

THE TEACHING EXCHANGE

BROWN UNIVERSITY • VOLUME 9 / NUMBER 1 • SEPTEMBER 2004



“Making Technology Work”: A Program for Linking Language Technologies and Pedagogy

Andrew F. Ross, Ph. D.

Director, Language Resource Center

On June 2, 3 and 4 three teams, comprised of graduate students and faculty members from the departments of East Asian Studies, German Studies and the International Teaching Assistant program, participated in a workshop hosted by the Language Resource Center, the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, the Center for Language Studies and the Instructional Technology Group of CIS. This workshop, generously funded by the Consortium for Teaching and Learning, provided graduate student/faculty teams an opportunity to plan and create technology-based instruction modules for courses that they will teach together in Fall 2004.

Participants, selected on a competitive basis, were: *East Asian Studies / Slavic Languages*: Kikuko Yamashita and Olga Yoshizumi; *German Studies*: Jane Sokolosky and Len Cagle; and the *International Teaching Assistant Program*: Barbara Gourlay, Rachel Rothenberg and Joan Lusk (Chemistry).

The workshop began with a valuable discussion of project overviews and expectations from team members, followed by presentations on instructional design process and “storyboarding” by Rebecca More and Laura Hess of the Sheridan Center, and Stephanie Birdsall of ITG. Teams then worked together to plan the design and use of their projects, and shared their results with the group.

Over the next two days, student/faculty teams worked with members of the Language Resource Center staff and the ITG group to learn basic and intermediate Web design using Dreamweaver including non-Western language formatting for the Web, audio recording and editing, and digital video editing and formatting. Projects include an interactive

pronunciation website for international teaching assistants in Chemistry to help with chemistry terms in and outside a classroom context; a viewing comprehension module for German 40 based on digitized video from the DDR and *heimat* films of the 1950s; and a series of Japanese interactive listening comprehension and pronunciation exercises using streamed audio and a server-based "dropbox" for student responses.

Perhaps one of the most useful aspects of the program was the opportunity for this small group of participants to share ideas with one another, and to work through pedagogical and technical issues with LRC and ITG staff over the period of the workshop.

Work on these projects is ongoing, and plans for the workshop participants include periodic meetings throughout the summer on an as-needed basis, a plenum meeting prior to the start of Fall semester to measure progress on the teaching modules, and a follow-up meeting in December to evaluate the projects' effectiveness in the classroom and to refine these materials for reuse in future semesters. Graduate student participants received a monetary stipend for their participation; faculty members were awarded a declining-balance account for technology purchases related to instruction and research.