case of the facilitators, I observed only one meeting (which was one of the pre-workshop planning meetings). In this I was able to see them working together with extreme amiability. During the course of the workshop, I saw no evidence of interpersonal tension, and interviews with the

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[9]   Five individuals mentioned more than one language.

facilitators indicate that a good teamwork spirit was developed. (One of the facilitators commented "That was absolutely remarkable. I don't think I've ever done a workshop that was so conflict-free.")

In the case of the participants, though no formal attendance was taken, from my notes and observations it seemed that almost all were present on most occasions; that is to say, no evidence of tourism as a primary intent was seen. In fact, some participants would have liked more work time and more open computer lab time. (I will return to this topic below.) No one complained about there being too much work or too many sessions. Furthermore, participants themselves mentioned the good feeling that developed among the group; there was much collaboration. I conclude, therefore, that participant selection was also good at the level of commitment and interest.

Finally, and this is also particularly important for the following subsection, the SI was closely supported by the more than full-time work of Heidi Wong (SI Project Coordinator) and Dana Petteys (Graduate Assistant), with further backup from NFLRC publications specialist Deborah Masterson. Year after year, SI participants have paid glowing tribute to Heidi, and more recently, Dana's efficiency, friendliness, patience, and professionalism. (A few examples from this SI: one participant wrote "Heidi, Dana--you are wonderful!!!"; another, "Heidi was really on top of things--superb--she should be commended.") Quantitatively, the questionnaire item that referred to the helpfulness of staff had an average of 4.9 out of a possible 5. As an experienced observer of SI Workshops, which operate on a dangerously slim margin of support personnel, it is clear to me that without these support staff (including, on this occasion, Kin Chan as technical assistant), the SI would be in danger of collapsing.

LOGISTICAL, PHYSICAL, AND STOMACH-ORIENTED MATTERS

There is no question that the logistics of a residential workshop such as this, if ill-handled, could destroy any possibility of educational successes. Had participants arrived uninformed and confused about the intent of the workshop, had they spent time looking for rooms or trying to get out of poor accommodations, and so on, their ability to focus and learn would have been diminished. In a residential workshop of only eight instructional days there might be little time to correct errors. However, after nine years of such UH NFLRC SI Workshops, and several years in which mostly the same support personnel have been involved, it was not surprising to me to hear almost nothing but praise on this front.

Pre-arrival

Pre-arrival information: many of the participants on this occasion were highly e-mail literate, and so found out about the Workshop from e-mail discussion lists they were subscribed to. Only 4 did *not* mention this source of information. (Of this group, three had heard about the Workshop at a conference, and one had seen a flyer. Only one, then, had used hard copy.) In addition, two had been participants at previous UH NFLRC SI s and obviously were ready for more time in Hawai'i.

SI staffers have over the last few years kept abreast of developments in information technology, and on this occasion, as in the past several years, had placed information about the workshop on a Web page. This year, for the first time, participants could register electronically (via the webpage). In addition, staff were engaged in answering e-mailed questions to clarify and address specific needs.

One participant commented, "The staff were terrific at responding to questions over email"; another "it [communication] was good--I felt like I had the information I needed for making room reservations, and where to go on the first day, and that sort of thing." This (together with the orientation of the participants to e-mail, etc.) was at least partly responsible for the fact that participants were in general in agreement that the information they were able to obtain about the SI before coming was adequate. Specifically, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree) their average score was 4.55 on a Likert scale item addressing this point. (See Appendix B for the questionnaire.) The only point of dissent that might directly explain the lack of an average of 5 here was one participant who commented "I wish I had known more about the nature of our individual project."

Readings/reading list

With a short, intensive Workshop about an unfamiliar topic, it might sometimes be useful to get participants to read some relevant content material ahead of arrival. UH SI staff have tried two approaches so far, to my knowledge. (1) Mailing a readings packet, or (2) providing a readings list. Option (1) is far more costly: there are photocopying costs, mailing costs, and staff time involved in collecting the master set of readings, as well as doing the copying, stuffing envelopes, and taking packages to the mail. Not surprisingly, on this occasion, option 2 was taken. Even participants at US universities reported difficulties obtaining these articles mentioned on the reading list, because of the limitations of their libraries and the fact that they were involved in end-of-semester matters just before leaving. So few participants were able to do much pre-course reading; however, given decreased funding over the next three years I assume that Option 2 will continue if pre-course reading is to be used or sought at all.[10]

Accommodations

Most participants stayed in the on-campus dormitories belonging to the East-West Center. (Two stayed off-campus at their own expense and preference). I am familiar with these dormitories and believe they are adequate for a residential course of this kind in a developed country. They are clean, well-lit, fully furnished, quiet, secure, on a regular bus route, equipped with phones, and less than five minutes' walk to the SI rooms. There are shared kitchens. There are also TV and entertainment rooms, and vending machines providing snacks and hot and cold drinks. Said one participant, "Any minor discomforts have been more than out-weighed by the conveniences." They are also co-ed; two participants (one male, one female) told me they were uncomfortable with this.

Food

The general opinion of the on-campus food was strongly negative (e.g., "The food is terrible", said one interviewee). This is also the opinion of SI staff, who grapple with the effects of a monopoly on the quality of catering services. Vegetarians were particularly poorly served on-campus, though off-campus offerings were described as exceptionally good for this increasingly influential special-interest group. Off-campus cheap eateries and mid-priced restaurants are all about twenty minutes walk away,

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[10]   Perhaps if next year's facilitators have relevant conference presentations or other unpublished papers in electronic formats, these could be posted to the 2000 SI webpage without incurring copyright problems, thus constituting an Option 3.

which is not out of the question for an evening meal, but not feasible for lunch. (The formal schedule allowed only one hour for lunch.) Commented one participant, "I've never seen a campus where there aren't restaurants really close by, or bookstores, or resources--that's an amazing thing." For the handful of participants who had access to or had rented a car, this was not a problem ("The cafeteria is less than happy, but then there are so many other eateries close by"). For some others, it appeared to be a concern. One participant suggested organizing a shuttle to a supermarket on the first or second day of future Workshops. It may be necessary to be more explicit about the limitations of campus food in future pre-Workshop information and the fact that since most participants are in self-catering accommodation, they can take advantage of that if they plan accordingly (e.g., to make a trip to the supermarket and to rent pots and pans at the dorm).[11]

Classrooms, etc.

The Workshop's physical center was three rooms on the ground floor of Moore Hall: a room intended for oral or video presentations (and recording), and two computer/media labs (one with PCs, the other with Mac equipment). These rooms, particularly the labs, were quite spacious enough, and there were obviously enough computers for each participant. My own experience as a non-specialist user is that they were well-functioning computer labs which provided a comfortable learning environment. Room 155A, in which the initial formal sessions which kicked off the Workshop were held is, was, and remains, "another story." It is intended to be used as a small video studio, and is very well appointed and designed for that purpose. As a result, there are no external windows (or chalkboards/whiteboards) and there are gray acoustic damping drapes on the walls. This together with gray chairs and dark carpet on the floor provide (in my opinion) a funereal atmosphere. There was only just enough room for all participants and facilitators to sit. Room temperature was maintained at a steady 70 F.[12] Even though participants had been warned in pre-arrival information to bring a sweater (obviously not part of their expectations for tropical Hawai'i), there was regularly some grousing, chafing of blued extremities, putting on of socks and wearing of cold-weather jackets. Several individuals purchased extra warm clothing during the course of the Workshop, in one case as early as lunch on the first day. Apart from sessions run by the facilitators, this room was only used on a few subsequent occasions, most of the time being notably and obviously empty.

Facilities and technical support

Adequacy in this area is always a concern when technology plays a large part in any educational program. It has played a large part in past Workshops, and is scheduled to play a large part in upcoming Workshops. However, the challenges faced in this area have increased as a result of three factors over which SI staff have almost no control. (1) "Internet time": the apparent exponential acceleration in the development and marketing of new and actually better (if not simpler) products in the field of information technology.[13] Much more can be had at costs much less than before, but this apparent advance goes along with the rapid obsolescence and swift descent into incompatibility

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[11] In on-going negotiations between UH student organizations and the monopolist, students are pressing to allow other food suppliers on campus. This concession is expected to be granted before the next SI (*Ka Leo*, July 22, 1999).

[12] For individuals accustomed to Hawai'i climatic conditions, this is unpleasantly cold, particularly if sustained for hours at a time. It may have been less unpleasant for visitors from, for example, Minnesota.

[13] E.g., Moore's law: CPU processing capacity doubles every year; or the aphorism 'a webyear is six weeks'.

of what has already been purchased. This is particularly a concern for those educators who are not just users of educational technology materials, but producers of them; they have a special need to stay ahead of the curve. (2) The University of Hawaiʻi, in line with the State of Hawaiʻi, continues to suffer cuts in funding; the resources it can offer UH NFLRC are less now than before though theoretically this can be compensated for if a deliberate decision is made to preferentially allocate funds to those components of the NFLRC that could be derived from UH resources.[14] (3) Critically, the entire NFLC budget has been either cut or redistributed more thinly, to cover the greater number of Centers that have been set up. This is a particular problem for the UH NFLRC, since it cannot draw on UH established plant to compensate for lacks in the funds supplied from the Federal Government. At the macro-level, the condition appears likely to worsen. Was the state of affairs for the ʻ99Workshop cause for concern, however?

On this occasion, it should be borne in mind that the participant group was quite non-homogenous with reference to their use of specialized technology. All participants were familiar with the basics of e-mail and word-processing, at the very least, but on the one hand, some had never tackled basic Web-page construction, while two or three were experienced software writers. Not surprisingly, then, there was a wide range of views in this area. From questionnaire data, I note that the score of 4.45 out of 5 indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the technical facilities. Three respondents provided additional positive comments (like, "the facilities & technical support exceeded adequacy"); but three provided additional negative comments. I actually think that the negative comments deserve to be weighed more heavily because two future SIs have been planned which will make heavy technological demands: one on testing/assessment, and one on distance education. Unfortunately, in the present period of rapid technological development, even what *exceeds* adequacy today is obsolete tomorrow, in "Internet time." I list here all three negative remarks, which though anonymous almost certainly come from the more technically-experienced participants, who may be somewhat representative of the potential participants of the two next SIs:

> "the computers need to be upgraded. Also some of the software programs conflict with each other. It was frustrating."

> "[the] Computers (Macs) are a little obsolete compared to 10 other schools I've been to lately but I guess it is a budget issue and has nothing to do with this workshop. Just tell those administrators to give you some additional $$$"

> "in general yes, but computers crashed on me several times. Wonderful if the computer can be upgraded and accommodate high speed high tech software."

One of the more technologically sophisticated participants noted problems arising from the fact that there are (still) two different platforms in use for FL related software. Applications that were discussed, and two that were demonstrated, are not available on both platforms[15]; in addition, it was too challenging for individuals who are only familiar with one platform to be asked to learn both new, advanced aspects of materials design, new software, and at the same time learn a new platform. "If the goal is to acquaint people with a Web-editing package, it's probably better to pick just one

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[14]   Such a decision in the favor of the NFLRC would be richly deserved as the balance of support has been in favor of UH, if one considers items of real dollar cost to the institutions concerned (NFLRC provision of computers and personnel for a media lab); if one takes account of UH personnel engaged in NFLRC projects, this has not actually cost UH much in terms of opportunity cost.

[15]   …and it is not the case that Macintosh lags behind, as it is widely-acknowledged advantage in some areas of graphics, audio, and video work.

[which is cross-platform available] that is most suited for the task that people are likely to be doing and stick with it." Another participant, not technologically-unsophisticated commented, "I've had trouble with--and it's really frustrating to me…It seems to be a Macintosh-oriented laboratory, which is all well and good. It's a splendid operating system, and all, but I'm used to the other." (There were, in fact, two labs, one Mac and one PC, but in the opinion of this participant, the support was greater for the Macs in the area of fonts for the LCTLs.)

Other resources

Besides the technology and the facilitators, two other resources can be identified--a readings packet and the participants themselves.

The readings packet

The readings packet was the material specified in the reading list that had been sent ahead of time. It consisted of 17 articles, chapters, or book extracts addressing issues in FL learner autonomy, learner strategies, and assessment (but contained nothing on the technicalities of creating web-based FL learning materials). It was passed out to the participants on the first day, with no directions as to how it might be used. This reflected the facilitator's intent to provide opportunity for participant self-direction. I was curious to see if this indirection led to a potentially valuable resource being wasted. (Of course, it only looked valuable to me because I am a print-oriented academic interested in conceptual issues.)

One of my interviewees explained that she read most of the packet over the weekend mid-workshop. "I found them very helpful…I found that it clarified some of things that I had heard discussed I was now seeing again in writing, that made it stick more, and also introduced me to some things that weren't discussed in detail last week that I am hopeful for thinking about some of the issues-- specifically one article by Brian Kenny from AIT about their program there and his ideas on learner autonomy--that I found very helpful as a completely different way of thinking of things--which I really liked." She was unsure if reading about such topics ahead of time would have allowed the ideas to have so much impact upon first exposure in the Workshop, but felt that the existence of the packet should have been emphasized a little more by facilitators. Another commented that the readings packet was "a great resource…they're good readings, they're going to be really useful to me." And a third remarked, "We were given the readings and the book and I set myself the goal of reading them every evening."

People, interactions, climate

Aiming to establish or support a positive socio-affective climate among students is usually a good move for teachers. Facilitators and staff were obviously friendly and courteous, but in addition the Workshop provided two times dedicated to socializing: a get-together one hour after the close of the first day's sessions, and a picnic at the beach at the end of the first week. The first included snacks and soft drinks at a room across campus near the campus center. For reasons of cost, SI staff had decided not to include more than the minimum in terms of snacks, and no alcohol. One participant commented that organizing dinner together might have been better. Another suggested *beginning* the Workshop with the picnic; thereby establishing social contacts and trust in a setting less threatening than the classroom. One participant commented that they were left to construct their own social

events. Overall it seemed that adequate socialization was achieved by participants acting independently. Costs in dollars and staff time would have been too great, within a generally very limited and full-stretched resources, for anything else to be a practical option, this year (or in the future).

Repeatedly mentioned throughout the duration of the course, and in interview and questionnaire data, are the pleasures participants took in having other like-minded individuals to interact with. (For example, one of the more technologically sophisticated participants, who had had some reservations about equipment, said that s/he learned a lot from two other technologically-experienced participants, noting that they were "not cold and techno-type; they're really good people to begin with"). It is a sad testimony to the isolated nature of teaching that for some individuals even though they were very satisfied with the course, it was this above all else that was the most rewarding part of the experience (30% of participants mentioned this). Some participants had informal discussions with colleagues who worked with the same languages; others drew on shared interests in aspects of materials design. One "commissioned session" was set up by and for those teaching reading with non-roman writing systems, and though the facilitator of this session was knowledgeable, the participants too had much to share.

However, given that the participant body was non-homogenous in terms of its background in and orientation to LA/SDL (as to some extent were the facilitators) and given that there was quite a lot of discussion time, it was surprising to find one participant commenting, "I would like there to be more argument, if necessary, more discussion, more debate…. [Some] people have not been heard from--I know that there are some people who don't buy into this at all and are not speaking up and I think they're getting tech stuff out of this…" "I want to hear from people, so I feel like I want the facilitators to get more information from people, at the same time as that impinges on their autonomy as participants so I think--I'm not sure how irreconcilable the contradiction is there." This perception accords with my own. It may have been a necessary aspect of the Workshop--since learner autonomy was to be facilitated and manifested, if people didn't want to challenge others' conceptions of SDL/LA, and there certainly were a range of understandings, it was perfectly possible for differences of opinion not to be voiced. One participant commented that he had heard from the facilitators that they themselves had different perspectives on SDL/LA, "but I actually don't know… there hasn't been enough presentation of material from the facilitators to enable me to understand how those perspectives are different." Perhaps the non-articulation of differences helped good feelings. One participant commented "I do feel like there's a real sense of collegiality between the facilitators and the participants, and among the participants, and that's as good as it gets." My own observations also suggested a very amiable, yet highly work-focused atmosphere.

ATTAINMENT OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FORMAT AND CONTENT OF WORKSHOP

The original goals (restated from above) as set down in introductory material for the Workshop were

"provide participants with tools and techniques for promoting learner autonomy through:

Incorporating training in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies into the language curriculum

> Creating environments that enable students to self-direct their learning by setting objectives, planning, organizing and completing tasks, and finding solutions to problems
>
> Developing techniques for student self-monitoring through self-assessment
>
> Making effective use of Web-based and other resources to support self-directed learning
>
> Developing self-access Web-based materials and resources."

First, let it be noted that the statement as a whole says that the Workshop will "provide…tools and techniques." The word "provide" is a fairly ambiguous term, if we are to approach the statement from a behavioral objective viewpoint. It suggests that the statement indicates processual goals for the facilitators, not for the learners, and thus though I intend to comment on the "provision" of tools and techniques, the statement says little or nothing about what the participants themselves were to learn, or how much they were to learn. Traditional specialists in goal-setting in curriculum design would criticize it on grounds that it does not lead to measurable specifications for student learning. But I suspect that a commitment to learner autonomy precludes a pre-course specification of student learning goals without contact with and dialogue with students prior to the beginning of the course, which was not possible in this case.

In any case, as the instructors worked together in detailed planning close to the time of the Workshop, they took on a broader additional goal, which is supervenient on the above goals. They decided to try to provide instruction or support learning related to the above statement in a way that was consistent with a valuing of the concepts of self-directed learning (SDL) and learner autonomy (LA). They became persuaded that it would not be consistent with advocating SDL/LA if they were to program the Workshop with a strict lock-step series of activities, and tightly specify requirements for student products. Given this additional goal, evaluator attention to the process of the Workshop, possibly at the expense of attention to the products students generated, is essential.

Formats and process

The first days were scheduled conventionally: several two-hour sessions were allocated to the facilitators, with each having a session topically-related to his/her principal area of expertise. The three topics which did not concern technology were handled (by Savage, Schmidt, and Thompson respectively) in a non-traditional manner. Much of the time was spent in small group discussion sessions, which were introduced and set up by the facilitators, who also managed the plenary "report-back" sessions that concluded them. Using conventional terminology, one might describe this as an inductive approach to the topics in question; Savage articulated the matter more explicitly as a fundamental principle of "pro-autonomy pedagogy" that instruction must begin with learner content.

The next couple of days were primarily introducing Web-based means of supporting self-directed S/FL learner assessment, and "showcasing" several "authoring tools": materials development applications, intended to be used to design Web-based materials for SDL. Time was also allocated to helping participants develop their ideas for a project to be used as the vehicle for their more independent learning during the course of the SI. By Thursday afternoon, participants were reviewing in whole group format the ideas they had begun to develop for projects, and by Friday (and until Tues/Wed) the majority of the remaining time was spent in individual work and one-on-one consultations with the facilitators, with some "commissioned" sessions on follow-up topics led by the facilitators. (These were sessions proposed or requested by the participants.)

A theoretically-interesting area concerns differences which might have existed between those facilitators who had greatest affinity or experience with the SDL/LA area (Savage, Schmidt, & Thompson) and the majority of the participants. Only a handful of participants had any theoretical knowledge of the pedagogical literature on SDL/LA; about a quarter had some formal experience with the area, but mostly at the level of supporting self-instruction. Pedagogical precepts from "pro-autonomy" pedagogy that Savage, Schmidt, & Thompson in particular were working on in the opening settings led to instructional formats that the participants appeared to function in adequately, but which for some were the source of frustration. On Day 1, for example, three participants expressed (either to me or in my hearing) a desire to get on with what they came here for, namely their projects. "We're very task-oriented," said one in explanation. By mid-Workshop, two of these told me they had come to see the value in the approach to the first couple of days. But final questionnaires and interviews still threw up evidence of remaining concerns:

> "there were formal sessions, but they were all small group discussions, and I know a lot of us were feeling kind of frustrated about that, and I think it was a case of the learner expectations not meeting what the facilitators were doing. So at the time I felt 'a lot of this is repetitive… very inefficient use of our time'. Looking back on it, now I can think it got a lot of us to think of this stuff on our own, it got us thinking about it on our own terms. But a lot of the questions, I just did not know what they were talking about. You know, I understand every word in this sentence but I have no idea what the meaning is! So those formal sessions were frustrating in a way but I think they were also useful looking back."

This same participant (in an unrelated part of the interview) commented on one of the commissioned sessions. S/he noted that s/he hadn't got so much out of one such, because s/he was unfamiliar with the topic and hadn't had a chance to think about it beforehand; thus s/he had not had time to develop questions about it from which s/he might have learned; support, presumably, for the approach facilitators took.

An extended comment from one participant, which I believe is representative in light of generally favorable quantitative summary scores, could set worries to rest:

> The only thing would have been perhaps at the beginning a little more input from the facilitators.... I said to Bill that myself and a couple of others were rather surprised that Monday morning first session [Savage presented] for five or ten minutes and then it was an hour and a half of group discussion, and that sort of caught me by surprise; I don't mind being in a group and discussing but it was kind of like, I had nowhere to come from... But then in retrospect, by Tuesday, after we'd done that a couple of times, it was a great learning experience There was a lot of expertise and skill and expertise among the other participants; we weren't all, you know, swimming in shallow water.... It seemed to work out fine.

Some internal contradictions were pointed to in this area by one participant. S/he pointed out that it was still "the facilitators saying how you're going to do this", namely "get into small groups and discuss" when s/he suspected that there were at least two other ways that specific subgroups of participants would have liked to have addressed the matter. "I think there were some people who would have preferred just a straight lecture type presentation, and there were some people who would have preferred taking a specific [learning task or materials] and talking about how this helps [learner autonomy]".

An important issue is the balance between presentations by facilitators and group discussions of conceptual matters, versus individual or consultative work sessions. Attendance was never actually mentioned (either as required or optional) by the facilitators, and though all participants were present on almost all occasions, the physical structure of the Workshop was important in facilitating the use of learner autonomy as learners exercised their own discretion in deciding what parts of the workshop they needed. The three main rooms were close--the main room (Moore 155) joined one lab by an internal passage, so that it was almost possible to hear what was going on in the lab while still being in the main room; the other lab was just across the corridor from these two. One of the participants commented, "thank you so much for letting me work on my own on many occasions. I guess I am one of the examples of an autonomous learner." So a participant who had decided, for example, that a formal session was on a topic of less interest, could leave that session and work on an individual project, while still maintaining contact with the group as a whole.[16]

There were a variety of comments about this balance. Even those who wanted more conceptual material seemed to see that others wanted less, and in the absence of strong negative comments from participants it looks like the balance was adequately struck. One participant said, "I would have preferred more "theory" and less "technology" at the beginning, but recognize that others had different needs"; whereas another person presumably had sufficient "theory" at the beginning, commenting "and I especially liked beginning with thought so it really pushed one to make an informed pedagogical decision."

There were probably a number of reasons why this balance was struck to the general satisfaction of a very diverse group of participants. The facilitators themselves, as a group, to some extent matched the diversity of the participants, with two obviously primarily focused on technological aspects of materials or test development, two (Savage and Schmidt) not particularly concerned with this and more concerned with pedagogy per se, one (Thompson) demonstrating authoring tools while talking about tools for facilitating autonomous learning (learner strategies), and the other two (Chou and Roever) operating more directly with the design of materials for SDL. This diversity also showed up in the formats for the formal sessions, as the technology showcasing sessions were much more teacher-fronted than the others.

But in addition, two design features of the workshop that may also have assisted this and deserve mention. Learner autonomy may be exercised (or fostered) with regard to various levels of the learning/teaching process, including but not limited to pace, content, task, syllabus, and curriculum. In some sense, a learner who only has control over the pace at which s/he moves through a pre-prescribed course or set of tasks is exercising relatively minimal autonomy (though more than in most high school classrooms) whereas a group of learners who are the primary forces in designing a curriculum (like the students of the University of Paris in the 13th century) are obviously operating with plenty of autonomy. In planning the Workshop, facilitators put in place content and formats that were set ahead of time (particularly for the first four days). They also notified participants that they (facilitators) stood ready to offer additional instructor-fronted sessions on topics related to the main thrust of the Workshop during times, particularly from Day 5 on, when there was plenty of unassigned time. They also indicated a willingness to listen to, or actively solicited feedback and

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[16]   The 1960s movement for "Open Classrooms", with its attached philosophies, comes to mind.

input as the sessions were progressing. Savage explicitly states that during this Workshop he was taking an "action research" approach to his own practice, by which he means that he was operating in an explicitly reflective manner, also collecting data from students, to exercise control over his application of a double-loop approach[17] to teaching learner autonomy. Thompson also on several occasions was one of the facilitators leading short feedback sessions or soliciting input from participants about how the Workshop was going. Such stances or requests would have been meaningless, however, if the participants had not actually been able to see action taken as a result of their input. This was most visible in the "commissioned sessions." Besides presentations that appear on the schedule, additional sessions were put in place after Day 4 that included a second session on the topic of motivation, a session on Savage's home program, and a session on concepts in FL reading theory and pedagogy. Attendance at these sessions was a little less than at the main introductory sessions, and this was appropriate. Only those particularly interested in the topic attended, and other students mainly were engaged in individual work on projects, often with one-on-one assistance from technical support staff or several of the other facilitators.

> Students commented very favorably about how this process had played out over the course of the Workshop. "Overall format" received a rating of 4.7 (out of 5 on a Likert-scale item) indicating close to Strong Agreement with the statement "I enjoyed the overall format of the Workshop." Illustrative of this approval is the comment from one student that the Workshop format was "very hands-on and good line-up of experts/resource speakers." A more extended participant comment that speaks very directly to the double-loop aspect of the course was the following, "The whole autonomy implementation was obviously a little experimental or tentative to start with, but probably everybody would end up saying it was very successful, overall."

Content/topics

Since the general topic area of the Workshop was used as a basis for selection of participants, we should expect a good degree of congruence between participant interests and what was presented. In addition, the syllabus flexibility I referred to earlier assisted "course corrections" in this area. It is thus not surprising that I can report good learner satisfaction in this area: they were happy with the variety of perspectives in the Workshop, identified in terms of four areas (learner autonomy, learner strategies, assessment, and technological/authoring tools). Scores on a 5-point scale reflecting "utility to the learner" were 4.6, 4.7, 4.65, and 4.5 respectively. In addition, when asked if the "variety" of perspectives presented was of value, the average score was 4.7.

Learning processes

Can it be assumed that a teacher who is interested in self-directed or autonomous learning is thereby self-directed? Apart from the requirement to conduct a project and a strong encouragement to engage in a project and share progress with the group, I didn't see any additional means whereby the self-directedness of participant learning was "institutionally" supported or developed. One participant suggested that at the end of each day it would have been good for there to have been some reflective sessions, or a requirement: "You need to keep journals."

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[17]   Woodward (1991).

Projects

Besides formal presentations, and commissioned smaller group discussion sessions, the remaining clearly distinguishable and publicly-visible learning-related activity during the Workshop was "work on projects" (with or without assistance). It has been a more-or-less constant feature of SI Workshops that participants either alone or in groups turn out a final "project." The project is often required to be conceptualized ahead of time, may be a continuation of work in progress, and is intended to be a vehicle for applying and extending the learning that participants engage in during the Workshop. It may also be a product that they can take back with them and be itself a dissemination vehicle. However, past workshops have been as long as four or five weeks; this one was not even two weeks in length; plus it was supposed to emphasize learner autonomy. In early planning, facilitators made the decision not to require or press for *finished* projects. This appears to have been a wise decision. Several participants commented that this absence of a deadline made them willing to take on challenging projects. Both of the returnee participants compared this point to the previous SI Workshop's requirement for a finished product and commented favorably on the change.

I saw no evidence that the absence of a requirement for a finished piece of work resulted in "goofing off," however. Participants appeared to be hard at work throughout most of the time I spent observing, once the main sessions of the first four days were over. Some were so keen to get started that they were at work right from day one. But there was also some formal pressure, in any case, because regardless of a requirement for "finished" products, participants were required to present what they were attempting to the whole group, or at least all those who cared to attend. (Such sessions began on Day 6.)

The requirement of a project suggests a commitment to experiential learning throughout past and present SI Workshops. In the present case it fits in particularly well with the ethos of this Workshop. In working on their projects, participants pursued their own goals in light of their own assessment of their learning needs and interests, in consultation with Workshop facilitators. The last point is important. The skeptical reader may wish to be assured that participants were *not* simply turned free at the end of four days to do their own thing for the remainder of their time in Hawai'i. The reader with a greater interest in learner autonomy, as well as an interest in this Workshop's attempt to work in a "double-loop" mode, may be aware of the considerable emphasis placed by advocates of learner autonomy on the role of the counselor or consultant. (See e.g., Riley, 1997.)

The primary counseling or consultation format was one-on-one, in the course of work. When most visible it was generally prompted by technical problems, but non-observational data indicates there was also considerable conceptual discussion between participants and facilitators. The initial occasion when counseling or feedback about projects was provided was in a sustained plenary counseling session occupying the whole of the second half of Day 4, when all facilitators listened to the participants one by one presenting what they intended to do, and provided feedback. Reflecting back on this, one interviewee commented that there were "too many ex cathedra" statements and a tendency to push a few participants to defend their work as if they were "defending this-- your thesis…before your examiner…That struck me as a bit inappropriate for the setting." Facilitators, in remarks to the group before a subsequent session, recognized that they might have been better off timetabling this phase of the Workshop in parallel sessions; separately, in remarks to me, they

recognized that one or two individuals were provided with more intensive and focused feedback than might have been desirable. Yet again, one of the individuals whose work was considered closely at this time, later made a presentation at the Symposium, after which s/he commented that receiving "frank criticism" was a particularly valuable part of the SI.

Were the projects, completed or not, effective means for fostering participant learning in an autonomous mode? This may appear to be the most immediately relevant question to ask about this part of the Workshop, but it may not be the best. In fact, I suspect that the projects were the *only* appropriate means of learning, once there had been some initial presentations, that would have been consistent with the ethos of the workshop and satisfied the need for practical products tailored to the varying situations of the participants. That is to say, the alternative would have been exposure and discussion only with no application, which would not only have been inefficient[18], but conceptually contradictory. Participants gave the idea of doing a project a 4.85 (where 5 = *strongly agree*) when asked if they "found the process of doing a project useful and relevant." One of several participants who amplified this stated, "this activity directed and focused what I wanted to accomplish as a result of having attended this institute." The projects were, then, effective per se rather than in comparison to anything else; they were a useful complement to the non-experiential components of the workshop (such as early authoring tool and self-assessment demonstrations, etc.). Given this, the question to be asked is, were they timetabled appropriately and supported appropriately? The first is a question that takes us back to the previous issue of balance among the components of the workshop, the second also takes us back to the matter of facilities.

Although most participants agreed that the length of the Workshop was appropriate, the Likert-scale item that addressed this topic on the questionnaire produced the lowest mean score of all such items: 4.25. Seven people (35% of the group) would have liked more time; though three (15%) mentioned that it was more or less "just right." Here it is hard for me to separate a natural desire for more time with free accommodation and a stipend in Hawai'i from a desire to complete the project itself, though 4 of the 7 specifically mention the project: for example, "As an inexperienced person on creating Web-based materials, I would like to have one whole week to work on the individual project." On the other hand, 1 person of the th3ree who found the length just right said this was "particularly since a completed project was not expected at the end."

Was there adequate faculty support for the projects? Certainly there was a favorable "teacher-student" ratio, of 20:5 (or 20:6, if we count in non-facilitator technical support personnel). Since most (though not all) of the projects involved technology, however, there were probably times when the combination of a very wide range of proficiency, attempts at technologically-demanding projects, and the limitations of technology and authoring tools themselves at this stage may have held a few people back from time to time, or stretched the facilitators themselves. With project development and support almost the only activity towards the end of the Workshop, Director Schmidt's comment that everyone was "pooped" at the end speaks to this point. This is supposed to be an intensive program, so if students, teachers, and staff were stretched, that is not a bad thing. Were they stretched to or beyond the limit? I did not see evidence of that, except in one or two cases of technical difficulties, where it was the equipment (software and hardware), rather than the

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[18]   Here I am in accord with the apparently-espoused position of the UH NFLRC, over many SIs, on the value of experiential learning in this setting.

individuals involved, who were overstretched. Again, the quantitative data suggests most participants were satisfied, in which case the following participant comment might exemplify this: "good basic instructions at start and good guidance during process and completion."

Though a completed final project was not required, projects when they reach a stage suitable for presentation will be made available to SI Workshop participants; they will not be located at UH NFLRC or hosted on NFLRC webpages but will reside on participants own home pages, but the NFLRC pages will contain a set of links to the projects. (This was not available for review at time of writing.)

OVERALL

I did not apply a pre-test post-test design to the evaluation of this workshop, for obvious reasons.[19] And though I have commented on the "projects-in-progress," as they are unfinished and also incorporate some or much that participants knew before coming to the Workshop, they cannot stand as a measure of overall achievement. So in order to address the matter of the participants' learning, I draw (as before) on my observations and the comments of facilitators and staff.

I am an experienced teacher of academically-gifted adults who are experienced professionals. In general, if given time to become familiar with a learning situation and cultural styles, I can usually tell if such individuals are bored or frustrated, or if (on the other hand) they are struggling. With no explicit requirement to attend sessions or produce more than a minimal finished product, with plenty of opportunities for feedback, and with the ample distractions of a tourist Mecca, these confident and mature individuals would, in my judgement, have made any dissatisfaction known, both in words and through "voting with their feet." Indeed, there were enough small examples of this among the more immediately task-oriented individuals, that my case is strengthened. But overall, this group of responsible professionals were being sufficiently engaged, and sufficiently rewarded with what they were learning, either from facilitators, from each other, or from their own individual efforts, that they ignored the sun and sand, and spent the vast majority of eight working days inside a building itself of no particular architectural merit and containing no other attractions besides those the Workshop provided.

One reason why LA/SDL is a very appropriate topic for a workshop for professional development is that the concepts are themselves inherent in the concept of professionalism. Professional codes require continued professional education for a member of a profession. (In some areas of medicine and the law, formal evidence of continuing professional learning is a prerequisite for maintaining professional licensing and credentials.) Admittedly, teaching is a "semi-profession," but the SI's reasonably thorough selection process (honed over nine years) ensures that those attending Workshops are among the more professional of post-secondary educators--they certainly draw individuals who are interested in and capable of self-learning. Consequently, I as evaluator and you as professionally concerned readers of this report have reasons to trust, generally, the judgement of the Workshop participants concerning their learning on this Workshop. They would not have been

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[19] The emergent syllabus design precluded it; the process emphasis makes it less relevant; the most important part of the learning that went on in the SI is not available for "test" at the last day of the SI but rather takes place *after* the participants have returned home; other than more likert-scale items of dubious nature, a true post-test would be far too time-consuming to design.

satisfied if they hadn't learned what they wanted, in as much depth as they wanted, and in the styles and formats that they wanted. Accordingly, their summary remarks concerning satisfaction, and in particular, the meeting of expectations, should weigh heavily in the evaluation balance of this Workshop. And what do they say? 15 out of 20 say their expectations "strongly agree" that their expectations of the workshop were met, and the remaining 5 "agree" that their expectations were met, leading to an average score of 4.75 out of 5 for this quantitative item. Dissenting voices? One individual's expectations were *not* met in the area of balance: "I don't think it was presented that the main thing was technology and yet I think that's how it's coming across. I have a bit of a hard time with that--even though I'm learning a lot about the tech stuff and having a good time. I mean I feel like I'm at this great academic retreat — I'm perfectly happy — it's an incredible luxury for me, but it's not what I thought it would be."

In discussing what they had learned, participants mentioned two areas. First, conceptual matters, much of which had apparently been unfamiliar to many if not most participants. For example,

> "Well, I think you can divide it into what I would call the factual information, or the theory…that's been a big part of it for me.

or

> "It's refined my sense of the role of a language counselor.[20]"

and

> "It's broadened my idea of what autonomy is…"

Second, they referred to beginning to learn, or developing yet further, their command of technological resources in the area of web-based materials for self-directed learning.

> "… It has encouraged me to look on the web for resources for [my students]"

> "I already had a site that someone else coded for me…. I'm making it much more useful."

I doubt if there can be any meaningful teacher development without practice and reflection. Even the most dedicated and gifted adult learners may not "learn" a great deal about pedagogical matters in eight days with no opportunity to put what they have "learned" into practice. Something more constrained, like the programming of Java applets, can perhaps be completely learned in an intense short course, but when there is a pedagogical intent, even such technical learning will be to no good end unless applied. And application is related to attitudes. Thus it is a good thing that I can report a very large number of participants commenting on the various means by which they will apply what they have "learned," in some case simply thinking about things differently, as this quote exemplifies:

> "Some of what I've learned has just been…well, maybe I'd start applying this, I'd better start asking myself the same questions, changing my approach to thinking about tasks, or problems…"

Here is a selection of summary comments from the participants:

> "I'm very happy with it. I've gotten an enormous amount out of it. It's helped me clarify what my interests are and where I want to go from here in terms of my career, and it's given me a whole lot to think about in terms of language and learning. I'm going to be very sad to leave and not just because this is Hawai'i. It's been really an amazing experience, I've enjoyed it immensely."

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[20]   One who helps a learner learn a language that the counselor themselves is not familiar with.

"My goals were overachieved. It was a pleasant, unexpected, fruitful result! By the fall you will see a lot of faculty projects on [his three] campuses, based on the knowledge I received here, so think about additional 36 language faculty [members] as active participants"

"It has been excellent. I have learned an enormous amount, had many of my ideas turned on their heads and shaken out so that I've gotten a completely new way of looking at teaching and learning of languages. I wish I could attend this kind of workshop/seminar every year — it was revitalizing"

"In many ways I didn't know what to expect. I was genuinely surprised by the nature of this workshop. I found everyone so interesting and knowledgeable I hardly ever felt like skipping sessions in favor of catching a good wave."

"The workshop was a stimulating experience. I go away with a better appreciation of how disparate issues, such as autonomy, motivation, task, technology, and pedagogy fit in a general framework to promote language learning."

"Extremely well done in a short time"

"Hallelujah!"

With these comments and the quantitative data that back them up, I feel we can be optimistic that on returning to their home sites, the participants of the 1999 SI are now ready to start *really* learning what they learned on their brief visit to Hawai'i.

THE SYMPOSIUM

The Symposia are intended by UH NFLRC as a means to enable SI participants to share their knowledge and broaden the interaction possible in the Workshop alone to include and address the wider educational community. The general aim is to facilitate learning and exchanges among interested parties on the topic of the SI, this time utilizing a conference format.

INITIAL ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Invitations to attend and to present at what was planned as a three-day mini-conference were sent out in the same manner as the Workshop had been publicized. As with the Workshop, presenters are given some financial support under the terms of the grant. Prospective participants are asked to submit an abstract; the acceptance rate, staff informed me, was high compared with that for applications to attend the Workshop, and was around 90%. Information about the Symposium, including the schedule and abstracts, was posted on the NFLRC Web site.

DATA AND PROCESS

As with the Workshop, I attended almost all of the time--in this case, two and a half days (a Thursday, Friday, and Saturday morning); I also co-presented one plenary paper (with one of the Workshop facilitators) and gave a concurrent sessions paper (by request). I distributed evaluation questionnaires initially around lunch on the second day, and they were available to be picked up and dropped off from then onward. This was because not all participants would stay to the end of the Symposium, and even if they did there was no way to ensure they dropped off questionnaires before

leaving. Rate of return was approximately 75%.[21] In addition to the questionnaires, and my own observations (and participation), I also draw on a small amount of data obtained from some of the same interviews I collected which mainly pertained to the Workshop.

The questionnaire itself (see Appendix C) had a format identical to that of the Workshop, with a few questions being different. Designing it ahead of time I believed that many issues would be the same in events of this sort--organization, availability and relevance of information, and so on. In collecting responses, I did not separately identify those of the Workshop participants, all but one of whom were also attending the Symposium. I estimate that about half of the returned questionnaires were from this group, and their qualitative answers had a distinguishable viewpoint.

Data: the questionnaire provides Likert-scale items, reduced to means (I did not assess variance); short answer questions supplementing the numerical items (which were not always completed), and a final section with 5 questions, for each of which three or four lines were given to be completed in prose only. I have summarized this data and supplemented it with my own observations.

FINDINGS

About 50 people (not counting staff) attended the Symposium. Nineteen of these were the Workshop participants. At least 90% of the 50 were FL professionals from the post-secondary sector; two participants identified themselves as high or intermediate school teachers, and at least one participant was not an educator but had governmental affiliation. No elementary teachers attended. There were in addition 1 software programmer and 1 individual whose primary responsibilities were of a technical support nature. In terms of languages taught, the LCTLs still predominated, though there were also more of the commonly-taught languages represented than was the case for the Workshop. At least 25% of the participants were from outside the USA, and the majority were from outside Hawai'i. Most of the non-US participants presented, so their prominence helped to give the Symposium an international flavor.[22]

I will group together one area of concern the answers to which might by now seem almost predictable. Questionnaire items addressed (a) availability of information ahead of time, (b) organization, (c) staff helpfulness, (d) technical support and facilities. Respondents were uniformly highly satisfied with these matters, and means for the quantitative Likert scale questions addressing these four areas were 4.6, 4.8, 4.9 and 4.7, respectively.

The length of any short conference of this sort is an important judgment call for administrators or planners. On this occasion, most people seemed satisfied with the duration of the Symposium. Average score on the question which addressed this issue was 4.5. A few Workshop participants would rather have allocated some of the time to a longer Workshop, and a few Symposium participants would rather have had a longer Symposium. Commented one, "three days is not enough

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[21]   Some uncertainty here. Since the Symposium was free, registration and attendance was not closely monitored; a few attendees may have been present only for a morning or an afternoon; at least one person gave in two evaluation forms (!). Nevertheless, the rate of return is higher than I expected, perhaps because many questionnaires were given out personally, and there were repeated entreaties for their return.

[22]   Of course, the target audience for the grant supporting the SI is US teachers of the LCTLs.; but the presence and contribution of international participants is a definite assist to the professional development of the actual target population.

when you come this far"--an understandable comment for participants arriving from Europe or East Asia, perhaps.

The overall format was also found satisfactory by most participants (4.4). There were dissenters on both sides concerning minor matters like length of presentations and amount of time for discussion. One participant commented, "The times allocated to [for papers] in this conference were longer than any I've been to [in Linguistics]…I felt it made the presentations more relaxed, people were really able to say what they wanted to say." On the other hand, a few others said there was not enough time for discussion. This could have been because many presenters, despite all being individually told to leave time for discussion (15 of the allotted 45 minutes), talked right through the discussion time, despite having been given time warnings. Though this seems to be a simple matter, it is a problem that (in my own conference-going experience) comes up repeatedly.[23]

There is a more serious concern with the presentations than the above minor matter, however. Comments from several participants, and more importantly from the SI facilitators themselves (as well as my own observations) suggest that some of the presentations did not meet the organizers" own high standards, though what implications can be drawn from this for future Symposia I am not sure. The precipitating problem was a shortage of submissions overall, so NFLRC organizers, having committed to a three-day conference, were obliged to accept 90% of submissions in order to even have a two-and-a-half day conference. Then, as NFLRC staff mentioned to me, the abstracts were not sufficiently detailed, and potential presenters not sufficiently known to staff, that they could adequately gauge the quality of presentations in every case. It had been decided to have morning sessions as 'plenaries', and afternoon sessions as concurrent (three strands). A number of participants were not convinced that the strengths of all morning sessions were great enough to justify their being in plenary format. An illustrative participant comment was "some plenaries should have been switched with concurrent sessions," and I believe staff would agree. Overall I would say (and a number of participants commented to this effect) that the quality of presentations was very variable. It is notable that those attending the Symposium who had also attended the Workshop were more likely to be critical of the Symposium presentations. In fairness to the abstract reviewers committee, one must recognize that if the NFLRC fulfills its mandate to introduce new ideas to the US FL, it might expect not to have so many very good abstracts submitted by members of that same community. This may have been a factor on this occasion. If this seems likely to be a factor in future Symposia, it would be a reason to plan for shorter Symposia, rather than accept abstracts of uncertain quality.

Other critical comments on the nature of the presentations appear to be divided between those who wanted more practical sessions and those who wanted more conceptually challenging sessions. One participant commented that some sessions "were a bit simplistic for this audience" and I would agree; however, referring to one presentation that I myself thought was simplistic, at least one participant

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[23]   Though this appears to be a minor matter, I believe it deserves serious attention. In the Workshop, participants were accustomed to a high level of interaction. In a small miniconference, there's no a priori reason why this should not also be present; and since it is widely said that meeting and talking to people is the best thing about conferences, surely steps should be taken to ensure this happens. Yet apparently keeping a traditional format and telling presenters, however strongly, 'Leave time for discussion!' doesn't work. Presenters were told bluntly to conclude their remarks, and they blithely and blatantly ignored such requests. And I have seen this at other conferences too. The only answer, it seems, is to have sessions which don't have the standard format.

indicated that it "could have been a plenary." Overall satisfaction with the quality of the plenaries was one of the lowest figures (4.0); the afternoon concurrent sessions were rated higher (4.2). As with the Workshop, but to an even greater extent, the Symposium, participants constituted an extremely wide range of experience on this topic. Some local participants had come to the Symposium knowing nothing about the topic. Some participants had just completed an intensive eight-day workshop on the topic, and a few were academics working actively in the area. What one group thought just right, others thought simplistic or a rehash of stuff they had already heard.

I should not stress the negative, because in any case, the data do not back up a strongly negative assessment. Participants found the topics applicable (4.5) valued the variety of perspectives (4.4), and when asked if their expectations were met, they either agreed or agreed very much, in that the average response to this question, numerically, was 4.5.

For many participants, the most useful aspect of the Symposium was its social interaction. This is, of course, a typical function of conferences. Experienced conference goers emphasize that conferences are places to meet people. The traditional conference format allows for this only as a by-product of putting a large number of people in a relatively small space, however. A number of Symposium participants emphasized that the coffee breaks, and in particular, the lunches, were particularly useful in supporting interaction. I am happy to be able to report that for these three lunches, NFLRC staff were finally able to escape the food-service monopoly that had dogged the Workshop's gourmet aspirations, and cater lunches from several good-quality local restaurants. These were a big hit. And though there was no explicit coaching by staff on the need for interaction, I can report myself that this happened very comfortably. One Workshop participant explained, "some of the Workshop participants, the very first lunchtime, we found ourselves heading towards the same table, so we said 'hang on, we can't do that' so we consciously, and autonomously dispersed and I went and sat with one or two other people ... I think the Workshop participants were sensitive to that."

The UH NFLRC SI has used a two-part structure of Workshop and Symposium on most if not every occasion, and the intent has been to maximize dissemination. The relationship between Workshop and Symposium has been and continues to be the subject of reflection by SI staff. If the Symposium is placed after the Workshop, it cannot be an adequately culminating activity for Workshop participants unless it attracts sufficient presenters whose expertise is as great as or better than those of the Workshop facilitators. On this occasion, it did provide some of this, and for the Workshop participants it may have served to assure them that the account provided by the facilitators of the area in question was congruent with the various different perspectives provided independently by the presenters at the Symposium, most of whom had not been involved in the Workshop. A representative comment from a Workshop participant: "I think the symposium's been an excellent follow-on to the Workshop." There were also comments which suggested that less experienced Workshop participants would have found the Symposium presentations indigestible if the SI had begun with the Symposium, but as a result of the Workshop, they were well able to benefit from the Symposium.

One participant, when asked what could have been done better, said "make everyone give a paper." This quote reminded me that in the world of academic conferences, a number of different variants exist, whose names sometimes indicate their characteristics. "Symposium" sometimes means a by-invitation only event in which all present present--that is, all participants give papers; there are no

by-standers and all are relatively expert; and consequently, discussion is particularly possible and useful.[24] Given the range of possibilities which do actually exist in the conference area, I think that the Workshop and Symposium did not show an equal amount of creative thinking. The Symposium was a fairly conventionally-structured short conference: plenaries, lunch, papers, one entertainment event (a hula lesson). The only timetabled element that was out of the ordinary was the summaries that began Days 2 and 3, and carried over content and continuity from the first day to the second, and from the second to the third. This was a nice touch that was mentioned by several participants appreciatively. But given the emphasis on non-teacher-centered formats in the Workshop, the traditional lecture format of the Symposium seemed a little incongruous.

The point is that any SI "Symposium" might benefit from being thought through *de novo*, because if there is a Workshop in attendance on the Symposium, precisely because of this the Symposium is not and cannot be a typical free-standing short academic conference. Furthermore, if the Workshop represents any kind of critique of, or recent development of education, there is all the more reason to review the Symposium forms in light of that. This year, self-directed learning or learner autonomy presents a challenge to ordinary education; the projected future topic of "distance education" does so as well.[25]

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CONCLUDING SECTION

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As we look toward the next set of three Summer Institutes, an overarching concern is going to be, regrettably, money. No recommendations for improvement I might make in this report will be given much consideration if they are going to involve more money, as the NFLRC will actually have less over the next cycle, and less from year one to year two, apparently. A better, more extended evaluation report was called for for the present year; and obviously I could recommend an even more extensive one for next year, in the hope that I might get asked to do it; but I suspect that the next evaluation will necessarily be a bare-bones operation.[26] About the only area where I think the Director and the Board might wish to review plans with a view to usefully redistributing resources in an era of economic stringency concerns the relationship between the Symposium and the Workshop. On this occasion, not all the presenters were found satisfactory, and the format, though apparently in itself successful, was quite traditional and almost out of keeping with the cutting-edge nature of the SI topic. Alternative formats might be worth considering. Could the Symposium be more tightly integrated with the Workshop? Would it be worth considering more interactive formats--perhaps in which Workshop participants have a chance to engage more closely with Symposium presenters? Would presenters value a structure in which all involved are experts and have extended time to discuss their work, and the future directions of the area? More radically, as the budget becomes tighter and tighter, would there be more bang for the buck simply from eliminating the Symposium

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[24] Or consider what Plato, Socrates, and Alcibiades might have understood the word to mean, in the original Symposium.

[25] Handbooks on conference design and administration appear in the Library of Congress catalog under call number AS6.

and inviting the best of those who would have otherwise presented papers to be Workshop facilitators? I leave this to the Board and the Director for their consideration.

Overall, my view is that another very creditable performance was turned in by a very experienced staff. Participants were generally extremely satisfied, both tyros and old hands; and even the facilitators learned from each other or in some cases learned from their own experiences. Since Summer Institutes never repeat the same topic, there is little incentive for the evaluator to point out minor flaws; I can think of just a couple of sessions in the Workshop that might have been improved on a second attempt, for example; but there never will be a second attempt, so I will not discuss that matter. Student endurance could be increased, and some money could be saved, by turning down the air-conditioning, but these dollars will not accrue to the SI budget, unfortunately. My summative comment would be that another high quality operation was carried out, maximizing use of limited resources; and the general objective of strengthening US FL education was undoubtedly achieved.

[background music UP; roll credits; fade to black]

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[26]   I would recommend, however, that the evaluator be requested to consult on the formulation of the goals for the SI next time. This may require selecting the evaluator quite early.

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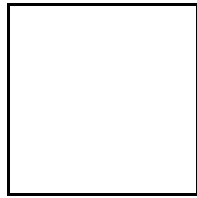
WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 14

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 9:00	Official opening of Workshop: welcoming remarks, explanation of schedule
9:00 – 10:00	Understanding and defining learner autonomy (Savage)
10:00 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 12:00	Understanding and defining learner autonomy (Savage, cont'd.)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Discussion of participant projects
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Continue participant presentations and discuss technologies they intend to use.
5:00 – 6:30	Reception (Student Services Center 412)

TUESDAY, JUNE 15

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Learner strategies for self-directed learning (Schmidt)
10:00 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 12:00	Learner strategies for self-directed learning (Thompson)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Technology session: Developing self-assessment tools (Roever)
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Technology session: Developing self-assessment tools (Roever, cont'd.)
4:30 – 6:30	Monitored open computer lab

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Models for self-directed learning
10:00 – 10:30	Break

10:30 – 12:00	Technology session: demo of Chinese lesson done with DreamWeaver2, a Web authoring tool (Chou)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Technology session: hands-on experience with DreamWeaver2 (Chou)
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Technology session: hands-on experience with DreamWeaver2 (Chou)
4:30 – 6:30	Monitored open computer lab

THURSDAY, JUNE 17

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Technology session: demo of Russian lesson done with GLAS (Thompson)
10:00 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 12:00	Technology session: hands-on experience with GLAS (Thompson)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Propose a project in consultation with workshop facilitators
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Propose a project in consultation with workshop facilitators
4:30 – 6:30	Monitored open computer lab

FRIDAY, JUNE 18

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Technology session: work in small groups with workshop facilitators

- assessment (Roever)
- authoring tools (Chou)
- strategies for independent learning (Savage, Schmidt)
- building strategy training into traditional classrooms & materials (Thompson)

| 10:00 – 10:30 | Break |
| 10:30 – 12:00 | Technology session (cont'd.): work in small groups with workshop facilitators |

- assessment (Roever)
- authoring tools (Chou)
- strategies for independent learning (Savage, Schmidt)
- building strategy training into traditional classrooms & materials (Thompson)

12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Begin work on individual projects
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:00	Continue work on individual projects
4:30 – 6:30	Magic Island picnic

SATURDAY, JUNE 19

| 9:00 – 12:00 | Monitored open computer lab |

| 12:30 | Enjoy our beautiful island! |

SUNDAY, JUNE 20

| 9:00 – 2:00 | Monitored open computer lab |

MONDAY, JUNE 21

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Continue work on individual projects
10:00 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 12:00	Progress reports by individual participants
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Consult with workshop facilitators on individual projects
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Consult with workshop facilitators on individual projects
4:30 – 6:30	Monitored open computer lab

TUESDAY, JUNE 22

| 7:00 – 8:30 | Open computer lab |
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Continue work on individual projects
10:00 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 12:00	Progress reports by individual participants
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Consult with workshop facilitators on individual projects
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Consult with workshop facilitators on individual projects
4:30 – 6:30	Monitored open computer lab

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23

7:00 – 8:30	Open computer lab
7:30 – 8:30	Coffee/tea & pastries
8:30 – 10:00	Continue work on individual projects
10:00 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 12:00	Progress reports by individual participants
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Workshop evaluation
2:30 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:30	Workshop wrap-up. Pau hana
4:30 – 6:30	Monitored open computer lab
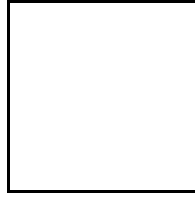
SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

all events held in Jefferson Hall unless otherwise noted	THURSDAY, JUNE 24	FRIDAY, JUNE 25	SATURDAY, JUNE 26
7:30–8:30	**Open lab for e-mail** Moore Hall 155B	**Open lab for e-mail** Moore Hall 155B	**Open lab for e-mail** Moore Hall 155B
8:00–8:30	**Coffee/tea & pastries** outside of Asia Room	**Coffee/tea & pastries** outside of Asia Room	**Coffee/tea & pastries** Keoni
8:30–9:00	**Symposium opening** (Schmidt) Asia Room	**Introductory session** (Thompson) Asia Room	**Introductory session** (Savage) Keoni
9:00–9:45	**Rebecca Oxford** *Language learning strategies in the context of autonomy* Asia Room	**George Gutsche** *Technology and learner autonomy: New perspectives* Asia Room	**George Jacobs** *Toward learner autonomy via cooperative learning* Keoni
9:45–10:00	*break*	*break*	*break*
10:00–10:45	**Felicity Kjisik & Joan Nordlund** *From here to autonomy: An adaptable approach for universities* Asia Room	**Rainer Kussler** *How to achieve learner autonomy in a CALL environment* Asia Room	**Carsten Roever** *Web-based language testing: Opportunities and challenges* Keoni
10:45–11:30	**Graham Crookes & William Savage** *Teachers as autonomous learners in a workshop on self-directed leaning* Asia Room	**Mary Spratt & Gillian Humphreys** *Teachers' and students' contributions to learner autonomy in the classroom* Asia Room	**Richard Schmidt** *Motivation, strategies, pedagogy, and autonomy* Keoni
11:30–12:45	**Lunch** – Garden level	**Lunch** – Garden level	**Lunch** – Garden level

all events held in Jefferson Hall unless otherwise noted	THURSDAY, JUNE 24	FRIDAY, JUNE 25	SATURDAY, JUNE 26
1:00–1:45 Asia Room	**Craig Rodine** *Autonomous language learning is strongly supported by Internet voice conferencing*	**Graham Crookes** *On the interface between critical/alternative pedagogy and autonomous/self-directed S/FL learning*	
Kamehameha Room	**Madeline Spring** *Creating individualized instruction in Chinese: Some high- and low-tech models*	**Yoko Koike** *Developing autonomy of learning in a project-based, telecommunications-focused course in advanced Japanese*	
Kaniela Room	**Tsung-yuan Hsiao** *Investigating use of Likert scales in language learning strategy research*	**Yea-Fen Chen** *Building a learning community and developing learner autonomy*	
1:45–2:30 Asia Room	**Carol Kinahan** *Communication strategies: How they may help learners notice the gaps in their interlanguage*	**George Jacobs** *Similarities between student and workplace groups*	
Kamehameha Room	**Vasu Renganathan** *Developing the skill for fast reading with interactive Web exercises*	**Sarah Withee** *Using the computer to teach Japanese letter-writing skills*	
Kaniela Room	**Fabio Girelli-Carasi** *"OGGIE E DOMANI": A fully interactive Italian language course on-line*	**Emi Sakamoto-Jog** *A manual of "Self-Directed Language Learning Activities"*	
2:30–2:45	*break*	*break*	
2:45–3:30 Asia Room	**Phyllis Larson** *Developing content-based instructional modules for Japanese in a Web environment*	**William Savage** *Assessing learner autonomy and language learning*	
Kamehameha Room	**Xunfeng Xu** *Use of on-line English/Chinese bilingual texts for learning legal English*	**Erika Gilson** *Creative writing in the target language: An enabling activity?*	
Kaniela Room	**Tim Murphey** *Innovative strategies for increasing autonomy*	**Alan Peterka** *Pinyin practice Web pages demonstration*	
4:00–5:30 Jefferson Lanai	**Welcome reception**	**Hula lesson!**	

1999 NFLRC SUMMER INSTITUTE
NATIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER
University of Hawai'i

Workshop
June 14 – 26, 1999

EVALUATION

Your assistance with this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Please take a few minutes to assess the effectiveness of the Workshop. Completing it carefully will aid those who participate in future summer institutes. Thank you very much!

PART I

1. Which best describes your institutional affiliation?

   ❑ Elementary   ❑ High School   ❑ Adult/Community College

   ❑ Intermediate   ❑ College/University ❑ Other _____

2. What is your position title?_____

   _____

3. Please indicate the language (s) that you teach or that represents your primary area of interest:

   _____

4. Years of experience in S/FL education _____

5. Briefly describe any previous experience with self-directed learning: _____

   _____

   _____

_____

_____

PART II

Please check the phrase or statement that best applies to your experience. Feel free to add any comments to clarify or enhance your response.

1. How did you find out about the 1999 NFLRC Summer Institute?

    ❐ Journal/Newsletter   ❐ Flyer   ❐ Email/WWW   ❐ Conference   ❐ Colleague

    Other? Comment _____

    _____

    _____

2. The information I received about the Workshop/Summer Institute prior to coming was adequate for my needs.

    ❐ Strongly Agree   ❐ Agree   ❐ Neutral   ❐ Disagree   ❐ Strongly Disagree
    Comment _____

    3. The Workshop was well organized and well run.

    ❐ Strongly Agree   ❐ Agree   ❐ Neutral   ❐ Disagree   ❐ Strongly Disagree
    Comment _____

    4. The staff was helpful.

    ❐ Strongly Agree   ❐ Agree   ❐ Neutral   ❐ Disagree   ❐ Strongly Disagree
    Comment _____

5. The Workshop facilities and technical support were adequate.

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Comment

6. The length of the Workshop (two weeks) was appropriate.

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Comment

7. I enjoyed the overall format of the Workshop (technology-based hands-on sessions, demos, group discussions, etc.).

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Comment

8. I found the variety of perspectives represented by Workshop facilitators and participants valuable.

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Comment

The following issues addressed at the Workshop are applicable/ relevant to my professional goals:

Learner autonomy

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Learner strategies

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Assessment/self-assessment

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Technology/authoring tools

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____

_____

_____

10. I found the process of developing a project useful and relevant.

❏ Strongly Agree   ❏ Agree   ❏ Neutral   ❏ Disagree   ❏ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____

_____

_____

11. I was satisfied with the facilitation of the Workshop.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____

_____

_____

12. Overall, my expectations of the Workshop were met.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____

_____

_____

PART III

Please respond to the following questions. Your comments will assist in the preparation of the evaluation report.

1. Please describe your most valuable learning experience(s) at the Workshop (e.g., specific session, conversation with a Workshop facilitator/another participant).

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

2. What effect will the Workshop have on your teaching/professional development?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. How do you expect to share/disseminate what you have learned with colleagues at your home institution? _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. What could we have done better at the Workshop?_____
_____
_____
_____

5. What did we do particularly well?_____
_____
_____
_____

MAHALO FOR YOUR TIME!

1999 NFLRC SUMMER INSTITUTE
NATIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER
University of Hawaiʻi

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING:
materials & strategies

Symposium
June 24 – 26, 1999

EVALUATION

Your assistance with this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Please take a few minutes to assess the effectiveness of the Symposium. Completing it carefully will aid those who participate in future summer institutes. Thank you very much!

PART I

1. Which best describes your institutional affiliation?

    ❏ Elementary ❏ High School ❏ Adult/Community College

    ❏ Intermediate ❏ College/University ❏ Other _____

2. What is your position title?_____

    _____

3. Please indicate the language (s) that you teach or that represents your primary area of interest:

    _____

4. Years of experience in S/FL education _____

5. Briefly describe your interest/previous experience in self-directed learning/learner autonomy:

    _____

    _____

    _____

_____

_____

PART II

Please check the phrase or statement that best applies to your experience. Feel free to add any comments to clarify or enhance your response.

1. How did you find out about the 1999 NFLRC Summer Institute?

   ❒ Journal/Newsletter   ❒ Flyer   ❒ Email/WWW   ❒ Conference   ❒ Colleague

   Other? Comment _____

   _____

   _____

2. The information I received about the Symposium/Summer Institute prior to coming was adequate for my needs.

   ❒ Strongly Agree   ❒ Agree   ❒ Neutral   ❒ Disagree   ❒ Strongly Disagree

   Comment _____

   _____

   _____

3. The Symposium was well organized and well run.

   ❒ Strongly Agree   ❒ Agree   ❒ Neutral   ❒ Disagree   ❒ Strongly Disagree

   Comment _____

   _____

   _____

4. The staff was helpful.

   ❒ Strongly Agree   ❒ Agree   ❒ Neutral   ❒ Disagree   ❒ Strongly Disagree

   Comment _____

   _____

   _____

5. The Symposium facilities and technical support were adequate.

   ❒ Strongly Agree   ❒ Agree   ❒ Neutral   ❒ Disagree   ❒ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

6. The length of the Symposium (3 days) was appropriate.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

7. I enjoyed the overall format of the Symposium (mix of plenaries & concurrent sessions).

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

8. Topics addressed at the Symposium were applicable/relevant to my professional goals.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

9. The variety of topics at the Symposium was satisfactory.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

10. I found the variety of perspectives represented at the Symposium valuable.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

11. I was satisfied with the quality of the plenary sessions.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

12. I was satisfied with the quality of the concurrent afternoon sessions.

❒ Strongly Agree   ❒ Agree   ❒ Neutral   ❒ Disagree   ❒ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

13. Overall, my expectations of the Symposium were met.

❒ Strongly Agree   ❒ Agree   ❒ Neutral   ❒ Disagree   ❒ Strongly Disagree

Comment _____
_____
_____

PART III

Please respond to the following questions. Your comments will assist in the preparation of the evaluation report.

1. Please describe your most valuable learning experience(s) at the Symposium.

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What effect will the Symposium have on your teaching/professional development?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. How do you expect to share/disseminate what you have learned with colleagues at your home institution? _____
_____

_____
_____

4. What could we have done better at the Symposium?_____
_____
_____
_____

5. What did we do particularly well?_____
_____
_____
_____

MAHALO FOR YOUR TIME!