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A Dual-language Approach to Teaching a Russian Media Undergraduate Course

Abstract: Instruction in Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP), especially in the less commonly taught languages, creates a resource challenge. Higher education institutions are often hesitant to support courses that draw small numbers of students. Even when fiscally possible, staffing such courses can represent a compromise between best practices in language pedagogy and the instructor's expertise in the specific purpose subject at hand. This article describes a unique dual-language approach for teaching a Russian media course, which students can elect to take as an English-only course or as a subject whose language of instruction is English, but nearly all the other work (assignments in reading, writing, and oral presentation) is completed in the target language at proficiency levels commensurate with other upper-division Russian-language courses.

Keywords: dual-language learning, language across the curriculum, Russian language, Russian media

Introduction

The twentieth century saw the rise of specialized language courses (Hammerly, 1982) to address a wide array of practical needs. During World War II, soldiers began their study of German, Russian, and Japanese with conversational pleasantries, but, by the end of the nine-month course, the main topic areas centered on military interrogation (Lesnin & Petrova, 1945). Would-be physicists and chemists of the 1960s and 1970s were encouraged to learn German—a nod to pioneering German scientific output before World War II—and/or Russian, a reaction to the early Soviet successes in missile development, and space exploration (Parry, 1967, pp. 145-150). Later, international business education emphasized a knowledge of Spanish for the Western Hemisphere (Huebener, 1963; Zalacaín, 1980), or Japanese, in response to Japan's industrial rise (Miyagawa, 1995). Now, in the first three decades of the twenty-first century, the global economy has made almost every area of human endeavor a target for Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) instruction across many languages in order to handle topics that arise from a panoply of globalized opportunities—and, just as often, challenges—including climate change, public health, cybercrime, international trade, and political repression or autonomy.

Thirty years of globalization have given us a long list of foreign-language desiderata; however, the economics of language instruction have made meeting those needs difficult, especially in languages deemed more challenging, for example, Groups III and IV, as categorized by ACTFL's Language Testing International (2021) that are sometimes taught in large North American colleges and universities: Russian, Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese, Korean. In Russian, for example, few American-born students reach working proficiency (i.e., the ACTFL Advanced range) (Rifkin, 2005). In most cases, for languages beyond the ACTFL-based Language Testing International (LTI) Categories I and II, institutions cannot provide enough hours of instruction, especially beyond the first or second year. Even in full eight-semester sequences, learners rarely achieve ACTFL Advanced proficiency in all four skills unless additional summer intensive or semester-length in-country instruction is available

(Malone et al., 2005; Thompson, 1996). In addition, second language (L2) instruction in a narrower domain specialization, such as public health for learners of Japanese, is rarely taught due to scarcity of instructors and instructional resources. The increasing need for LSP requires curricular and pedagogical innovations. Among these is the dual-language course, described below. In such courses, a small number of students completes work for the course using the target language.

It is not uncommon for language instructors to identify student specialists in various disciplines and give them a fragment of the pertinent world language specific to their needs and purposes. In Russian, for example, scientific writing used the passive voice and limited vocabulary, and "many scientists believed that learning to read a Soviet researcher's organic chemistry paper would be a comparatively simple task" (Baldwin, 2017). Yet advanced language proficiency takes time. An example comes from the late 1980s, when the business world saw opportunities in the emerging market of Russia of 1990. "How many weeks of intensive Russian would be required of our students to make them effective in the language?" administrators from the Business School asked the Russian Language Program Director at one US university. The answer was that that type of language acquisition program took months or years.

At the business Russian forum at the 1990 Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS, now called the Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies [ASEES]), speakers bemoaned the apparent need to limit business Russian training for heritage speakers, the only students thought to have enough experience to take on business in the target language.

Related to the paucity of Russian language students qualified to do specialized content work are the economics of enrollments into upper-division courses. Programs of commonly taught languages, such as Spanish and French, can offer specialized upper-division courses that meet the requirements for minimum undergraduate enrollment. Nevertheless, for the less commonly taught languages (LCTL), baseline upper-division courses required for the program's major often must fight to avoid cancelation due to low enrollment. Success, at times, comes only in the form of the institution's nod to such programs' traditional stature. However, such largesse is unlikely to extend to additional target-LCTL specialized courses, even for Russian, the ninth most studied world language in the latest 2016 Modern Language Association (MLA) survey of higher education enrollments (Looney & Lusin, 2019). A specialized course in Persian or Turkish is, for example, perhaps fiscally less realistic under any immediately foreseeable circumstances, except in larger programs or those specific to a given institution's history, location, or funding source.

Still, the limit on resources does not mean abandoning specialized language content. I propose a model of instruction in which instructors can deliver some LSP content in the target language by combining it with specialized content delivered primarily in English for larger audiences. I call this a first-language / second-language (L1/L2) "dual-language" course: one in which some students complete additional and alternative assignments based on target-language content. Such courses might have two, or even three, tiers. In a two-tiered course, the majority of students use English only. A minority of upper-division language students (third year and beyond for Russian) handle most of the primary sources in Russian. In a three-tiered system, third-year students handle primary sources in Russian, while fourth-year students commit to writing their course papers in Russian as well. In this discussion, I refer to that minority contingent (sometimes only two or three students in a single section) as the dual-language participants in what otherwise is a course delivered in the students' common language (here: English). In the

current dual-language model, I propose offering all the content in English but with an opportunity for proficient students to add target language material that qualifies the course for language credit. Such courses are not without precedent, either at the host institution for the program described here or elsewhere (e.g., Arizona State University's [2022] listing of its course on Russian pop culture).

The course on Russian media, taught at the George Washington University, a private institution of about 25,000 students, is set up along such lines. The course has been taught three times since 2016 and typically draws between 10 and 20 students. About two-thirds of the students come to the course with no usable proficiency in Russian (i.e., first-year, not higher than the ACTFL Novice level) or with no Russian at all. For those students the course is all about the Russian media — with no expectations for language acquisition. The other third consists of either heritage speakers with a wide range of proficiency from the ACTFL Advanced range through "true near native," or students at the third and fourth-year levels, who speak at Intermediate High or Advanced Low with slightly higher proficiency in the receptive skills. Students with some Russian proficiency—Intermediate High or above, can opt to take the course as dual-language (i.e., taking on course activities that turn the course into one with "content in Russian," and thereby satisfy major and minor requirements and which counts as the third-year Russian course for the undergraduate requirement).

In the following sections, I present the dual-language model of the Russian media course, providing details about course structure, materials, and tasks, as well as some technical tips relevant for faculty considering developing a similar LSP course.

Russian Media Dual-language Course

Overview of the Course: Structure and Materials

History of the Russian Media focuses on Russian journalism of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries with an emphasis on the variability of judicial restraints, both government and corporative, in totalitarian, authoritarian, and free societies. Students also look at the development and spread of media technology under those conditions. The role of non-journalistic media (i.e., entertainment) is also considered. At the end of the semester students should be able to 1) discuss orally and in writing the characteristics of the mass media in Russia from Soviet times to the current day as a model for totalitarian and authoritarian societies; 2) categorize and contextualize by time period, theme, and slant of individual pieces in the Russian media landscape; 3) identify points of control on the media in an authoritarian state; 4) compare and contrast the Russian media to various segments of the media in Europe and the United States; and, 5) discuss the role of social media in authoritarian societies, such as Russia. The central narrative of the course is the timeline taken by the Soviet, then Russian, media from about the 1960s forward: the totalitarian media monopoly of the Soviet Union, the sudden freedom of the Gorbachev era of the late 1980s, the freedom and anarchy of the 1990s, and, finally, the reassertion of state control of a commercialized media under Vladimir Putin. The language of presentation in the course is English. All students, whether they have chosen the dual-language option or not, must complete assignments for the course basics: initial student presentations and background reading in English about twentieth-century Soviet and post-Soviet history and specifically media (see Table 1 for an overview of the course set-up with sample materials). All students must read a series of scholarly and journalistic articles in English on

current issues in the Russian media, mostly taken from three texts: (1) Pomerantsev's (2014) *Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible: The Surreal Heart of the New Russia*; (2) *The Post-Soviet Russian Media: Conflicting Signals* by Beumers et al. (2011); and, (3) *Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution* by Glasser and Baker (2005). Beumers et al. (2011) is a scholarly anthology that provides theoretical underpinnings for the analysis of the media in totalitarian and authoritarian states. The remaining two works are primarily journalistic narratives. Because the Kremlin's treatment of the media has been targeted over the last twenty years, students can expect additional assignments taken from current journalistic reports. Students are assigned articles (as they appear) from English-language media outlets like the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Guardian*, or even Russia's anti-Kremlin expat daily English-language *Moscow Times*. Dual-language students are given some source material from Russian press outlets, whether controlled by or supportive of the Russian government (e.g., *Rossiyskaya gazeta* or *Lenta.ru*), or reasonably independent (*Ekho Moskvy*, which was shut down as this article went to press), or opposition and "discouraged," if not banned outright, such as *Meduza.io*, which have been forced to register as foreign agents—a death knell for journalistic accreditation and advertising revenue.

Of course, as with almost any written texts, instructors have no way of guaranteeing that dual-language students will slog through an article in Russian, when surprisingly accurate computer mediated translation (CMT) such as Google Translate or DeepL gives access to almost any print media, whether online or as a scanned hard copy.[1] Students' reliance on available translations is hardly new. It is hard to imagine that undergraduates, assigned to read *Crime and Punishment*, in fact read the entire work only in Russian. The difference is that now, *any* text written in literary Russian becomes available to English readers (CMT translations of colloquial texts contain more errors, at least in Russian; see Robin, 2021); and in a dual-language course, fewer options are available to force students to demonstrate through L2 class discussion that they have indeed read the article at hand in the target language. Fewer options does not mean no options, but such activities might well include additional individual meetings with students during office hours — something that teachers are not likely to want to make a regularly scheduled activity if it monopolizes the instructors' time to see other students, even if virtual communication makes timing such meetings more flexible.

Primary Sources for English-only and Dual-language Students

All students read, watch, and/or listen to many samples of the Russian media from the last sixty years. Students whose working academic language is English use source materials from EastView, the world's most complete public purveyor of the historical Russian print media in English. All students are required to view Soviet and Russian video passages with news and commentary. The course materials include about a hundred such clips, each of which runs from several seconds to several minutes. Nearly all come from YouTube. All have downloadable

[1] For standard expository journalistic Russian prose, CMTs have become quite robust. The underlying reason for miscomprehension is more likely the reader's lack of cultural or historical background, rather than linguistic miscommunication. The accuracy of any CMT correlates mostly to the state of the engines AI learning. Languages with a larger body of previous translations into English translate more accurately overall. Occasionally, a language's structure gets in the way. For example, until recently Google Translate had trouble disambiguating pronouns in Spanish (they are usually dropped) or proper names versus common nouns in Chinese.

portable subrip (SRT) subtitles, which can be made visible in many media players. Creating the subtitles used to be an onerous task. Five minutes of subtitles used to be an hour's work. In 2021, Adobe released (as part of its Premiere Pro editing package) automatic subtitling for a growing list of languages. Subtitle generation still requires manual clean-up, but the automation cuts the work by well over fifty percent, mostly by pegging the transcribed text to points on the video timeline. Instructors without access to the Adobe suite still have some free resources to speed up subtitling: Subtitle Workshop, Subtitle Edit, or Aegisub, among others.

Table 1

Two-tier Dual-language System for Russian Courses

	English-only students	**Dual-language students**
Primary sources	*Captioned (by instructor or producer)*: • News and discussion video • Serial clips • Radio clips *Professionally translated:* • News articles • Opposition YouTube videos • Historical print articles (Soviet Central press) *CMT translations (GT, DeepL, etc.):* • Printed news and discussions	Uncaptioned (i.e., not from the instructor's video database): • News and discussion video • Serial clips • Radio clips • Historical articles (Soviet Central press; un-scannable, impossible to use CMT)
Secondary sources	• Beumers, B., Hutchings, S., & Rulyova, N. (Eds., 2011). *The Post-Soviet Russian Media*. • Pomerantsev, P. (2014). *Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible.* • Glasser, S., & Baker, P. (2005). *Kremlin Rising*. (selection)	
	• 3-5 articles in English (chosen from a list) about the media • Vladimir Pozner: various YouTube lectures in English	• 3-5 articles by Russians in Russian (chosen from a list) about the media • Vladimir Pozner: various YouTube lectures in Russian
Research papers	• Two papers in English	• One paper in Russian (600-1000 words) • One paper in English or Russian (1000 words)
Daily	• Consume and report on at least one-half hour of RT or Radio Sputnik per week. (Students may also add opposition a/v media to the mix if they find subtitled versions).	• Consume and report on at least one 30 min. of Federal TV or Radio per week. (Students may also add opposition a/v media to the mix, e.g. TV Rain, Redaktsiya, etc.)
Group project	• Presentation in English	• Video broadcast simulation in Russian
Service work	• Peer writing program: the instructor pairs advanced writers with less experienced writers for editing in English.	• Consecutive interpretation for non-English speaking guest speakers • Help non-dual students using CMT translations with identifying research sources
Optional assignments	• One additional paper in English (1000 words) or video presentation in English • Final exam (factual knowledge) Students with emerging communications skills can opt for a factual final exam or attempt a third paper to demonstrate improved communicative skills.	

Distribution of the video clips with subtitles occurs in one of two ways. In a live classroom, students watch downloaded copies of the videos with the subtitles projected simultaneously. For review outside class, students can download the video from YouTube using third-party software, whether web-based or installed on the user's local machine.[2] Users then download the subtitles separately and display them in the VLC videoplayer as they view the downloaded clip. (The distribution of the subtitles is legal, governed by the Creative Commons license [www.creativecommons.org]). An alternate method for displaying subtitles requires users to install a plugin from Amara OpenSubtitles.org to display uploaded subtitles directly in the YouTube window.

Assignments: Differences for English-only and Dual-language Students

All students write three papers, create a multimedia group project in teams, engage in class discussions, and participate in on-site media visits (to the studios of RT, Russia's propaganda YouTube channel, and the Voice of America's Russian service). Invited guest speakers from the Russian media deliver presentations in English and in Russian—all with student assistance (see below for more on this point).

Those students who choose the dual-language option enjoy a slightly modified menu, based largely on Marx's maxim from 1875: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" (Marx, 1970). To begin with, all dual-language students are directed towards YouTube-based video clips with content similar to that of the subtitled clips but are untranslated. For print materials, those dual-language students are directed to research based on the historical press as well. Except for EastView's efforts, the Russian press before the era of computerization is largely untranslated and digitized only as low-resolution photographic PDFs. Students who would seek to shortcut the effort of L2 reading by scanning texts into Google Translate will find it easier to read the originals; the resolution of the PDF copies is too low for accurate scanning.

For the multimedia group project, the dual-language students form their own group and produce a video presentation in Russian with English subtitles added for the benefit of the rest of the class.

Dual-language Students and Listening Comprehension

By far, the most significant task that falls to dual-language students is listening comprehension, rather than the comprehension of printed texts. After all, even advanced students of Russian are likely to use a translation bot for lengthy tracts of print of digital origin. Google Translate can even be coaxed into taking on speech, but the procedure is unwieldy, because Google often mistranscribes speech. Enterprising, tech-savvy students can use any number of applications to slow down the speech. However, even once the actual words are captured

[2] The 2002 Teach Act allows instructors to show timely copyrighted media as a part of face-to-face and asynchronous instruction (Copyright Clearance Center, 2011). Individual downloads from sites such as YouTube are considered legal if the downloader (that is, the student) does not redistribute the content. However, it violates YouTube's terms of service (Brown, 2021).

acoustically and understood, comprehension of a text's meaning is often still missing, since that is often tied to background knowledge, addressed below.

Not surprisingly, for the Russian media course, heritage speakers are sometimes at a disadvantage compared to US-born learners of Russian who have reached ACTFL Advanced. At our university, students typically take Russian as part of a larger interest in geopolitics. They often come with an impressive background in history and international affairs. For many (but certainly not all) heritage speakers of Russian, knowledge of the politics and media of Russia stems from parental hearsay, sometimes misinterpreted, than of formal study. As a result, despite their Russian-born parentage, such students sometimes need more assistance with the background required for complete comprehension than those without Russian heritage language background who have engaged in formal area studies of Russia. In such situations, proficient non-heritage students with strong backgrounds in formal area studies (previous coursework in Russian history and culture) are paired with their heritage classmates who, while more linguistically fluid (ease of speech, fluency), might misconstrue the words they hear, even with high rates of literal accuracy.

Writing in Russian

For their written papers, dual-language students' source lists must be largely, if not predominantly, Russian. Those capable of writing longer papers in Russian are encouraged to do so. In a class of fifteen, three might write in Russian: heritage students and those at the fourth-year level. However, the decision to use Russian writing as a vehicle for the students' communication requires consideration; the merits for writing in Russian must be weighed for each student and depend on the goals of the assignment and the students' communicative capabilities in writing in both L1 and L2. We expect students to master presentational communications (writing and/or oral-visual) in a way that demonstrates critical thinking. Yet the debate over what constitutes a display of critical thinking is itself fuel for a lengthy discussion. My institution, George Washington University, has set the bar quite high: In addition to the analysis of "complex information," students must demonstrate that they can "[a]nalyze *scholarly literature* in particular its theoretical orientation and sources of support" [emphasis mine], and "[f]ormulate an argument based on the analysis of that scholarly literature and/or data" (George Washington University, 2021).

These goals correspond to the writing proficiency guidelines for the ACTFL Superior level—a realistic goal for only the best of the most advanced undergraduate students of Russian in college. However, given that dual-language students are writing in the target language, some adjustments to satisfy individual needs must be made in order for dual-language course approach to be fair and successful. Below are several potential ways to adjust the demands on dual-language students for demonstrating critical thinking in their written work.

Possible Adjustment 1: Demand Cogent Narration

A cogent restatement of factual content in something close to standard prose is the essence of Advanced proficiency in writing and a realistic goal for dual-language learners. Those students can demonstrate critical thinking in other projects meant for distribution to the entire class, such as multimedia presentations.

Possible Adjustment 2: Encourage Students to Write Prose that Approaches the ACTFL Superior Language through the Smart Use of Internet Resources

Encouraging students to turn to CMT, using programs such as Google Translate, DeepL, or ReversoContext, may be seen as controversial. Yet the published scholarship on the student use of autonomous tools, including CMT, is cautiously optimistic about its incorporation into language pedagogy, as Godwin-Jones (2011), Groves and Mundt (2015), Hannibal Jensen (2019), Lee (2021), Liubanets et al. (2018), and Robin (2021) have argued. In the 2021 study summarizing the growth of autonomous language learning tools on the internet over the past twenty years, Godwin-Jones (2011) compares the "mechanical" nature of many language pedagogical sites to the dynamism of non-pedagogical applications, including the recent jump in accuracy of CMT. However, classroom teachers make no secret of their fears about the pedagogical implications of such resources (Ducar & Schocket, 2018; Henshaw, 2020; Spanishplans.org, 2020). The benefit or risk of using machine translation as a tool for completing assignments depends on the student's training and proficiency level. We can expect that students who have reached the ACTFL Superior level in writing Russian to have enough linguistic resources to have already learned how to use CMT properly or to be teachable on that count. The low numbers of dual-language students in the GWU Russian media course provides only anecdotal evidence. In the three iterations of the course, only six students have produced written composition in Russian: three heritage speakers and three who started learning Russian in college. The three Americans who started with no Russian and reached ACTFL certified speaking proficiencies ranging from Intermediate High to Advanced High, were all able to use CMT tools to produce Russian with Superior characteristics. Such results, however tentative, should come as no surprise. In the courses described here, the dual-language students proved to be experienced language learners who have used CMT. The dual-language approach may be targeted precisely to language learners who can learn to make use of similar technologies independently. Careful learners can use tools such as Reverso Context to check the veracity of phrase-length translations. For longer texts they can use Google Translate or DeepL. Nevertheless, it goes without saying that those first impressions of non-heritage learner use of CMT require confirmation from larger controlled studies.

Classroom learners of Russian (non-heritage speakers) come to the dual-language course described here with proven skills in language acquisition. That is not the case with many heritage students of Russian. The role of heritage learners in a dual-language course depends on their linguistic assets, based on their language training. For example, heritage speakers of Russian with no previous training in Russian language literacy (e.g., with reading skills limited to sounding out words by decoding the letters) cannot participate in such a course as dual-language students. Heritage speakers with grade-school literacy are likely to understand most of the spoken texts they hear from the media. The availability of CMT obscures their true reading ability unless it is tested directly in a proctored setting. However, heritage speakers in a dual-language class face challenges that their fellow students (who studied Russian language in a classroom) do not. If they have not studied Russian in a formal academic setting, they will likely lack some language and quite a bit of cultural and political background that classroom learners acquire in a full-fledged Russian language and culture program, especially if they have spent time in Russia or in an intensive program such as those at Middlebury, Arizona State University, or the Indiana Summer Language Workshop. Moreover, second language learners without heritage Russian backgrounds may owe their success in language acquisition to the development of a sense of overall language sensitivity. Literacy skills transfer across languages (Carson et al., 1990), and L2 writing skills much depend on L1 writing proficiency (Cumming, 1989). For that reason, we should not be surprised when the writing of academically trained L2 students of

Russian composition outdistances that of heritage speakers without such training. Designers of dual-language courses must be aware of this when they create writing assignments that address not only language issues but also demonstrations of critical thinking. Students who cannot produce L2-based research-analytical compositions (as opposed to simple narrative essays) are not in a position to use L2 composition to satisfy both requirements—for dual-language and for critical thinking. In previous iterations of the course, heritage speakers who would have qualified for dual-language credit did not seek it because they did not have the historical and cultural background to handle the additional cognitive load of writing about unfamiliar material in their heritage language. Therefore, towards the beginning of the semester, the instructor must meet with each student to determine how much of the student's program will be in Russian, especially writing assignments. Consider, therefore, three different types of Russian language students, which demonstrate potential scenarios for dual-language course participation in the Russian media course:

"Sophie" is a successful fourth-year student of Russian with all-round Advanced proficiency. Now a senior, Sophie has taken university writing courses and writing-in-the disciplines courses. An accomplished writer in English and rather linguistically aware, she can turn her attention to developing her writing proficiency in Russian.

"Paul" is a Russian heritage speaker, a first-year student. He understands most of what he hears and reads in Russian. However, composition in Russian beyond basic needs is difficult for him. Writing in Russian would lead to little progress. Moreover, his college prose in English needs improvement. As a dual-language student, Paul can work with the Russian input (e.g., reading Russian texts and listening to Russian broadcasts), but his output will need to be in English.

"Courtney" is a second-year Russian student with the foundation required for much of the background material in Russian. Her writing, however, does not approach the threshold necessary to produce college-level communication in L2. Therefore Courtney writes papers in English.

The thumbnails presented above are focused on traditional assignments involving the comprehension and analysis of source material through traditional academic output: papers and presentations. However, the possibilities for participation by dual-language students extends into the realm of classroom service-learning as described below.

Dual-language Students as Course Assistants

No matter what their level of proficiency, students who take the course on a dual-language basis are expected to help the non-dual-language students for any research language needs as part of their grade for class participation. Activities include the following:

- **Search engine assistance.** CMT solves the problem of reading selected background material, but searching for that material through machine translation is cumbersome and often leads to irrelevant results, especially in the EastView search engine. Nevertheless, even students at the lower end of the reading proficiency spectrum can be of service here.
- **Translation summary assistance.** Students who rely entirely on CMT for Russian-language research lack the skimming and scanning capabilities needed to eliminate materials that only at first appear to be germane. Advanced-level readers go a long way in helping with the issue of incomprehensible search results.

- **A/V media navigation.** Dual-language learners can assist non-dual-language students sort through small amounts of audio/visual media that would ordinarily be unavailable to them.
- **Oral interpretation for guest lecturers.** Few of our guest speakers addressing the class remotely from Russia on a live stream speak English well enough to make cogent presentations. Fourth-year students and heritage speakers fill in as informal consecutive oral interpreters when such assistance is required. That task is usually challenging but rewarding. However, these are, nevertheless, undergraduate students and not professional interpreters. For that reason, I look for guest speakers with some experience talking to audiences whose Russian is less proficient. Fortunately, the Russian media is full of such talent. They know that they will be understood best if they mold their message into evenly paced, redundant speech.

The student assistance described above is not exclusively a one-way street. The course attracts some non-Russian speaking expertise in the guise of students with previous coursework in journalism, human rights, and international conflict. Such students can act as guides for dual-language participants whose content knowledge may be less advanced.

Multimedia Presentation

All members of the class are required to participate in a group presentation. For English-only students that activity is usually a report written in a group of 2-3 people whose core is an analysis of a question based on a multimedia PowerPoint, as is the case in many courses requiring such work. The dual-language students get to work on a different kind of project—something a bit more creative, albeit less scholarly. They produce a YouTube simulation (or, if they wish, parody) of a Russian (or Soviet) television news segment. They are required to adhere to the stylistic features of the newscast. The project requires a Russian script (usually written by two students, who also act as director and producer), two news anchors, a field reporter, and two or three interviewees. In one case, the dual-language group had non-Russian students stand in as foreigners with Russian voice-over translations—a common feature of the Russian media. The grading metrics for such an assignment vary from those applied to research-oriented work.

Work on the script of the simulated newscasts is especially productive for teaching the basics of the upper register of scripted presentation. The student screenwriters are tasked with mastering the newscast style of the period they have selected. They arrive at that goal through borrowing, appropriation, along with some connective prose from CMTs. For example, in their Soviet production of about the 1980s Moscow Olympics, one group of dual-language screenwriters created their anchors' scripts as an amalgam of contemporary print news reports. They scripted the person-on-the-street interviews for the look and feel of similar interviews of the Soviet 1980s.

Technological fixes allow weaker students to participate in such projects. Students at lesser levels of oral production can take the smaller roles of street interviewees. In a parody video based on a Soviet era newscast about the imagined survival of the USSR into the 1990s, one of the students wrote a viable script for a stand-up piece (on-camera correspondent reporting from the field accompanied by background videoclips) about collective farms, but he was unable to reproduce it on camera convincingly. However, his lip movements were close enough to the

required utterances to allow a dub over from a Russian voice generated by Amazon Polly.[3] While some teachers may question the use of electronic resources to fill in the gaps of the students' own abilities, I argue that a main principle of dual-language teaching is to build on each learner's abilities and allow them support (here through technological tools) according to their needs. Students with beginning speaking abilities might indeed need the dub to supplement their on-screen performances. Nevertheless, for such students, the on-screen appearance was merely the final performance of the script that they had composed correctly. In putting together the script, they added high-register lexical items to their active vocabulary. A requirement that they reproduce all the high-level language in their script, designed to be read straight through without mistakes, is simply too great a challenge for them. The electronic voice-over rescue is entirely legitimate and, in a way, imitates life in the movie industry, where directors sometimes hastily arranged dub overs for actors whose skills did not match the work at hand: Gert Fröbe, whose unexpectedly impenetrable English was dubbed for *Goldfinger* (1963) or Donastas Bonionis, whose Russian was deemed too accented for his lead role in *Solaris* (1971), or more recently, in the *Star Wars* series, the use of James Earl Jones's voice for Darth Vader, played by David Prowse.

Finally, for the video project, students were tasked with writing the text for the English subtitles (to be added for the benefit of the English-only audience) that focus additional attention on each phrase in the text, a useful bottom-up exercise. They must also learn to edit the subtitles into shorter readable text (no more than 15 words per second), a task that involves some guidance from a faculty member or classmate with subtitling experience.

The media production project has a hidden benefit unrelated to language acquisition. In higher education, we have begun investigating avenues students can use to demonstrate their communication skills to show mastery of an area of scholarly endeavor beyond the academic paper. The fuel for that endeavor is the push for inclusion of students with greater diversity in their college preparation. Formal academic writing was once a staple of those high schools whose curricula focused on college preparation. That was realistic for the first part of the twentieth century, an age when high school students were expected to read more, since the only media competition for reading came from radio. That educational philosophy survived the age of television. However, now, at a time when a mature Web 2.0 targets learners with predominantly short readings and videos whose length is measured in seconds rather than half hours or hours, teachers of formal composition are hard pressed to have students draw on models of longer scholarly texts they have actually read. If the visual media are the communicative platform of the current generation of students as Daley (2003) and Genereux (2015) have argued, we should be prepared to teach communication in that medium. Of course, that requires yet another arrow in the instructor's quiver: teaching and critiquing video production, and certainly many current faculty members would require guidance, sometimes provided by media centers at their institutions. Yet as LSP fields expand in undergraduate programs, new generations of teachers will bring a broader range of skills integral to teaching language in the twenty-first century.

[3] Since then, the availability of convincing computer-generated voices for commonly spoken languages has increased). In addition to Amazon Polly, users can access a combination of free and paid FL voices from Microsoft, Google, as well as specialized cloud-based software such as Speechalo and Play.ht.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The dual-language course, such as the one described here for Russian media, may not be the ideal solution to the relative paucity of coursework in specialized content areas beyond the standard language and literature track. Nevertheless, the description at hand provides a roadmap for a type of course that encourages student growth in both language and content using an economically manageable language-across-the-curriculum approach. Such a course satisfies the needs of students with different but complimentary skill sets. It encourages the practical application of language skills for that important group of students who might otherwise not have an academic setting for their growing proficiency. It creates opportunities for language learners to earn rewards for their pursuit of language growth without penalizing students outside the language track.

The course on Russian media is but one example of such a dual-language course. The Russian program hosting the course also offers a course on the cultural and political history of Russian rock music, run along similar lines. Those two topics tie in well with the general profile of the university, known for its programs in international affairs, political science, and public policy. Other institutions or divisions within an institution might find better fits between dual-language offerings and different areas of content. Offerings could branch out into the other obvious targets of area studies such as political science, social developments, or foreign affairs. However, coursework that takes students farther afield requires thought and planning. Language course hybridization in the model proposed here works well because it attracts a few advanced language students into courses that would under any circumstances would draw a student audience large enough to satisfy the demands of fiscally conservative administrators. One can imagine courses on country or area-specific issues such as minority rights, gender equality, and environmental change. Such endeavors would require coordination among departments to avoid territorial conflicts. Moreover, some ideas might involve courses too specific to draw a crowd, such as a course on the history of mathematical discovery in Russia, featuring Nikolai Lobachevsky.

Other unintended consequences of the dual-language course model might be looming just beyond the horizon. Once administrators understand the nature of dual-language courses, they may well see this approach as an economically viable path for *core* courses for the language major. The fourth-year undergraduate course in nineteenth-century Russian literature that rarely attracts double-digit enrollments at my institution may be an attractive target for administrators who would argue that the language/literature development needs of students studying LCTLs are best served by moving such students into dual-language general interest humanities courses.

Finally, it would be unwise to close our eyes to the greatest loss that would come as the result of creating too many dual-language courses, namely student classroom discussion in the target language. As students seek to move from ACTFL Intermediate to Advanced, every hour of potential speaking practice is precious. A strictly proficiency-oriented view of classroom activities in upper-division Russian literature courses in Russian might cast doubt on the efficacy of such classroom talk in terms of proficiency growth. After all, theoretically based discussions of literature and culture require more proficiency than the levels typical of our students in fourth-year courses.

The focus of this presentation of a dual-language approach to teaching an LSP course was on Russian, a Category III-language classified as less commonly taught because it is absent from

all but a short list of US high schools and available only in larger or better endowed institutions of higher learning.[4] Nevertheless, the dual-language course structure, as presented here, is fertile ground for use with many of the less commonly taught languages in schools around the country whose resources do not permit a fully developed set of upper-division LSP courses.

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[4] In 2020, just 101 U.S. institutions of higher learning reported offering coursework beyond second-year Russian to 1414 students.

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